ART 1610: THREE-DIMENSIONAL DESIGN



Nyoka Reed
Taft College



3D Design

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1: Introduction

Introduction to Three-Dimensional Design

Three-Dimensional Design, often referred to as 3D Design, is the exploration and creation of objects that occupy physical space. Unlike two-dimensional art forms, which are confined to height and width, three-dimensional works engage the full spatial experience by incorporating depth. This fundamental distinction allows 3D design to interact with its environment and the viewer in dynamic ways, making it a vital discipline in both artistic and functional contexts. From sculptures and installations to product and environmental design, three-dimensional work can be found throughout human culture as a means of expression, utility, and innovation.

In the contemporary art world, three-dimensional design has evolved beyond traditional sculpture to encompass a wide range of media, techniques, and conceptual frameworks. Artists and designers work with materials like metal, wood, plastic, found objects, textiles, and even digital modeling tools to challenge the boundaries between art and design. Installation art, public art, interactive objects, and immersive environments are all modern extensions of 3D design that invite physical engagement and often involve social, political, or environmental commentary. This versatility allows artists to not only shape form and space but also to craft experiences that provoke thought and elicit emotion.

Studying three-dimensional design equips students with a foundation in spatial thinking, material manipulation, and critical analysis. In this course, students will engage hands-on with core design principles—such as balance, rhythm, scale, texture, and structure—through projects that encourage experimentation and personal expression. Whether a student's path leads to fine art, industrial design, architecture, or creative entrepreneurship, the skills developed through 3D design are widely applicable and highly valued. As we move forward, this textbook will serve as both a technical guide and a conceptual companion, encouraging students to think beyond the flat surface and into the world of tangible, spatial creation.

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1.1: What is an Artist

An artist is any person from any culture engaged in one or more activities to create art or practice art. Artists do not have to be a professional to design art; most of the time, art is very relaxing and enjoyable, creating sense and meaning in one's life. Artists throughout time were generally called an artisan, a term used for someone who labored with their hands producing art. However, art can be utilitarian, although very beautiful. For example, the pots the Jomon culture produced over 10,000 years ago were very utilitarian, yet they added unusual decorations to the outside of the pots with rope impressions in different patterns.

Art historians have divided art into categories called art movements. A famous art movement known to many is the Renaissance. The Renaissance encompasses the art in Italy during the 14th and 15th centuries. The name Renaissance means "Rebirth," and it seemed an appropriate term to describe the dramatic evolution in art. Art movements usually consisted of the same style or philosophy during a period. The movements usually were not named during the time it occurred; later, art historians arbitrarily assigned names based on similar styles and geographical groupings. Art movements have only been classified as movements by the artists or commentators in the last 150 years, beginning with the Impressionists. Most art periods in the last 150 years have been short, around ten years or less, the periods of art before modern art usually lasted 25-50 years.

Not all artists are famous or make a living selling art, but they still create interesting or different art. There are multiple employment opportunities in the art field, for example, teaching, writer, museum curator, art therapists, music, theater, education, and many more. Even the computer industry has designers on staff, so the design of the final product is aesthetically appealing and commercially compelling.

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1.2: Representational, Abstract, and Nonrepresentational Art

Abstract art exists on a continuum, from somewhat realistic representational work to fully nonrepresentational work.

Key Points

- Representational art or figurative art represents objects or events in the real world.
- Romanticism, Impressionism, and Expressionism contributed to the emergence of abstract art in the nineteenth century.
- Even representational work is abstracted to some degree; entirely realistic art is elusive.

Term

- Verisimilitude: the property of seeming true, of resembling reality; has a resemblance to reality

Painting and sculpture can be divided into the categories of figurative (or representational) and abstract (which includes nonrepresentational art). Figurative art describes artworks—particularly paintings and sculptures–that are clearly derived from real object sources, and therefore are by definition representational. Since the arrival of abstract art in the early twentieth century, the term figurative has been used to refer to any form of modern art that retains strong references to the real world.



Johann Anton Eismann, Meerhaven. 17th c. Work is in the public domain

This figurative or representational work from the seventeenth century depicts easily recognizable objects–ships, people, and buildings. Artistic independence was advanced during the nineteenth century, resulting in the emergence of abstract art. Three movements that contributed heavily to the development of these were Romanticism, Impressionism, and Expressionism.

Abstraction indicates a departure from reality in depiction of imagery in art. Abstraction exists along a continuum; abstract art can formally refer to compositions that are derived (or abstracted) from a figurative or other natural source. It can also refer to nonrepresentational art and non-objective art that has no derivation from figures or objects.

Even art that aims for verisimilitude of the highest degree can be said to be abstract, at least theoretically, since perfect representation is likely to be exceedingly elusive. Artwork which takes liberties, altering for instance color and form in ways that are conspicuous, can be said to be partially abstract.



Robert Delaunay, Le Premier Disque, 1913. Work is in the public domain

Delaunay's work is a primary example of early abstract art. Nonrepresentational art refers to total abstraction, bearing no trace of any reference to anything recognizable. In geometric abstraction, for instance, one is unlikely to find references to naturalistic entities. Figurative art and total abstraction are almost mutually exclusive. But figurative and representational (or realistic) art often contains partial abstraction.

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2: Elements of Art

The Elements of Art are the essential visual building blocks used by artists to create and communicate meaning in their work. In three-dimensional art, these elements—line, shape, form, space, texture, value, and color—take on dynamic qualities that interact with the viewer in physical space. Unlike two-dimensional artworks, 3D designs occupy real volume and can be viewed from multiple angles, allowing the artist to manipulate actual space and tangible materials. Understanding how each element functions in three-dimensional contexts helps artists make intentional choices about structure, surface, and spatial relationships. This chapter explores how the Elements of Art apply specifically to sculpture, installation, and other forms of 3D design, providing a foundation for effective visual expression in the physical world.

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2.1: What are the Elements of Art?

The Point

A **point** is the visual element upon which all others are based. It can be defined as a singularity in space or, in geometric terms, the area where two coordinates meet. When an artist marks a simple point on a surface, (also referred to as the ***ground***), they immediately create a ***figure-ground relationship***. That is, they divide the work between its surface and anything added to it. Our eyes differentiate between the two, and their arrangement has everything to do with how we see a final composition. The point itself can be used as a way to create forms. For example, *Pointillism* is a style of painting made famous by the French artist Georges Seurat in the late nineteenth century. He and others in the Pointillist group created paintings by juxtaposing points—or dots—of color that optically mixed to form lines, shapes and forms within a composition. Look at a detail from Seurat's *La Parade de Cirque* to see how this works. His large canvas *Sunday Afternoon on the Grande Jatte* is a testament to the pointillist style and aesthetic. Its creation was a painstaking process but one that generated new ways of thinking about color and form.



Georges Seurat, La Parade de Cirque, detail, 1887-89. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. CC BY-SA

Definitions and Qualities of Line

Essentially, when you put two or more points together you create a line. A line can be lyrically defined as a point in motion. There are many different types of lines, all characterized by their length being greater than their width. Lines can be static or dynamic depending on how the artist chooses to use them. They help determine the motion, direction and energy in a work of art. We see line all around us in our daily lives; telephone wires, tree branches, jet contrails and winding roads are just a few examples. Look at the photograph below to see how line is part of natural and constructed environments.



Photo by NASA. CC BY-NC

In this image of a lightning storm we can see many different lines. Certainly the jagged, meandering lines of the lightning itself dominate the image, followed by the straight lines of the light standards, the pillars holding up the overpass on the right and the guard rails attached to its side. There are more subtle lines too, like the gently arced line at the top of the image and the shadows cast by the poles and the standing figure in the middle. Lines are even implied by falling water droplets in the foreground.

The Nazca lines in the arid coastal plains of Peru date to nearly 500 BCE were scratched into the rocky soil, depicting animals on an incredible scale, so large that they are best viewed from the air. Let's look at how the different kinds of line are made.

Diego Velazquez's *Las Meninas* from 1656, ostensibly a portrait of the Infanta Margarita, the daughter of King Philip IV and Queen Mariana of Spain, offers a sumptuous amount of artistic genius; its shear size (almost ten feet square), painterly style of naturalism, lighting effects, and the enigmatic figures placed throughout the canvas–including the artist himself –is one of the great paintings in western art history. Let's examine it (below) to uncover how Velazquez uses basic elements and principles of art to achieve such a masterpiece.



Diego Velazquez, Las Meninas, 1656, oil on canvas, 125.2" x 108.7". Prado, Madrid. CC BY-SA

Actual lines are those that are physically present. The edge of the wooden stretcher bar at the left of *Las Meninas* is an actual line, as are the picture frames in the background and the linear decorative elements on some of the figures' dresses. How many other actual lines can you find in the painting?

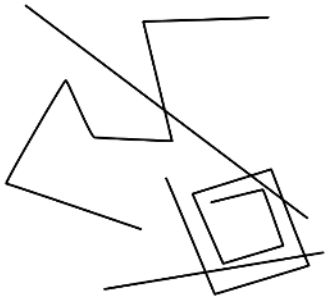
Implied lines are those created by visually connecting two or more areas together. The space between the Infanta Margarita—the blonde central figure in the composition—and the *meninas*, or maids of honor, to the left and right of her, are implied lines. Both set up a diagonal relationship that implies movement. By visually connecting the space between the heads of all the figures in the painting we have a sense of jagged motion that keeps the lower part of the composition in motion, balanced against the darker, more static upper areas of the painting. Implied lines can also be created when two areas of different colors or tones come together. Can you identify more implied lines in the painting? Where? Implied lines are found in three-dimensional artworks, too. The sculpture of the *Laocoon* below, a figure from Greek and Roman mythology, is, along with his sons, being strangled by sea snakes sent by the goddess Athena as wrath against his warnings to the Trojans not to accept the Trojan horse. The sculpture sets implied lines in motion as the figures writhe in agony against the snakes.



Laocoon Group, Roman copy of Greek original, Vatican Museum, Rome. Photo by Marie-Lan Nguyen. CC BY-SA

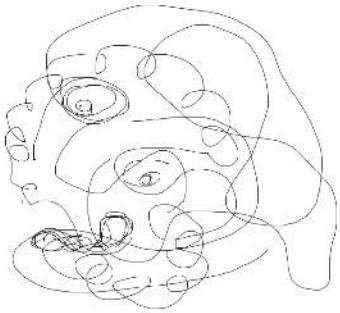
Straight or classic lines provide structure to a composition. They can be oriented to the horizontal, vertical, or diagonal axis of a surface. Straight lines are by nature visually stable, while still giving direction to a composition. In *Las Meninas*, you can see them

in the canvas supports on the left, the wall supports and doorways on the right, and in the background in matrices on the wall spaces between the framed pictures. Moreover, the small horizontal lines created in the stair edges in the background help anchor the entire visual design of the painting.



Straight lines, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Expressive lines are curved, adding an organic, more dynamic character to a work of art. Expressive lines are often rounded and follow undetermined paths. In *Las Meninas* you can see them in the aprons on the girls' dresses and in the dog's folded hind leg and coat pattern. Look again at the *Laocoon* to see expressive lines in the figures' flailing limbs and the sinuous form of the snakes. Indeed, the sculpture seems to be made up of nothing but expressive lines, shapes and forms.



Organic lines, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

There are other kinds of line that encompass the characteristics of those above yet, taken together, help create additional artistic elements and richer, more varied compositions. Refer to the images and examples below to become familiar with these types of line.

Outline, or contour line is the simplest of these. They create a path around the edge of a shape. In fact, outlines define shapes.



Outline, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Cross contour lines follow paths across a shape to delineate differences in surface features. They give flat shapes a sense of form (the illusion of three dimensions), and can also be used to create shading.



Cross Contour, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Hatch lines are repeated at short intervals in generally one direction. They give shading and visual texture to the surface of an object.



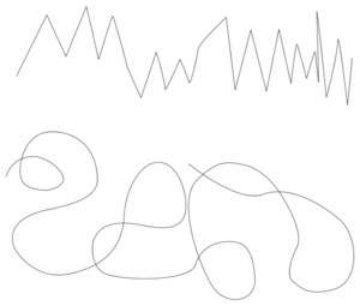
Hatch, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Crosshatch lines provide additional tone and texture. They can be oriented in any direction. Multiple layers of crosshatch lines can give rich and varied shading to objects by manipulating the pressure of the drawing tool to create a large range of values.



Crosshatch, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Line quality is that sense of character embedded in the way a line presents itself. Certain lines have qualities that distinguish them from others. Hard-edged, jagged lines have a staccato visual movement while organic, flowing lines create a more comfortable feeling. Meandering lines can be either geometric or expressive, and you can see in the examples how their indeterminate paths animate a surface to different degrees.



A Line, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Although line as a visual element generally plays a supporting role in visual art, there are wonderful examples in which line carries a strong cultural significance as the primary subject matter.

Calligraphic lines use quickness and gesture, more akin to paint strokes, to imbue an artwork with a fluid, lyrical character. To see this unique line quality, view the work of Chinese poet and artist Dong Qichang's Du Fu's Poem, dating from the Ming dynasty (1555-1637). A more geometric example from the Koran, created in the Arabic calligraphic style, dates from the 9th century.

Both these examples show how artists use line as both a form of writing and a visual art form. American artist Mark Tobey (1890–1976) was influenced by Oriental calligraphy, adapting its form to the act of pure painting within a modern abstract style described as white writing.

Shapes: Positive, Negative and Planar Issues

A shape is defined as an enclosed area in two dimensions. By definition shapes are always implied and flat in nature. They can be created in many ways, the simplest by enclosing an area with an outline. They can also be made by surrounding an area with other shapes or the placement of different textures next to each other—for instance, the shape of an island surrounded by water. Because they are more complex than lines, shapes do much of the heavy lifting in arranging compositions. The abstract examples below give us an idea of how shapes are made.



Shapes, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Referring back to Velazquez's *Las Meninas*, it is fundamentally an arrangement of shapes; organic and hard-edged, light, dark and mid-toned, that solidifies the composition within the larger shape of the canvas. Looking at it this way, we can view any work of art, whether two or three-dimensional, realistic, abstract or non-objective, in terms of shapes alone.

Positive / Negative Shapes and Figure / Ground Relationships

Shapes animate figure-ground relationships. We visually determine ***positive*** shapes (the figure) and ***negative*** shapes (the ground). One way to understand this is to open your hand and spread your fingers apart. Your hand is the positive shape, and the space around it becomes the negative shape. You can also see this in the example above. The shape formed by the black outline becomes positive because it's enclosed. The area around it is negative. The same visual arrangement goes with the gray circle and the purple square. But identifying positive and negative shapes can get tricky in a more complex composition. For instance, the four blue rectangles on the left have edges that touch each other, thus creating a solid white shape in the center. The four green rectangles on the right don't actually connect yet still give us an implied shape in the center. Which would you say is the positive shape? What

about the red circles surrounding the gray star shape? Remember that a positive shape is one that is distinguished from the background. In *Las Meninas* the figures become the positive shapes because they are lit dramatically and hold our attention against the dark background. What about the dark figure standing in the doorway? Here the dark shape becomes the positive one, surrounded by a white background. Our eyes always return to this figure as an anchor to the painting's entire composition. In three dimensions, positive shapes are those that make up the actual work. The negative shapes are the empty spaces around, and sometimes permeating through the work itself. The *Laocoon* is a good example of this. A modern work that uses shapes to a dramatic effect is Alberto Giacometti's *Reclining Woman Who Dreams* from 1929. In an abstract style the artist weaves positive and negative shapes together, the result is a dreamy, floating sensation radiating from the sculpture.

Plane

A ***plane*** is defined as any surface area in space. In two-dimensional art, the picture plane is the flat surface an image is created upon; a piece of paper, stretched canvas, wood panel, etc. A shape's orientation within the picture plane creates a visually implied plane, inferring direction and depth in relation to the viewer. The graphic below shows three examples.



Shape Planes, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Traditionally the picture plane has been likened to a window the viewer looks through to a scene beyond, the artist constructing a believable image showing implied depth and planar relationships. *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*, painted by Pieter Breughel the Elder in 1558 (below), presents us with the tragic ending to the Greek myth involving Icarus, son of Daedalus, who, trying to escape from the island of Crete with wings of wax, flies too close to the sun and falls to earth. Breughel shows us an idyllic landscape with farmers tilling their fields, each terraced row a different plane of earth, and shepherds tending their flocks of sheep in the foreground. He depicts the livestock in positions that infer they are moving in different directions in relation to the "window" of the picture plane. We look further to see a gradual recession to the sea and a middle ground dominated by a ship under sail. The curves of the billowing sails imply two or three different planes. The background of the painting shows the illusion of deep space, the massive cliffs now small in relation to the foreground, and the distant ship near the center as smaller and lighter in tone. In the grandeur of the scene Icarus falls into the sea unnoticed just off shore to the lower right, only his legs still above water. The artist's use of planar description is related to the idea of space and how it's depicted in two dimensions. We will look at the element of space just ahead.

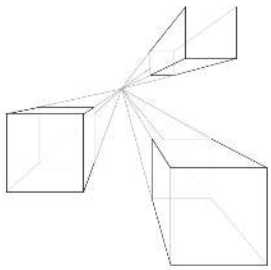


Landscape with the Fall of Icarus, Peter Breughel the Elder, 1558. Musee des Beaux-arts, Brussels. CC BY-SA

Space

Space is the empty area surrounding real or implied objects. Humans categorize space: there is outer space, that limitless void we enter beyond our sky; inner space, which resides in people's minds and imaginations, and personal space, the important but intangible area that surrounds each individual and which is violated if someone else gets too close. Pictorial space is flat, and the digital realm resides in cyberspace. Art responds to all of these kinds of space.

Clearly artists are as concerned with space in their works as they are with, say, color or form. There are many ways for the artist to present ideas of space. Remember that many cultures traditionally use pictorial space as a window to view realistic subject matter through, and through the subject matter they present ideas, narratives and symbolic content. The innovation of ***linear perspective,*** an implied geometric pictorial construct dating from fifteenth-century Europe, affords us the accurate illusion of three-dimensional space on a flat surface, and appears to recede into the distance through the use of a ***horizon line*** and ***vanishing points***. See how perspective is set up in the schematic examples below:



One Point Perspective, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

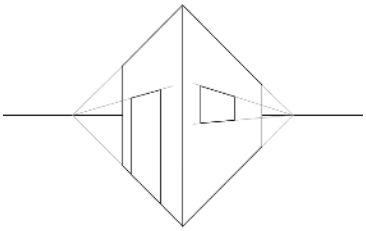
One-point perspective occurs when the receding lines appear to converge at a single point on the horizon and used when the flat front of an object is facing the viewer. Note: Perspective can be used to show the relative size and recession into space of any object, but is most effective with hard-edged three-dimensional objects such as buildings.

A classic Renaissance artwork using one point perspective is Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* from 1498. Da Vinci composes the work by locating the vanishing point directly behind the head of Christ, thus drawing the viewer's attention to the center. His arms mirror the receding wall lines, and, if we follow them as lines, would converge at the same vanishing point.



Leonardo da Vinci, The Last Supper, 1498. Fresco. Santa Maria della Grazie. Work is in the public domain.

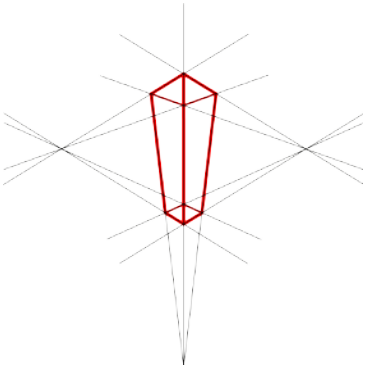
Two-point perspective occurs when the vertical edge of a cube is facing the viewer, exposing two sides that recede into the distance, one to each vanishing point.



Two Point Perspective, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

View Gustave Caillebotte's Paris Street, Rainy Weather from 1877 to see how two-point perspective is used to give an accurate view to an urban scene. The artist's composition, however, is more complex than just his use of perspective. The figures are deliberately placed to direct the viewer's eye from the front right of the picture to the building's front edge on the left, which, like a ship's bow, acts as a cleaver to plunge both sides toward the horizon. In the midst of this visual recession a lamp post stands firmly in the middle to arrest our gaze from going right out the back of the painting. Caillebotte includes the little metal arm at the top right of the post to direct us again along a horizontal path, now keeping us from traveling off the top of the canvas. As relatively spare as the left side of the work is, the artist crams the right side with hard-edged and organic shapes and forms in a complex play of positive and negative space.

Three-point perspective is used when an artist wants to project a "bird's-eye view", that is, when the projection lines recede to two points on the horizon and a third either far above or below the horizon line. In this case the parallel lines that make up the sides of an object are not parallel to the edge of the ground the artist is working on (paper, canvas, etc).



Three-point perspective (with vanishing points above and below the horizon line shown at the same time). Design by Shazz, CC BY

The perspective system is a cultural convention well suited to a traditional western European idea of the "truth," that is, an accurate, clear rendition of observed reality. Even after the invention of linear perspective, many cultures traditionally use a flatter pictorial space, relying on overlapped shapes or size differences in forms to indicate this same truth of observation. Examine the miniature painting of the *Third Court of the Topkapi Palace* from fourteenth-century Turkey to contrast its pictorial space with that of linear perspective. It's composed from a number of different vantage points (as opposed to vanishing points), all very flat to the picture plane. While the overall image is seen from above, the figures and trees appear as cutouts, seeming to float in mid air. Notice the towers on the far left and right are sideways to the picture plane. As "incorrect" as it looks, the painting gives a detailed description of the landscape and structures on the palace grounds.



Third Court of the Topkapi Palace, from the Hunername, 1548. Ottoman miniature painting, Topkapi Museum, Istanbul. CC BY-SA

After nearly five hundred years using linear perspective, western ideas about how space is depicted accurately in two dimensions went through a revolution at the beginning of the 20th century. A young Spanish artist, Pablo Picasso, moved to Paris, then western culture's capital of art, and largely reinvented pictorial space with the invention of Cubism, ushered in dramatically by his painting Les Demoiselles d'Avignon in 1907. He was influenced in part by the chiseled forms, angular surfaces and disproportion of African sculpture (refer back to the *Male Figure* from Cameroon) and mask-like faces of early Iberian artworks. For more information about this important painting, listen to the following question and answer.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: pb.libretexts.org/artappreciation/?p=32

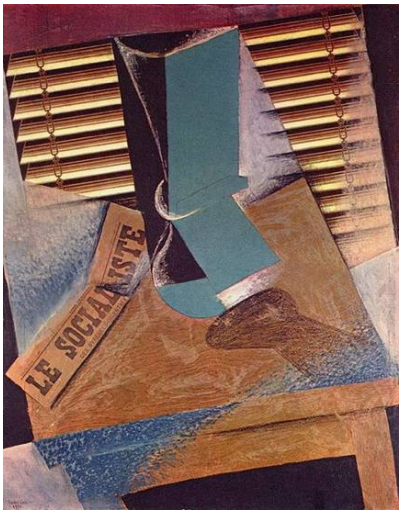
Picasso, his friend Georges Braque and a handful of other artists struggled to develop a new space that relied on, ironically, the flatness of the picture plane to carry and animate traditional subject matter including figures, still life and landscape. Cubist pictures, and eventually sculptures, became amalgams of different points of view, light sources and planar constructs. It was as if they were presenting their subject matter in many ways at once, all the while shifting foreground, middle ground and background so the viewer is not sure where one starts and the other ends. In an interview, the artist explained cubism this way: "The problem is now to pass, to go around the object, and give a plastic expression to the result. All of this is my struggle to break with the two-dimensional aspect*"(from Alexander Liberman, *An Artist in His Studio, 1960, page 113*). Public and critical reaction to cubism was understandably negative, but the artists' experiments with spatial relationships reverberated with others and became – along with new ways of using color – a driving force in the development of a modern art movement that based itself on the flatness of the picture plane. Instead of a window to look into, the flat surface becomes a ground on which to construct formal arrangements of shapes, colors and compositions. For another perspective on this idea, refer back to module one's discussion of 'abstraction'.

You can see the radical changes cubism made in George Braque's landscape *La Roche Guyon* from 1909. The trees, houses, castle and surrounding rocks comprise almost a single complex form, stair-stepping up the canvas to mimic the distant hill at the top, all of it struggling upwards and leaning to the right within a shallow pictorial space.



George Braque, Castle at La Roche Guyon, 1909. Oil on canvas. Stedelijk van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven, Netherlands. Licensed through GNU and Creative Commons

As the cubist style developed, its forms became even flatter. Juan Gris's *The Sunblind* from 1914 splays the still life it represents across the canvas. Collage elements like newspaper reinforce pictorial flatness.



Juan Gris, The Sunblind, 1914. Gouache, collage, chalk, and charcoal on canvas. Tate Gallery, London. Image licensed under GNU Free Documentation License

It's not so difficult to understand the importance of this new idea of space when placed in the context of comparable advances in science surrounding the turn of the nineteenth century. The Wright Brothers took to the air with powered flight in 1903, the same year Marie Curie won the first of two Nobel prizes for her pioneering work in radiation. Sigmund Freud's new ideas on the inner spaces of the mind and its effect on behavior were published in 1902, and Albert Einstein's calculations on relativity, the idea that space and time are intertwined, first appeared in 1905. Each of these discoveries added to human understanding and realligned the way we look at ourselves and our world. Indeed, Picasso, speaking of his struggle to define cubism, said "Even Einstein did not know it either! The condition of discovery is outside ourselves; but the terrifying thing is that despite all this, we can only find what we know" (from *Picasso on Art, A Selection of Views* by Dore Ashton, (Souchere, 1960, page 15).

Three-dimensional space doesn't undergo this fundemental transformation. It remains a visual tug between positive and negative spaces. Sculptors influenced by cubism do, however, develop new forms to fill this space; abstract and non-objective works that chanllenge us to see them on their own terms. Constantin Brancusi, a Romanian sculptor living in Paris, became a leading artist to champion the new forms of modern art. His sculpture Bird in Space is an elegant example of how abstraction and formal arrangement combine to symbolize the new movement. The photograph of Brancusi's studio below gives further evidence of sculpture's debt to cubism and the struggle "to go around the object, to give it plastic expression."



Edward Steichen, Brancusi's studio, 1920. Metropolitan Museum, New York. This photograph is in the public domain.

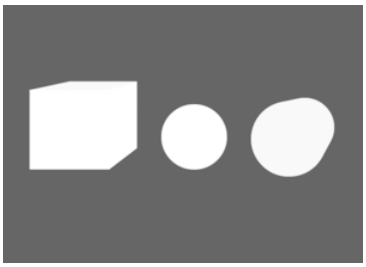
Now that we've established line, shape, and spatial relationships, we can turn our attention to surface qualities and their importance in works of art. Value (or tone), color and texture are the elements used to do this.

Value is the relative lightness or darkness of a shape in relation to another. The value scale, bounded on one end by pure white and on the other by black, and in between a series of progressively darker shades of grey, gives an artist the tools to make these transformations. The value scale below shows the standard variations in tones. Values near the lighter end of the spectrum are termed high-keyed, those on the darker end are low-keyed.

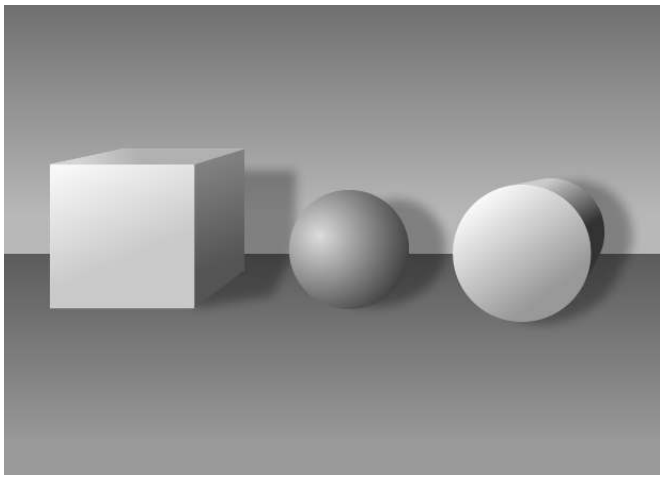


Value Scale, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison, CC BY

In two dimensions, the use of value gives a shape the illusion of mass and lends an entire composition a sense of light and shadow. The two examples below show the effect value has on changing a shape to a form.



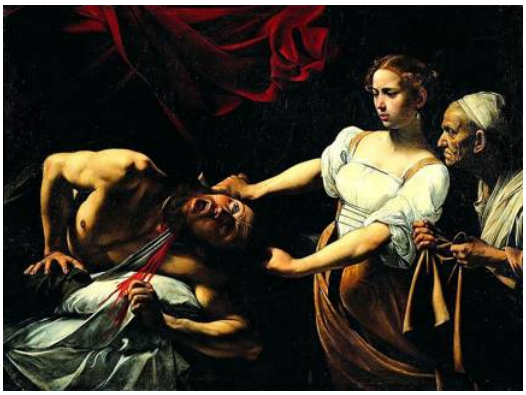
2D Form, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison, CC BY



3D Form, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison, CC BY

This same technique brings to life what begins as a simple line drawing of a young man's head in Michelangelo's Head of a Youth and a Right Hand from 1508. Shading is created with line (refer to our discussion of *line* earlier in this module) or tones created with a pencil. Artists vary the tones by the amount of resistance they use between the pencil and the paper they're drawing on. A drawing pencil's leads vary in hardness, each one giving a different tone than another. Washes of ink or color create values determined by the amount of water the medium is dissolved into.

The use of ***high contrast,*** placing lighter areas of value against much darker ones, creates a dramatic effect, while ***low contrast*** gives more subtle results. These differences in effect are evident in 'Guiditta and Oloferne' by the Italian painter Caravaggio, and Robert Adams' photograph Untitled, Denver from 1970-74. Caravaggio uses a high contrast palette to an already dramatic scene to increase the visual tension for the viewer, while Adams deliberately makes use of low contrast to underscore the drabness of the landscape surrounding the figure on the bicycle.



Caravaggio, Guiditta Decapitates Oloferne, 1598, oil on canvas. National Gallery of Italian Art, Rome. This work is in the public domain

Color

Color is the most complex artistic element because of the combinations and variations inherent in its use. Humans respond to color combinations differently, and artists study and use color in part to give desired direction to their work.

Color is fundamental to many forms of art. Its relevance, use and function in a given work depend on the medium of that work. While some concepts dealing with color are broadly applicable across media, others are not.

The full ***spectrum*** of colors is contained in white light. Humans perceive colors from the light reflected off objects. A red object, for example, looks red because it reflects the red part of the spectrum. It would be a different color under a different light. Color theory first appeared in the 17th century when English mathematician and scientist Sir Isaac Newton discovered that white light could be divided into a spectrum by passing it through a prism.

The study of color in art and design often starts with *color theory*. Color theory splits up colors into three categories: primary, secondary, and tertiary.

The basic tool used is a color wheel, developed by Isaac Newton in 1666. A more complex model known as the color tree, created by Albert Munsell, shows the spectrum made up of sets of tints and shades on connected planes.

There are a number of approaches to organizing colors into meaningful relationships. Most systems differ in structure only.

Traditional Model

Traditional color theory is a qualitative attempt to organize colors and their relationships. It is based on Newton's color wheel, and continues to be the most common system used by artists.



Blue Yellow Red Color Wheel. Released under the GNU Free Documentation License

Traditional color theory uses the same principles as subtractive color mixing (see below) but prefers different primary colors.

- The ***primary*** colors are red, blue, and yellow. You find them equidistant from each other on the color wheel. These are the "elemental" colors; not produced by mixing any other colors, and all other colors are derived from some combination of these three.
- The ***secondary*** colors are orange (mix of red and yellow), green (mix of blue and yellow), and violet (mix of blue and red).
- The***tertiary*** colors are obtained by mixing one primary color and one secondary color. Depending on amount of color used, different hues can be obtained such as red-orange or yellow-green. Neutral colors (browns and grays) can be mixed using the three primary colors together.
- White and black lie outside of these categories. They are used to lighten or darken a color. A lighter color (made by adding white to it) is called a ***tint***, while a darker color (made by adding black) is called a ***shade***.

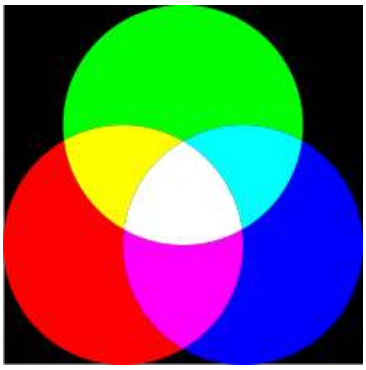
Color Mixing

A more quantifiable approach to color theory is to think about color as the result of light reflecting off a surface. Understood in this way, color can be represented as a ratio of amounts of primary color mixed together.

Additive color theory is used when different colored lights are being ***projected*** on top of each other. Projected media produce color by projecting light onto a reflective surface. Where subtractive mixing creates the impression of color by selectively absorbing part of the spectrum, additive mixing produces color by selective projection of part of the spectrum. Common applications of additive color theory are theater lighting and television screens. RGB color is based on additive color theory.

- The primary colors are red, blue, and green.
- The secondary colors are yellow (mix of red and green), cyan (mix of blue and green), and magenta (mix of blue and red).
- The tertiary colors are obtained by mixing the above colors at different intensities.

White is created by the confluence of the three primary colors, while black represents the absence of all color. The lightness or darkness of a color is determined by the intensity/density of its various parts. For instance: a middle-toned gray could be produced by projecting a red, a blue and a green light at the same point with 50% intensity.

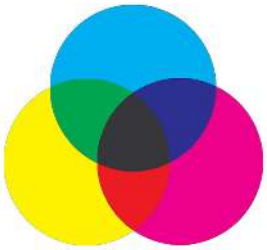


Additive Color Representation. This image is in the public domain.

The primaries are red, green and blue. White is the confluence of all the primary colors; black is the absence of color.

Subtractive color theory (“process color”) is used when a single light source is being ***reflected*** by different colors laid one on top of the other. Color is produced when parts of the external light source’s spectrum are absorbed by the material and not reflected back to the viewer’s eye. For example, a painter brushes blue paint onto a canvas. The chemical composition of the paint allows all of the colors in the spectrum to be absorbed except blue, which is reflected from the paint’s surface. Subtractive color works as the reverse of additive color theory. Common applications of subtractive color theory are used in the visual arts, color printing and processing photographic positives and negatives. The primary colors are red, yellow, and blue.

- The secondary colors are orange, green and violet.
- The tertiary colors are created by mixing a primary with a secondary color.
- Black is mixed using the three primary colors, while white represents the absence of all colors. Note: because of impurities in subtractive color, a true black is impossible to create through the mixture of primaries. Because of this the result is closer to brown. Similar to additive color theory, lightness and darkness of a color is determined by its intensity and density.



Subtractive Color Mixing. Released under the GNU Free Documentation License

The primaries are blue, yellow and red.

Color Attributes

There are many attributes to color. Each one has an effect on how we perceive it.

- **Hue** refers to color itself, but also to the variations of a color.
- **Value** (as discussed previously)refers to the relative lightness or darkness of one color next to another. The value of a color can make a difference in how it is perceived. A color on a dark background will appear lighter, while that same color on a light background will appear darker.
- **Tone** refers to the gradation or subtle changes made to a color when it’s mixed with a gray created by adding two complements (see *Complementary Color* below). You can see various color tones by looking at the color tree mentioned in the paragraph above.
- **Saturation** refers to the purity and intensity of a color. The primaries are the most intense and pure, but diminish as they are mixed to form other colors. The creation of tints and shades also diminish a color’s saturation. Two colors work strongest together when they share the same intensity. This is called equiluminance.

Color Interactions

Beyond creating a mixing hierarchy, color theory also provides tools for understanding how colors work together.

Monochrome

The simplest color interaction is monochrome. This is the use of variations of a single hue. The advantage of using a monochromatic color scheme is that you get a high level of unity throughout the artwork because all the tones relate to one another. See this in Mark Tansey's Derrida Queries de Man from 1990.

Analogous Color

Analogous colors are similar to one another. As their name implies, analogous colors can be found ***next*** to one another on any 12-part color wheel:



Analogous Color, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

You can see the effect of analogous colors in Paul Cezanne's oil painting Auvers Panoromic View

Color Temperature

Colors are perceived to have***temperatures*** associated with them. The color wheel is divided into ***warm*** and ***cool*** colors. Warm colors range from yellow to red, while cool colors range from yellow-green to violet. You can achieve complex results using just a few colors when you pair them in warm and cool sets.



Warm cool color, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Complementary Colors

Complementary colors are found directly ***opposite*** one another on a color wheel. Here are some examples:

- purple and yellow
- green and red
- orange and blue



Complementary Color, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Blue and orange are complements. When placed near each other, complements create a visual tension. This color scheme is desirable when a dramatic effect is needed using only two colors. The painting Untitled by Keith Haring is an example. You can click the painting to create a larger image.

A **split complementary** color scheme uses one color plus the two colors on each side of the first color's complement on the color wheel. Like the use of complements, a split complement creates visual tension but includes the variety of a third color.



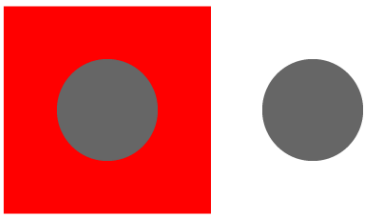
Split Complementary Color, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

Color Subtraction refers to a visual phenomenon where the appearance of one color will lessen its presence in a nearby color. For instance, orange (red + yellow) on a red background will appear more like yellow. Don't confuse color subtraction with the *subtractive color system* mentioned earlier in this module. Color subtraction uses specific hues within a color scheme for a certain visual effect.

Simultaneous Contrast

Neutrals on a colored background will appear tinted toward that color's complement, because the eye attempts to create a balance. (Grey on a red background will appear more greenish, for example.) In other words, the color will shift *away* from the surrounding color. Also, non-dominant colors will appear tinted towards the complement of the dominant color.

Color interaction affect values, as well. Colors appear darker on or near lighter colors, and lighter on or near darker colors. Complementary colors will look more intense on or near each other than they will on or near grays (refer back to the Keith Haring example above to see this effect).



Simultaneous Contrast, 11 July 2012, Creator: Oliver Harrison. CC BY

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3: Principles of Design

The Principles of Design are the organizational tools artists use to arrange and structure the Elements of Art into compelling, cohesive works. In three-dimensional art, these principles—such as balance, unity, variety, rhythm, emphasis, proportion, and scale—play a crucial role in guiding how viewers interact with and move around a piece. Because 3D artworks occupy physical space and can be experienced from multiple perspectives, the Principles of Design help artists control how visual interest and harmony are achieved throughout the form. Whether constructing a freestanding sculpture or assembling an immersive installation, artists rely on these principles to create dynamic, intentional compositions that engage both the senses and the mind. This chapter examines how each principle functions in three-dimensional design and how they can be applied to strengthen the conceptual and aesthetic impact of a work.

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3.1: What are the Principles of Design?

Art As Visual Input

Visual art manifests itself through media, ideas, themes and sheer creative imagination. Yet all of these rely on basic structural principles that, like the elements we've been studying, combine to give voice to artistic expression. Incorporating the principles into your artistic vocabulary not only allows you to objectively describe artworks you may not understand, but contributes in the search for their meaning.

The first way to think about a principle is that it is something that can be repeatedly and dependably done with elements to produce some sort of visual effect in a composition.

The principles are based on sensory responses to visual input: elements APPEAR to have visual weight, movement, etc. The principles help govern what might occur when particular elements are arranged in a particular way. Using a chemistry analogy, the principles are the ways the elements "stick together" to make a "chemical" (in our case, an image). Principles can be confusing. There are at least two very different but correct ways of thinking about principles. On the one hand, a principle can be used to describe an operational cause and effect such as "bright things come forward and dull things recede". On the other hand, a principle can describe a high quality standard to strive for such as "unity is better than chaos" or "variation beats boredom" in a work of art. So, the word "principle" can be used for very different purposes.

Another way to think about a principle is that it is a way to express a value judgment about a composition. Any list of these effects may not be comprehensive, but there are some that are more commonly used (unity, balance, etc). When we say a painting has unity we are making a value judgment. Too much *unity* without *variety* is boring and too much variation without unity is chaotic.

The principles of design help you to carefully plan and organize the elements of art so that you will hold interest and command attention. This is sometimes referred to as *visual impact.*

In any work of art there is a thought process for the arrangement and use of the elements of design. The artist who works with the principles of good composition will create a more interesting piece; it will be arranged to show a pleasing rhythm and movement. The center of interest will be strong and the viewer will not look away, instead, they will be drawn into the work. A good knowledge of composition is essential in producing good artwork. Some artists today like to bend or ignore these rules and by doing so are experimenting with different forms of expression. The following page explore important principles in composition.

Visual Balance

All works of art possess some form of visual balance – a sense of weighted clarity created in a composition. The artist arranges balance to set the dynamics of a composition. A really good example is in the work of Piet Mondrian, whose revolutionary paintings of the early twentieth century used non-objective balance instead of realistic subject matter to generate the visual power in his work. In the examples below you can see that where the white rectangle is placed makes a big difference in how the entire picture plane is activated.

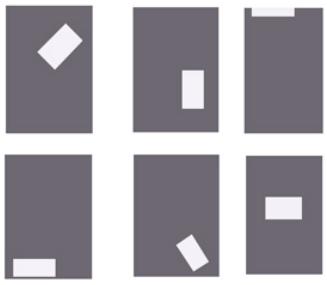


Image by Christopher Gildow. Used with permission.

The example on the top left is weighted toward the top, and the diagonal orientation of the white shape gives the whole area a sense of movement. The top middle example is weighted more toward the bottom, but still maintains a sense that the white shape is floating. On the top right, the white shape is nearly off the picture plane altogether, leaving most of the remaining area visually empty. This arrangement works if you want to convey a feeling of loftiness or simply direct the viewer's eyes to the top of the composition. The lower left example is perhaps the least dynamic: the white shape is resting at the bottom, mimicking the horizontal bottom edge of the ground. The overall sense here is restful, heavy and without any dynamic character. The bottom

middle composition is weighted decidedly toward the bottom right corner, but again, the diagonal orientation of the white shape leaves some sense of movement. Lastly, the lower right example places the white shape directly in the middle on a horizontal axis. This is visually the most stable, but lacks any sense of movement. Refer to these six diagrams when you are determining the visual weight of specific artworks.

There are three basic forms of visual balance:

- Symmetrical
- Asymmetrical
- Radial



Examples of Visual Balance. Left: Symmetrical. Middle: Asymmetrical. Right: Radial. Image by Christopher Gildow. Used with permission.

Symmetrical balance is the most visually stable, and characterized by an exact—or nearly exact—compositional design on either (or both) sides of the horizontal or vertical axis of the picture plane. Symmetrical compositions are usually dominated by a central anchoring element. There are many examples of symmetry in the natural world that reflect an aesthetic dimension. The Moon Jellyfish fits this description; ghostly lit against a black background, but absolute symmetry in its design.



Moon Jellyfish, (detail). Digital image by Luc Viator, licensed by Creative Commons

But symmetry's inherent stability can sometimes preclude a static quality. View the Tibetan scroll painting to see the implied movement of the central figure Vajrakilaya. The visual busyness of the shapes and patterns surrounding the figure are balanced by their compositional symmetry, and the wall of flame behind Vajrakilaya tilts to the right as the figure itself tilts to the left. Tibetan scroll paintings use the symmetry of the figure to symbolize their power and spiritual presence.

Spiritual paintings from other cultures employ this same balance for similar reasons. Sano di Pietro's '*Madonna of Humility*', painted around 1440, is centrally positioned, holding the Christ child and forming a triangular design, her head the apex and her flowing gown making a broad base at the bottom of the picture. Their halos are visually reinforced with the heads of the angels and the arc of the frame.



Sano di Peitro, Madonna of Humility, c.1440, tempera and tooled gold and silver on panel. Brooklyn Museum, New York. Image is in the public domain

The use of symmetry is evident in three-dimensional art, too. A famous example is the *Gateway Arch* in St. Louis, Missouri (below). Commemorating the westward expansion of the United States, its stainless steel frame rises over 600 feet into the air before gently curving back to the ground. Another example is Richard Serra's *Tilted Spheres* (also below). The four massive slabs of steel show a concentric symmetry and take on an organic dimension as they curve around each other, appearing to almost hover above the ground.



Eero Saarinen, Gateway Arch, 1963-65, stainless steel, 630' high. St. Louis, Missouri. Image Licensed through Creative Commons



Richard Serra, Tilted Spheres, 2002 – 04, Cor-ten steel, 14' x 39' x 22'. Pearson International Airport, Toronto, Canada. Image Licensed through Creative Commons

Asymmetry uses compositional elements that are offset from each other, creating a visually unstable balance. Asymmetrical visual balance is the most dynamic because it creates a more complex design construction. A graphic poster from the 1930s shows how offset positioning and strong contrasts can increase the visual effect of the entire composition.



Poster from the Library of Congress archives. Image is in the public domain

Claude Monet's *Still Life with Apples and Grapes* from 1880 (below) uses asymmetry in its design to enliven an otherwise mundane arrangement. First, he sets the whole composition on the diagonal, cutting off the lower left corner with a dark triangle. The arrangement of fruit appears haphazard, but Monet purposely sets most of it on the top half of the canvas to achieve a lighter visual weight. He balances the darker basket of fruit with the white of the tablecloth, even placing a few smaller apples at the lower right to complete the composition.

Monet and other Impressionist painters were influenced by Japanese woodcut prints, whose flat spatial areas and graphic color appealed to the artist's sense of design.



Claude Monet, Still Life with Apples and Grapes, 1880, oil on canvas. The Art Institute of Chicago. Licensed under Creative Commons

One of the best-known Japanese print artists is Ando Hiroshige. You can see the design strength of asymmetry in his woodcut *Shinagawa on the Tokaido* (below), one of a series of works that explores the landscape around the Takaido road. You can view many of his works through the hyperlink above.



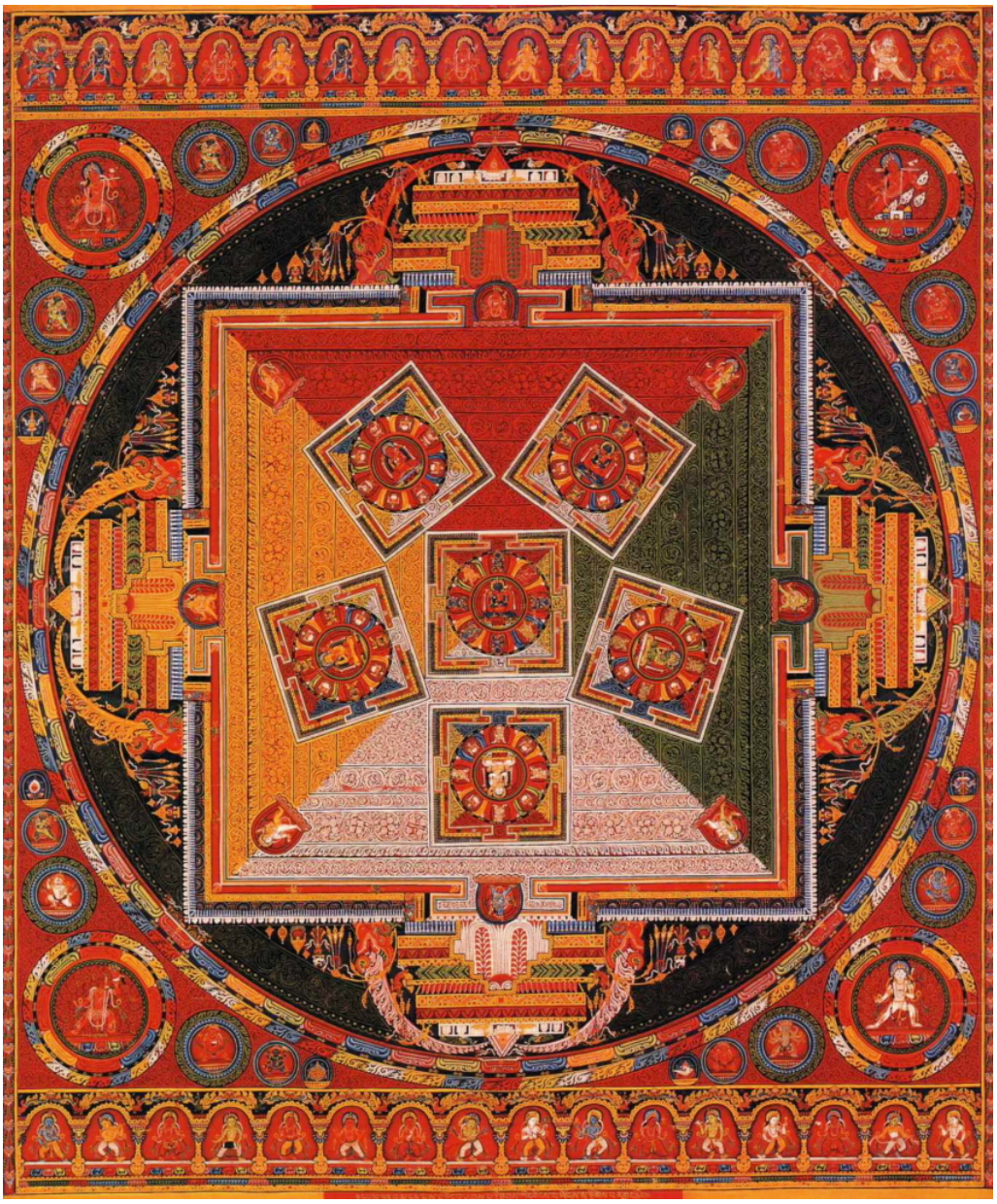
Hiroshige, Shinagawa on the Tokaido, ukiyo-e print, after 1832. Licensed under Creative Commons

In Henry Moore's *Reclining Figure* the organic form of the abstracted figure, strong lighting and precarious balance obtained through asymmetry make the sculpture a powerful example in three-dimensions.



Henry Moore, Reclining Figure, 1951. Painted bronze. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. Photo by Andrew Dunn and licensed under Creative Commons

Radial balance suggests movement from the center of a composition towards the outer edge—or vise versa. Many times radial balance is another form of symmetry, offering stability and a point of focus at the center of the composition. Buddhist mandala paintings offer this kind of balance almost exclusively. Similar to the scroll painting we viewed previously, the image radiates outward from a central spirit figure. In the example below there are six of these figures forming a star shape in the middle. Here we have absolute symmetry in the composition, yet a feeling of movement is generated by the concentric circles within a rectangular format.



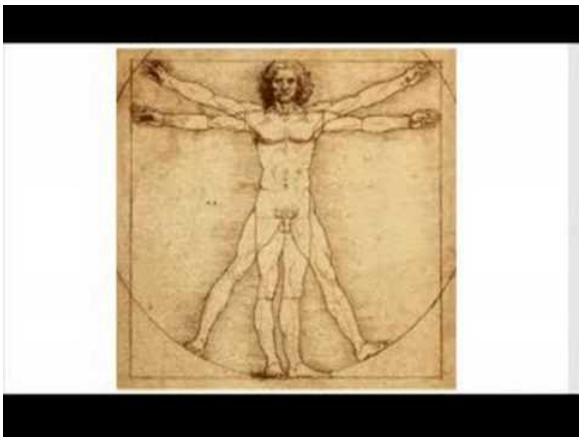
Tibetan Mandala of the Six Chakravartins, c. 1429-46. Central Tibet (Ngor Monestary). Image is in the public domain

Raphael's painting of Galatea, a sea nymph in Greek mythology, incorporates a double set of radial designs into one composition. The first is the swirl of figures at the bottom of the painting, the second being the four cherubs circulating at the top. The entire work is a current of figures, limbs and implied motion. Notice too the stabilizing classic triangle formed with Galatea's head at the apex and the other figures' positions inclined towards her. The cherub outstretched horizontally along the bottom of the composition completes the second circle.



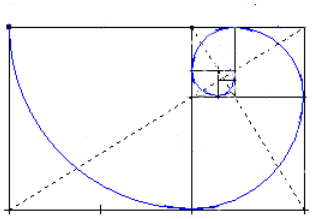
Raphael, Galatea, fresco, 1512. Villa Farnesina, Rome. Work is in the public domain

Within this discussion of visual balance, there is a relationship between the natural generation of organic systems and their ultimate form. This relationship is mathematical as well as aesthetic, and is expressed as the Golden Ratio:



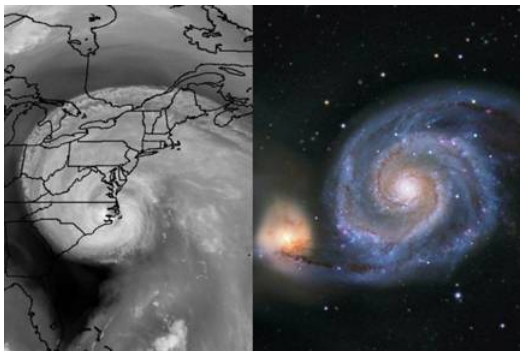
A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: pb.libretexts.org/artappreciation/?p=38

Here is an example of the golden ratio in the form of a rectangle and the enclosed spiral generated by the ratios:



The golden ratio. Image from Wikipedia Commons and licensed through Creative Commons

The natural world expresses radial balance, manifest through the golden ratio, in many of its structures, from galaxies to tree rings and waves generated from dropping a stone on the water's surface. You can see this organic radial structure in some natural systems by comparing the satellite image of hurricane Isabel and a telescopic image of spiral galaxy M51 below.



Images by the National Weather service and NASA. Images are in the public domain.

A snail shell, unbeknownst to its inhabitant, is formed by this same universal ratio, and, in this case, takes on the green tint of its surroundings.



Image by Christopher Gildow. Used with permission.

Environmental artist Robert Smithson created *Spiral Jetty*, an earthwork of rock and soil, in 1970. The jetty extends nearly 1500 feet into the Great Salt Lake in Utah as a symbol of the interconnectedness of our selves to the rest of the natural world.



Robert Smithson, Spiral Jetty, 1970. Image by Soren Harward, CC BY-SA

Repetition

Repetition is the use of two or more like elements or forms within a composition. The systematic arrangement of a repeated shapes or forms creates **pattern.**

Patterns create **rhythm**, the lyric or syncopated visual effect that helps carry the viewer, and the artist's idea, throughout the work. A simple but stunning visual pattern, created in this photograph of an orchard by Jim Wilson for the New York Times, combines color, shape and direction into a rhythmic flow from left to right. Setting the composition on a diagonal increases the feeling of movement and drama.

The traditional art of Australian aboriginal culture uses repetition and pattern almost exclusively both as decoration and to give symbolic meaning to images. The *coolamon*, or carrying vessel pictured below, is made of tree bark and painted with stylized patterns of colored dots indicating paths, landscapes or animals. You can see how fairly simple patterns create rhythmic undulations across the surface of the work. The design on this particular piece indicates it was probably made for ceremonial use. We'll explore aboriginal works in more depth in the 'Other Worlds' module.



Australian aboriginal softwood coolamon with acrylic paint design. Licensed under Creative Commons

Rhythmic cadences take complex visual form when subordinated by others. Elements of line and shape coalesce into a formal matrix that supports the leaping salmon in Alfredo Arreguin's '*Malila Diptych'*. Abstract arches and spirals of water reverberate in the scales, eyes and gills of the fish. Arreguin creates two rhythmic beats here, that of the water flowing downstream to the left and the fish gracefully jumping against it on their way upstream.



Alfredo Arreguin, Malila Diptych, 2003 (detail). Washington State Arts Commission. Digital Image by Christopher Gildow. Licensed under Creative Commons.

The textile medium is well suited to incorporate pattern into art. The warp and weft of the yarns create natural patterns that are manipulated through position, color and size by the weaver. The Tlingit culture of coastal British Columbia produce spectacular ceremonial blankets distinguished by graphic patterns and rhythms in stylized animal forms separated by a hierarchy of geometric shapes. The symmetry and high contrast of the design is stunning in its effect.

Scale and Proportion

Scale and proportion show the relative size of one form in relation to another. Scalar relationships are often used to create illusions of depth on a two-dimensional surface, the larger form being in front of the smaller one. The scale of an object can provide a focal point or emphasis in an image. In Winslow Homer's watercolor *A Good Shot, Adirondacks* the deer is centered in the foreground and highlighted to assure its place of importance in the composition. In comparison, there is a small puff of white smoke from a rifle in the left center background, the only indicator of the hunter's position. Click the image for a larger view.

Scale and proportion are incremental in nature. Works of art don't always rely on big differences in scale to make a strong visual impact. A good example of this is Michelangelo's sculptural masterpiece *Pieta* from 1499 (below). Here Mary cradles her dead son, the two figures forming a stable triangular composition. Michelangelo sculpts Mary to a slightly larger scale than the dead Christ to give the central figure more significance, both visually and psychologically.



Michelangelo's Pieta, 1499, marble. St. Peter's Basilica, Rome. Licensed under GNU Free Documentation License and Creative Commons

When scale and proportion *are* greatly increased the results can be impressive, giving a work commanding space or fantastic implications. Rene Magritte's painting *Personal Values* constructs a room with objects whose proportions are so out of whack that it becomes an ironic play on how we view everyday items in our lives.

American sculptor Claes Oldenburg and his wife Coosje van Bruggen create works of common objects at enormous scales. Their *Stake Hitch* reaches a total height of more than 53 feet and links two floors of the Dallas Museum of Art. As big as it is, the work retains a comic and playful character, in part because of its gigantic size.

Emphasis

Emphasis—the area of primary visual importance—can be attained in a number of ways. We've just seen how it can be a function of differences in scale. Emphasis can also be obtained by isolating an area or specific subject matter through its location or color, value and texture. Main emphasis in a composition is usually supported by areas of lesser importance, a hierarchy within an artwork that's activated and sustained at different levels.

Like other artistic principles, emphasis can be expanded to include the main *idea* contained in a work of art. Let's look at the following work to explore this.

We can clearly determine the figure in the white shirt as the main emphasis in Francisco de Goya's painting *The Third of May, 1808* below. Even though his location is left of center, a candle lantern in front of him acts as a spotlight, and his dramatic stance reinforces his relative isolation from the rest of the crowd. Moreover, the soldiers with their aimed rifles create an implied line between them selves and the figure. There is a rhythm created by all the figures' heads—roughly all at the same level throughout the painting—that is continued in the soldiers' legs and scabbards to the lower right. Goya counters the horizontal emphasis by including the distant church and its vertical towers in the background.

In terms of the idea, Goya's narrative painting gives witness to the summary execution of Spanish resistance fighters by Napoleon's armies on the night of May 3, 1808. He poses the figure in the white shirt to imply a crucifixion as he faces his own death, and his compatriots surrounding him either clutch their faces in disbelief or stand stoically with him, looking their executioners in the eyes. While the carnage takes place in front of us, the church stands dark and silent in the distance. The genius of Goya is his ability to direct the narrative content by the emphasis he places in his composition.



Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, The Third of May, 1808, 1814. Oil on canvas. The Prado Museum, Madrid. This image is in the public domain

A second example showing emphasis is seen in *Landscape with Pheasants*, a silk tapestry from nineteenth-century China. Here the main focus is obtained in a couple of different ways. First, the pair of birds are woven in *colored* silk, setting them apart visually from the gray landscape they inhabit. Secondly, their placement at the top of the outcrop of land allows them to stand out against the light background, their tail feathers mimicked by the nearby leaves. The convoluted treatment of the rocky outcrop keeps it in competition with the pheasants as a focal point, but in the end the pair of birds' color wins out.

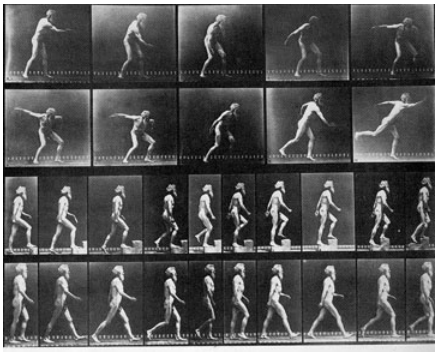
A final example on emphasis, taken from *The Art of Burkina Faso* by Christopher D. Roy, University of Iowa, covers both design features and the idea behind the art. Many world cultures include artworks in ceremony and ritual. African *Bwa* Masks are large, graphically painted in black and white and usually attached to fiber costumes that cover the head. They depict mythic characters and animals or are abstract and have a stylized face with a tall, rectangular wooden plank attached to the top.* In any manifestation, the mask and the dance for which they are worn are inseparable. They become part of a community outpouring of cultural expression and emotion.

Time and Motion

One of the problems artists face in creating static (singular, fixed images) is how to imbue them with a sense of **time and motion**. Some traditional solutions to this problem employ the use of spatial relationships, especially perspective and atmospheric perspective. Scale and proportion can also be employed to show the passage of time or the illusion of depth and movement. For example, as something recedes into the background, it becomes smaller in scale and lighter in value. Also, the same figure (or other form) repeated in different places within the same image gives the effect of movement and the passage of time.

An early example of this is in the carved sculpture of Kuya Shonin. The Buddhist monk leans forward, his cloak seeming to move with the breeze of his steps. The figure is remarkably realistic in style, his head lifted slightly and his mouth open. Six small figures emerge from his mouth, visual symbols of the chant he utters.

Visual experiments in movement were first produced in the middle of the 19th century. Photographer Eadweard Muybridge snapped black and white sequences of figures and animals walking, running and jumping, then placing them side-by-side to examine the mechanics and rhythms created by each action.



Eadweard Muybridge, sequences of himself throwing a disc, using a step and walking. Licensed through Creative Commons

In the modern era, the rise of cubism (please refer back to our study of 'space' in module 3) and subsequent related styles in modern painting and sculpture had a major effect on how static works of art depict time and movement. These new developments in form came about, in part, through the cubist's initial exploration of how to depict an object and the space around it by representing it from multiple viewpoints, incorporating all of them into a single image.

Marcel Duchamp's painting Nude Descending a Staircase from 1912 formally concentrates Muybridge's idea into a single image. The figure is abstract, a result of Duchamp's influence by cubism, but gives the viewer a definite feeling of movement from left to right. This work was exhibited at The Armory Show in New York City in 1913. The show was the first to exhibit modern art from the United States and Europe at an American venue on such a large scale. Controversial and fantastic, the Armory show became a symbol for the emerging modern art movement. Duchamp's painting is representative of the new ideas brought forth in the exhibition.

In three dimensions the effect of movement is achieved by imbuing the subject matter with a dynamic pose or gesture (recall that the use of diagonals in a composition helps create a sense of movement). Gian Lorenzo Bernini's sculpture of David from 1623 is a study of coiled visual tension and movement. The artist shows us the figure of David with furrowed brow, even biting his lip in concentration as he eyes Goliath and prepares to release the rock from his sling.

The temporal arts of film, video and digital projection by their definition show movement and the passage of time. In all of these mediums we watch as a narrative unfolds before our eyes. Film is essentially thousands of static images divided onto one long roll of film that is passed through a lens at a certain speed. From this apparatus comes the term *movies*.

Video uses magnetic tape to achieve the same effect, and digital media streams millions of electronically pixilated images across the screen. An example is seen in the work of Swedish Artist Pipilotti Rist. Her large-scale digital work Pour Your Body Out is fluid, colorful and absolutely absorbing as it unfolds across the walls.

Unity and Variety

Ultimately, a work of art is the strongest when it expresses an overall **unity** in composition and form, a visual sense that all the parts fit together; that the whole is greater than its parts. This same sense of unity is projected to encompass the idea and meaning of the work too. This visual and conceptual unity is sublimated by the **variety** of elements and principles used to create it. We can think of this in terms of a musical orchestra and its conductor: directing many different instruments, sounds and feelings into a single comprehendible symphony of sound. This is where the objective functions of line, color, pattern, scale and all the other artistic elements and principles yield to a more subjective view of the entire work, and from that an appreciation of the aesthetics and meaning it resonates.

We can view Eva Isaksen's work *Orange Light* below to see how unity and variety work together.



Eva Isaksen, Orange Light, 2010. Print and collage on canvas. 40" x 60." Permission of the artist

Isaksen makes use of nearly every element and principle including shallow space, a range of values, colors and textures, asymmetrical balance and different areas of emphasis. The unity of her composition stays strong by keeping the various parts in check against each other and the space they inhabit. In the end the viewer is caught up in a mysterious world of organic forms that float across the surface like seeds being caught by a summer breeze.

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4: Art Materials and Methods

Art Materials and Methods

Art materials and methods are anything an artist uses to create art in any combination. Materials and methods also can be defined as the process of manufacturing or fabrication of a piece of art such as bronze that need to be melted and poured into a mold to be a finished piece of art. The stone must be quarried, transported, and carved before it can be considered a piece of art. Cotton will be picked, cleaned, wound into thread, dyed, and woven into the fabric before a quilter creates a quilt. Mined minerals are ground, mixed, and put into tubes before an artist creates a painting. Art materials are the tools of an artist. This list is by no means complete; however, it does cover most of the art in this textbook.

Aquatint: Aquatint is used in intaglio printmaking to create marks on the metal plate. The plate and paper press together to create a transfer of ink to paper. An artist uses mordant to etch a plate design, and then rosin is used to create a tonal effect. The tonal variation on the plate is the desired outcome.

Atmospheric perspective: The effect of perspective and distance occurs when the mountains in the background are painted a lighter and grayer color than the mountains in the foreground, a common technique by landscape painters.

Bas-relief: A French word meaning to carve in "low relief" in stone, wood, or rock, which gives the carving a three-dimensional look. The word relief is derived from a Latin verb "relevo" meaning to raise. A sculpture looks like it emerges above the background. However, the artist cuts away the background, adding different degrees of depth to determine how far the sculpted section stands out from the background.

Brick: Brick originated in Mesopotamia around 7500 BCE and is still used today in many shapes, made by mixing earth and water. In other civilizations, bricks were made from mud, loam, sand, and water and were sun-dried to harden.

Brush and ink: Brushes were made from many materials including bamboo, wood, bone, feathers with metal tips to control the flow of ink. Iron gall ink is purple-black and made from tannic acids and iron salts from various vegetables. Dip pens were used to transport the ink from the bottle to the paper for drawing.

Camera: The camera is a visual contraption to record images. The word camera comes from the Latin word 'camera obscura,' which means 'dark chamber.'

Carving: Carvers use a tool to shape material by cutting or scraping sections away from the original form making sculptures of wood, stone, clay, bone, ivory, or any suitable material. Several types of tools are used to carve, and different civilizations developed different tools depending on what natural resources are available.

Chalk: Chalk is very similar to pastels, but instead of grinding the rock into a fine powder, the chalk is in its natural state. Chalk is limestone made about 100 million years ago when it was initially under the sea. Today, chalk is mined from the earth, and the chalk is compacted into cylinder shapes familiar in classrooms today.

Charcoal: Charcoal is a common element throughout human life. Charcoal is the byproduct of burning wood.

Chiaroscuro: Chiaroscuro is the Italian word for "light-dark" and is the use of sharp contrasts between dark and light. The bold contrasts produced a dramatic composition and were used extensively by the Renaissance and Baroque artists. Dark colors made their paintings come to life, and the colors made shadows giving depth to the paintings. Dark colors made their paintings come to life, and the colors made shadows giving depth to the paintings. The deep colors contained more than just black, and the artists combined other colors with black depending on the desired outcomes.

Clay: Over millions of years, the earth's crust has been melted, moved, squeezed, cracked, pounded by weather to create a layer of topsoil with various deposits of rock, and clay. The rivers near the first civilizations cut through the topsoil, exposing the layers of clay and providing easy access to the raw product. The fine particles of silt in the clay give the material its plasticity, and when water is added, it is a cohesive product. Silt consists of feldspar (the most abundant mineral on earth), silica, and alkalis like iron which give clay its reddish-brown color.



Collage: From the French word coller "to glue," collage is an art technique of assembling different pieces of art into one cohesive art piece. The most common pieces are newspapers, magazines, paint, photographs, and found objects which are glued down to a piece of paper or canvas. Collage was invented right after the invention of paper in China around 300 BCE.

Composition: In the visual arts, composition refers to the placement of visual elements in a painting or work of art. It also denotes the organization of people, vignettes, and lighting. The composition is essential whether the artist is arranging people, fruit, or the view of a landscape.

Concrete: The use of lightweight concrete has been used for centuries in construction; however, in the last 100 years, it has become more reliable and predictable. Concrete is a mixture of lightweight coarse aggregate with fine aggregates like shale, clay, or slate. The advantages of the newer lightweight concrete include the reduction of load for faster building rates, longer-lasting, and is an excellent thermal protector compared to brick.

Cotton: has been around since 4500 BCE and is used for clothing or weaving. The cotton plant provides a cellulose thread washed and dyed to weave into cotton material. It does not stretch, making it a very durable fabric for clothes.

Drawing: Drawing is the foundation of all art. Drawing is intuitive and part of the function of our brains used to apply marks to a surface. Most people have drawn sometime in their lives, whether in school or at home. Drawing is a simple exercise to convey a thought or share an experience with another person. Drawing can also be challenging and complex, and only with time and practice could one get better.

En Plein Air: A French expression for artists painting out in the open air, also called Peinture Sur le motif, 'painting what the eyes see.'

Foreshortening: The use of foreshortening is a technique to create perspective by exaggerating the part of an object closer to the viewer.

Frescos: Fresco painting is an ancient painting technique created by troweling wet lime plaster on a wall or ceiling. When the plaster dries, the painting becomes permanent and will last until the plaster is damaged. The plaster is painted with a scene after it dries.

Function: When creating architectural drawings, a basic rule of design states form follows function. A visual principle for architecture designates the shape of the building or structure should be principally based upon its planned purpose. To create houses, villages, or the city layout, builders relied on lines, whether straight, angled, curved, or connected, and those planning the city generally used a grid system layout when planning settlements. Architects formulate ideas and define the concepts of the new buildings rendering the multiple layers of a building in three-dimensional concepts scratched in the dirt, written on paper, or today with a computer.

Gesso: Traditionally, gesso was made from a base of white pigment and the addition of chalk and a binder. The gesso was used to prepare the base on wood panels or canvas before the artist applied paint. Modern gesso uses acrylic polymers and latex along with

pigments, giving the gesso more flexibility when it is applied.

Glass: Silica is the most common component in glass, an amorphous solid material, also known as sand, and when heated is transparent even with the addition of color. Glass can be floated in a flat frame to make a sheet of glass or blown. Glass blowing has been around for 3,000 years and is the art method of melting glass on the end of a long metal tube and blowing through the tube, causing the glass to expand.

Harmony: Scale is the relationship between the piece of art and its occurrence in the space. It can be significantly larger than life or smaller than life. Proportion is the relative size of the art and the harmony found in the piece.

Jade: The mineral jade is a metamorphic rock made up of different silicates, either nephrite made from a silicate combination of magnesium and calcium or jadeite, also a silicate made from sodium and aluminum.

Linear perspective: A set of parallel lines that recede into the horizon appearing to move closer and closer until they touch. Linear perspective can produce an illusion of three-dimensional space on a piece of paper or painting.

Linen: is made from flax plant fibers and is known around the world for its absorbency and ability to stay cooler in hot weather. It is also the oldest cultivated plant in the world. The durable flax fibers are woven into the most supple, fine, and highly sought-after material ever manufactured.

Lithography: A Greek word meaning "stone" and "writing." Lithography is a print of text or pictures from an etched stone or metal plate and is based on the principle that oil and water do not mix. Using a grease pen, the artist draws directly on the stone, adding acid to etch the unprotected parts of the design into the stone. Mixed ink is spread on the damp stone, and the water is attracted to the non-etched part of the stone, the ink is attracted to the etched portion. The stone and paper are pressed together, and the image is transferred to the paper.



Marble: Marble is formed when limestone is changed by heat and pressure and recrystallizes into a light-colored rock, frequently white. Marble usually is dolomite or calcite in origin and is a combination of recrystallized carbonate elements through heat, compression, or pressure to transform from one type of rock into harder rock. Impurities in the limestone cause the colorful markings. Marble is found in extensive deposits, generally hundreds of feet deep across a mountain. People have mined marble for hundreds of years in mines or open quarries and used the marble in buildings and sculptures.

Marble process: Marble is a metamorphic rock that used to be limestone. The marble usually is dolomite or calcite in origin and is a combination of recrystallized carbonate elements through heat, compression, or pressure to transform from one type of rock into harder rock. Marble was soft enough to carve and a favorite material for sculptors. Marble is mined from quarries and used to create statues with a hammer and chisel to remove unwanted material to expose the figure as it emerges from the marble.

Mass: The mass is the three-dimensional volume of a piece of artwork. It is the volume and density, which give the art a perceived weight. One principle of architecture and a requirement for builders is the concept of the resistance of gravity and how to use

natural materials in any culture to construct a building. Isaac Newton showed how gravity works as a force, and Albert Einstein theorized gravity is a curvature of space-time; however, the ancient civilizations did not have that information.

Metal casting process: The most common form of casting metal is the lost wax process and dates back to 4000 BCE. The casting of a bronze statue can be a complicated process; however, many sculptures can be made from one mold. Bronze is perhaps the most popular metal for casting sculpture. Typically, bronze is 10% tin, and 90% copper heated, mixed, and poured into molds. The early civilizations discovered bronze tools and weapons were more effective than Stone Age tools, leading to inventions advancing civilizations.

Modeling process: Modeling clay is any of a group of malleable substances such as plastic or clay, to build a sculpture. Modeling is an additive method as opposed to carving, and the artist adds material to the sculpture.

Mosaic: Mosaics are crafted by creating images using small pieces of colored tile, stone, or glass. The mosaics are used on walls, ceilings, and even floors as they are durable, lasting for centuries. Artists create mosaics by gluing small pieces of glass or stone to a wall and when it dries in place, spreading grout over the top, sealing the mosaics in place.

Paint: Paint is a combination of a binder and color, mixed to form a liquid drying as a solid. Various types of paint were invented throughout the centuries, including oil, acrylic, and watercolor, in addition to the traditional paints of early civilizations. Paint can also be contained in pressurized cans, released when the valve is pushed down, releasing a fine mist of paint.

Paper: Paper was invented in ancient China but did not become popular in Europe until the 14th century. Paper made from linen rags left to rot in large vats of water. They stamped until the linen became pulp, poured into molds, and left to dry. The results were large pieces of paper suitable to use in the newly invented printing press. Paper was also inexpensive to produce and was a way to create information for more people than the expensive vellum.

Pastels: A pastel is a finely ground powdered pigment mixed with some type of binder. Modern pastels invented in the 17th century were manufactured by machines yielding a standard product.

Perspective and Depth: An artist who paints landscapes on a two-dimensional piece of wood or panel uses the illusion of depth, a three-dimensional feeling, and the sense of reality, bringing the viewer into the scene.

Photography: Photography is the art of capturing a picture and producing a photograph from the picture. Photography captures light in a moment of time, recording the lights produced by an image on a highly sensitive material. Photographic plates were used to capture images before film was invented. The glass had an emulsion of sensitive silver salts in a thin layer. When the light hit the plate, it captured the image on the glass. Used widely for professionals seeking details, plates did not distort the image as the film could.

Photomontage: A photomontage is a group of photos made by cutting up photos and gluing them to a piece of paper, or the montage can be made in a digital photo program, like Adobe Photoshop. The montage can look like a realistic, seamless photo or be an abstract composition.

Pointillism: Pointillism is a form of painting using tiny dots instead of brush strokes. Pointillism is applied in small dots of pure color by juxtaposing complementary colors directly on the canvas, combining through the eye of the viewer to form an image.

Silk: is a fiber from the cocoon of a silkworm, which is on a diet of mulberry leaves and then spins a cocoon. The cocoon is washed in hot water, which kills the silkworm leaving a thin prism-like structure called silk thread. Rewashed and spun into silk thread and dyed thousands of colors. The thread ships on the Silk Road around Asia and Europe.

Silk Screening: Silk screening is a process of printing using a silk mesh in a wooden frame to transfer an image onto another surface, like a tee-shirt.

Sketching: Sketching is a freehand drawing representing what the artist is seeing, but not necessarily the finished work.



Stone: Stones are solid pieces of different types of solid mineral matter used for building structures. Stones are readily found throughout the planet, and many civilizations still use stone for construction. Limestone is a sedimentary rock primarily composed of calcite and aragonite and usually has skeletal pieces of marine organisms. Buildings were designed and engineered to accommodate corners, supports, open spaces, columns, roofs, height, width, all dependent on the variety of stones available. Quarry marks in surviving structures reveal how most people used wooden wedges soaked in water to split the stone on its natural fault lines. Stone lasts a long time, and some of the only surviving parts of civilization are the stone sculptures.

Terracotta: Terracotta means "baked earth" in Italian and is used to describe any type of earthenware that is clay-based.

Vellum: Vellum comes from the Latin word "vitulinum," meaning "made from the calf." They used calfskin vellum to produce books or scrolls. Vellum is smooth, durable, and usually white in color, an excellent medium to write on.

Volume: The volume of artwork can also have many meanings, especially if you are comparing a 2-dimensional painting to a 3-dimensional vessel. Volume usually applies to 3-dimensional work and denotes the amount of space it contains. A vessel will usually have the same volume for a vessel of like kind and size and may occupy the same amount of shelf space yet can still have space around it.

Weaving: Weaving is the art of textile production when two yarns are woven at a right angle to each other, producing some type of fabric or cloth. The warp is the yarn attached to the loom, and the weft is the yarn woven through the alternating warp yarns to create a pattern.

Welding: Welding is a sculptural fabrication process joining metal materials with solder and heat. Different sources of fuel can be used for welding, including gas, electricity, and laser. Forge welding has been used for thousands of years by blacksmiths to join iron and steel pieces together.

Wool: is a fiber from shearing sheep, llamas, or yak and woven into clothing that retains its warmth even when wet. The coats of the animals are sheared off, washed, and spun into yarn, which is one of the warmest fabrics even when wet. The wool is dyed and usually woven on large looms.

3-d drawings: Three-dimensional drawings usually represent a building, shape, or object that has more than one dimension

Art appreciation is a journey about learning, the discovery of cultures, and their art, which has survived after they have abandoned long-ago settlements. Art is a form of creative human expression, lasting longer than cultures, buildings, government, or religion and providing a window into the past. Art is a tangible element of a bygone culture we can hold today, even though it is 30,000 years old, a small remnant of past life.

We study art to learn how to be responsible for human cultural art and to accept the diversity of people and their lifestyles. Looking at the past, we can see the influence of civilizations and time on culture and art today. For example, silk was produced and woven in China, but how long did it take to spread across Asia and into Europe? The Silk Road was a commercial enterprise supporting the transportation and selling of art for thousands of miles. Today, the internet is our influence, and we have access to millions of products on our computers. Research is faster and travels in light seconds, letting us see the rest of the world and their art, providing a way to learn and appreciate art and not just pass by with a preconceived judgment. When you understand the culture, you can understand the art, it applies to cave art, and it still pertains today in our technological culture.

JUST LOOK!

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4.1: Three-Dimensional Techniques

Distinguish between additive and subtractive sculpture techniques

Learning Activities

The learning activities for this section include:

- Reading: Types of Sculpture and Other Three-Dimensional Media
- Reading: Methods
- Reading: Installation Art

Take time to review and reflect on this activity in order to improve your performance on the assessment for this section.

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4.1.1: Reading- Types of Sculpture and Other Three-Dimensional Media

Sculpture is any artwork made by the manipulation of materials resulting in a three-dimensional object. The sculpted figure of the Venus of Berekhat Ram, discovered in the Middle East in 1981, dates to 230,000 years BCE. It is the oldest example of artwork known. The crudely carved stone figure will fit in the palm of your hand. Its name derives from the similarity in form with so-called female fertility figures found throughout Europe, some of which date to 25,000 years ago. For example, the form of the *Venus of Willendorf* below shows remarkable skill in its carving, including arms draped over exaggerated breasts, an extended abdomen and elaborate patterning on the head, indicating either a braided hairstyle or type of woven cap. Just as remarkable, the figure has no facial detail to indicate identity. The meaning behind these figures is difficult to put into context because of the lack of any written record about them or other supporting materials.



Venus of Willendorf, c.25,000 BCE. Natural History Museum, Vienna. Image in the public domain

These earliest images are indicative of most of the cultural record in sculpture for thousands of years; singular figurative objects made within an iconographic context of myth, ritual or ceremony. It's not until the Old Kingdom period of Egyptian sculpture, between 3100 and 2180 BCE, that we start to see sculpture that reflects a resemblance of specific figures.

Sculpture can be **freestanding**, or self-supported, where the viewer can walk completely around the work to see it from all sides, or created in **relief,**where the primary form's surface is raised above the surrounding material, such as the image on a coin. **Bas-relief** refers to a shallow extension of the image from its surroundings, **high relief** is where the most prominent elements of the composition are undercut and rendered at more than half in the round against the background. Rich, animated bas-relief sculpture exists at the Banteay Srei temple near Angor Wat, Cambodia. Here humans and mythic figures combine in depictions from ancient Hindu stories.



Bas-relief sculpture at the temple Banteay Srei, Angor, Cambodia. Tenth century. Sandstone. Image in the public domain.

The Shaw Memorial combines freestanding, bas-, and high-relief elements in one masterful sculpture. The work memorializes Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the Massachusetts Fifty-fourth regiment, the first African American infantry unit to fight for the north in the Civil War.

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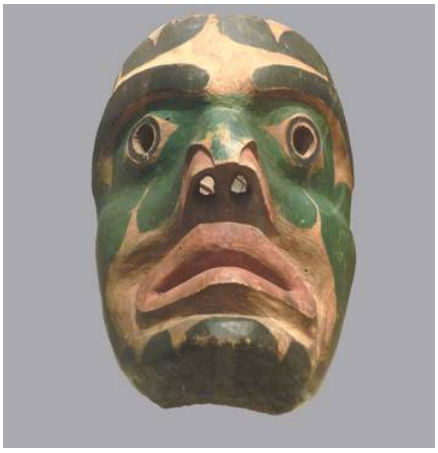
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4.1.2: Reading- Methods

1. Carving uses the subtractive process to cut away areas from a larger mass, and is the oldest method used for three-dimensional work. Traditionally stone and wood were the most common materials because they were readily available and extremely durable. Contemporary materials include foam, plastics and glass. Using chisels and other sharp tools, artists carve away material until the ultimate form of the work is achieved.

A beautiful example of the carving process is seen in the *Water and Moon* Bodhisattva from tenth-century China. The Bodhisattva, a Buddhist figure who has attained enlightenment but decides to stay on earth to teach others, is exquisitely carved and painted. The figure is almost eight feet high, seated in an elegant pose on a lotus bloom, relaxed, staring straight ahead with a calm, benevolent look. The extended right arm and raised knee create a stable triangular composition. The sculptor carves the left arm to simulate muscle tension inherent when it supports the weight of the body.

In another example, you can see the high degree of relief carved from an original cedar wood block in the *Earthquake Mask* from the Pacific Northwest Coast Kwakwaka' wakw culture. It's extraordinary for masks to personify a natural event. This and other mythic figure masks are used in ritual and ceremony dances. The broad areas of paint give a heightened sense of character to this mask.



Earthquake Mask, 9" x 7", early twentieth century. Kwakwaka' wakw culture, North American Pacific Coast. Burke Museum, University of Washington, Seattle. Used by permission.

Wood sculptures by contemporary artist Ursula von Rydingsvard are carved, glued and even burned. Many are massive, rough vessel forms that carry the visual evidence of their creation.

Michelangelo's masterpiece statue of *David* from 1501 is carved and sanded to an idealized form that the artist releases from the massive block, a testament to human aesthetic brilliance.



Michelangelo, David, 1501, marble, 17 feet high. Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence. Image in

the public domain

2. Casting: The additive method of casting has been in use for more than five thousand years. It's a manufacturing process by which a liquid material is usually poured into a mold, which contains a hollow cavity of the desired shape, and then allowed to solidify. One traditional method of bronze casting frequently used today is the lost wax process. Casting materials are usually metals but can be various cold-setting materials that cure after mixing two or more components together; examples are epoxy, concrete, plaster, and clay. Casting is most often used for making complex shapes that would be otherwise difficult or uneconomical to make by other methods. It's a labor-intensive process that allows for the creation of multiples from an original object (similar to the medium of printmaking), each of which is extremely durable and exactly like its predecessor. A mold is usually destroyed after the desired number of castings has been made. Traditionally, bronze statues were placed atop pedestals to signify the importance of the figure depicted. A statue of William Seward (below), the U. S. Secretary of State under Abraham Lincoln and who negotiated the purchase of the Alaska territories, is set nearly eight feet high so viewers must look up at him. Standing next to the globe, he holds a roll of plans in his left hand.



Richard Brooks, William Seward, bronze on stone pedestal, c. 1909. Image by Christopher Gildow. Used with permission.

More contemporary bronze cast sculptures reflect their subjects through different cultural perspectives. The statue of rock guitarist Jimi Hendrix is set on the ground, his figure cast as if performing on stage. He's on both of his knees, head thrown back, eyes shut and mouth open in mid wail. His bell-bottom pants, frilly shirt unbuttoned halfway, necklace and headband give us a snapshot of 1960s rock culture but also engage us with the subject at our level.



Daryl Smith, Jimi Hendrix, 1996, bronze. Broadway and Pine, Seattle. Image by Christopher Gildow. Used with permission.

Doris Chase was also a strong sculptor. Her large-scale abstract work *Changing Form* from 1971 is cast in bronze and dominates the area around it. The title refers to the visual experience you get walking around the work, seeing the positive and negative shapes dissolve and recombine with each other.



Doris Chase, Changing Form, 1971. Bronze. Image by Christopher Gildow. Used with permission.

3. Modeling is a method that can be both additive and subtractive. The artist uses modeling to build up form with clay, plaster or other soft material that can be pushed, pulled, pinched or poured into place. The material then hardens into the finished work. Larger sculptures created with this method make use of an **armature**, an underlying structure of wire that sets the physical shape of the work. Although modeling is primarily an additive process, artists do remove material in the process. Modeling a form is often a preliminary step in the casting method. In 2010, Swiss artist Alberto Giacometti's Walking Man (c. 1955), a bronze sculpture first modeled in clay, set a record for the highest price ever paid for a work of art at auction.

4. Construction, or Assemblage, uses found, manufactured or altered objects to build form. Artists weld, glue, bolt and wire individual pieces together. Sculptor Debra Butterfield transforms throw away objects into abstract sculptures of horses with scrap metal, wood and other found objects. She often casts these constructions in bronze.

Louise Nevelson used cut and shaped pieces of wood, gluing and nailing them together to form fantastic, complex compositions. Painted in a single tone, (usually black or white), her sculptures are graphic, textural façades of shapes, patterns, and shadow.

Traditional African masks often combine different materials. The elaborate Kanaga Mask from Mali uses wood, fibers, animal hide and pigment to construct an other worldly visage that changes from human to animal and back again.

Some modern and contemporary sculptures incorporate movement, light and sound. **Kinetic** sculptures use ambient air currents or motors allowing them to move, changing in form as the viewer stands in place. The artist Alexander Calder is famous for his mobiles, whimsical, abstract works that are intricately balanced to move at the slightest wisp of air, while the sculptures of Jean Tinguely are contraption-like and, similar to Nevelson's and Butterfield's works, constructed of scraps often found in garbage dumps. His motorized works exhibit a mechanical aesthetic as they whir, rock and generate noises. Tinguely's most famous work, *Homage to New York*, ran in the sculpture garden at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1960 as part of a performance by the artist. After several minutes, the work exploded and caught fire.

The idea of generating sound as part of three-dimensional works has been utilized for hundreds of years, traditionally in musical instruments that carry a spiritual reference. Contemporary artists use sound to heighten the effect of sculpture or to direct recorded narratives. The cast bronze fountain by George Tsutakawa (below) uses water flow to produce a soft rushing sound. In this instance the sculpture also attracts the viewer by the motion of the water: a clear, fluid addition to an otherwise hard abstract surface.



George Tsutakawa, Fountain. Bronze, running water. City of Seattle. Image by Christopher Gildow. Used with permission.

Doug Hollis's A Sound Garden from 1982 creates sounds from hollow metal tubes atop gridlike structures rising above the ground. In weathervane fashion, the tubes swing into the wind and resonate to specific pitch. The sound extends the aesthetic value of the work to include the sense of hearing and, together with the metal construction, creates a mechanical and psychological basis for the work.

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4.1.3: Reading- Installation Art

Dan Flavin is one of the first artists to explore the possibilities of light as a sculptural medium. Since the 1960s his work has incorporated fluorescent bulbs of different colors and in various arrangements. Moreover, he takes advantage of the wall space the light is projected onto, literally blurring the line between traditional sculpture and the more complex medium of installation.

Installation art utilizes multiple objects, often from various mediums, and takes up entire spaces. It can be generic or site specific. Because of their relative complexity, installations can address aesthetic and narrative ideas on a larger scale than traditional sculpture. Its genesis can be traced to the Dada movement, ascendant after World War I and which predicated a new aesthetic by its unconventional nature and ridicule of established tastes and styles. Sculpture came off the pedestal and began to transform entire rooms into works or art. Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau, begun in 1923, transforms his apartment into an abstract, claustrophobic space that is at once part sculpture and architecture. With installation art the viewer is surrounded by and can become part of the work itself.

British artist Rachel Whiteread's installation Embankment from 2005 fills an entire exhibition hall with casts made from various sized boxes. At first appearance a snowy mountain landscape navigated by the viewer is actually a gigantic nod to the idea of boxes as receptacles of memory towering above and stacked around them, squeezing them towards the center of the room.



Rachel Whiteread, Embankment, 2005. Source: Wikipedia, licensed through Creative Commons

Ilya Kabakov mixes together a narrative of political propaganda, humor and mundane existence in his installation *The Man Who Flew into Space from His Apartment* from 1984. What we see is the remains of a small apartment plastered with Soviet era posters, a small bed and the makeshift slingshot a man uses to escape the drudgery of his life within the system. A gaping hole in the roof and his shoes on the floor are evidence enough that he made it into space.

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5: Art History - Ancient Cultures to the Renaissance

This chapter explores the foundations of three-dimensional design through the lens of ancient and classical art, focusing on the sculptural traditions of Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, as well as the masterworks of the High Renaissance. These cultures laid the groundwork for many of the formal and conceptual approaches still used in sculpture and spatial design today. From the symbolic rigidity of Egyptian statuary to the idealized naturalism of Greek and Roman forms, and finally to the refined realism and anatomical precision of Renaissance masterpieces, each period reflects evolving ideas about the human figure, proportion, material use, and artistic intention. By studying these historical milestones, students will gain a deeper understanding of the enduring principles and innovations that continue to influence contemporary three-dimensional art.

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5.1: Ancient Egypt

Introduction to Ancient Egyptian Art

Ancient Egyptian art is the painting, sculpture, and architecture produced by the civilization in the Nile Valley from 5000 BCE to 300 CE.

Key Points

- Ancient Egyptian art reached considerable sophistication in painting and sculpture , and was both highly stylized and symbolic.
- The Nile River, with its predictable flooding and abundant natural resources, allowed the ancient Egyptian civilization to thrive sustainably and culturally. Much of the surviving art comes from tombs and monuments; hence, the emphasis on life after death and the preservation of knowledge of the past. In a narrower sense, Ancient Egyptian art refers to the second and third dynasty art developed in Egypt from 3000 BCE and used until the third century.
- Most elements of Egyptian art remained remarkably stable over this 3,000 year period, with relatively little outside influence.

Key Terms

- **wadi**: A valley, gully, or stream bed in northern Africa and southwest Asia that remains dry except during the rainy season.
- **Ancient Egypt**: A civilization that existed in the valley of the Nile River from 3150 BC to 30 BC. Noted for building the Great Pyramids of Giza.
- **pyramid**: An ancient massive construction with a square or rectangular base and four triangular sides meeting in an apex, such as those built as tombs in Egypt or as bases for temples in Mesoamerica.

Ancient Egypt

In Ancient Egypt , the Bronze Age began in the Protodynastic period circa 3,150 BCE. The hallmarks of ancient Egyptian civilization, such as art, architecture, and many aspects of religion, took shape during the Early Dynastic period and lasted until about 2,686 BCE. During this period, the pantheon of the gods was established and the illustrations and proportions of their human figures developed; and Egyptian imagery , symbolism , and basic hieroglyphic writing were created. During the Old Kingdom, from 2686-2181 BCE, the Egyptian pyramids and other more natural sculptures were built. The first-known portraits were also completed. At the end of the Old Kingdom, the Egyptian style moved toward formalized seminude figures with long bodies and large eyes.



Reverse and obverse sides of Narmer Palette, this facsimile on display at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada: The Narmer Palette, named after Egyptian King Narmer, is a significant Egyptian archeological relic dating from about the 3,100 BCE, containing some of the earliest hieroglyphic inscriptions ever found

Ancient Egyptian art includes the painting, sculpture, architecture, and other arts produced by the civilization in the lower Nile Valley from 5000 BCE to 300 CE. Ancient Egyptian art reached considerable sophistication in painting and sculpture, and was both highly stylized and symbolic. Much of the surviving art comes from tombs and monuments; hence, the emphasis on life after death and the preservation of knowledge of the past. In a narrower sense, Ancient Egyptian art refers to art of the second and third dynasty developed in Egypt from 3000 BCE until the third century. Most elements of Egyptian art remained remarkably stable over this 3,000 year period, with relatively little outside influence. The quality of observation and execution began at a high level and remained so throughout the period.

Ancient Egypt was able to flourish because of its location on the Nile River, which floods at predictable intervals, allowing controlled irrigation, and providing nutrient-rich soil favorable to agriculture. Most of the population and cities of Egypt lie along those parts of the Nile valley north of Aswan, and nearly all the cultural and historical sites of Ancient Egypt are found along riverbanks. The Nile ends in a large delta that empties into the Mediterranean Sea. The settlers of the area were able to eventually produce a surplus of edible crops, which in turn led to a growth in the population. The regular flooding and ebbing of the river is also responsible for the diverse natural resources in the region.

Natural resources in the Nile Valley during the rise of ancient Egypt included building and decorative stone, copper and lead ores, gold, and semiprecious stones, all of which contributed to the architecture, monuments, jewels, and other art forms for which this civilization would become well known. High-quality building stones were abundant. The ancient Egyptians quarried limestone all along the Nile Valley, granite from Aswan, and basalt and sandstone from the wadis (valleys) of the eastern desert. Deposits of decorative stones dotted the eastern desert and were collected early in Egyptian history.

The Prehistory of Egypt spans the period of earliest human settlement to the beginning of the Early Dynastic Period of Egypt in ca. 3100 BCE, beginning with King Menes/Narmer. The Predynastic Period is traditionally equivalent to the Neolithic period, beginning ca. 6000 BCE and is generally divided into cultural periods, each named after the place where a certain type of Egyptian settlement was first discovered. However, the same gradual development is present throughout the entire Predynastic period, and individual “cultures” must not be interpreted as separate entities but as largely subjective divisions used to facilitate the study of the entire period.

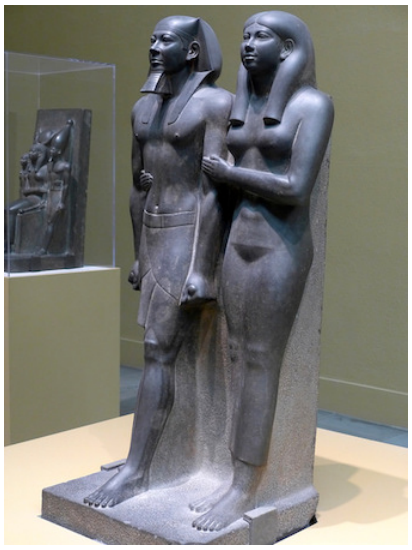
Old Kingdom

The Old Kingdom is the name given to the period in the third millennium BCE when Egypt attained its first continuous peak of civilization in complexity and achievement—the first of three so-called “Kingdom” periods which mark the high points of civilization in the lower Nile Valley (the others being Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom). While the Old Kingdom was a period of internal security and prosperity, it was followed by a period of disunity and relative cultural decline referred to by Egyptologists as the First Intermediate Period. During the Old Kingdom, the king of Egypt (not called the Pharaoh until the New Kingdom) became a living god, who ruled absolutely and could demand the services and wealth of his subjects. Under King Djoser, the first king of the Third Dynasty of the Old Kingdom, the royal capital of Egypt was moved to Memphis. A new era of building was initiated at Saqqara under his reign. King Djoser’s architect, Imhotep, is credited with the development of building with stone and with the conception of the new architectural form—the Step Pyramid . Indeed, the Old Kingdom is perhaps best known for the large number of pyramids constructed at this time as pharaonic burial places. For this reason, the Old Kingdom is frequently referred to as “the Age of the Pyramids.”



Djoser pyramid: Step pyramid of Djoser at Saqqara, Egypt

Sculpture in the Old Kingdom set the standard for all sculpture to come – except for the moment of Akhenaten and Amarna. One of the Great Pyramids at Giza was the tomb of Menkaure (Mycerinus). This iconic greywacke relief sculpture of Menkaure and one of his queens shows the characteristics of Egyptian pharoanic sculpture. He is rigid, frontal, with one foot forward as a sign of life. The queen’s gesture is one of familial belonging rather than protection.



King Menkaure (Mycerinus) and queen, 2490–2472 B.C.E., greywacke, 142.2 x 57.1 x 55.2 cm (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), photo: tutincommon (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Middle Kingdom

The Middle Kingdom of Egypt is the period in the history of ancient Egypt stretching from the establishment of the Eleventh Dynasty to the end of the Thirteenth Dynasty, between 2055 and 1650 BCE. During this period, the funerary cult of Osiris rose to dominate Egyptian popular religion.



Osiris: The gods Osiris, Anubis, and Horus, from a tomb painting

New Kingdom

The New Kingdom of Egypt, also referred to as the Egyptian Empire, is the period between the sixteenth century and the eleventh century BCE, covering the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Dynasties of Egypt. The New Kingdom followed the Second Intermediate Period and was succeeded by the Third Intermediate Period. It was Egypt's most prosperous time and marked the peak of its power.

The Ptolemaic dynasty was a Macedonian Greek royal family which ruled the Ptolemaic Empire in Egypt during the Hellenistic period. Their rule lasted for 275 years, from 305 BCE to 30 BCE. They were the last dynasty of ancient Egypt.

Painting

All Egyptian reliefs were painted, and less prestigious works in tombs, temples, and palaces were just painted on a flat surface. Stone surfaces were prepared by whitewash, or, if rough, a layer of coarse mud plaster, with a smoother gesso layer above; some finer limestones could take paint directly. Pigments were mostly mineral, chosen to withstand strong sunlight without fading. The binding medium used in painting remains unclear; egg tempera and various gums and resins have been suggested. It is clear that true fresco, painted into a thin layer of wet plaster, was not used. Instead, the paint was applied to dried plaster, in what is called *fresco a secco* in Italian. After painting, a varnish or resin was usually applied as a protective coating, and many paintings with some exposure to the elements have survived remarkably well, although those on fully exposed walls rarely have. Small objects including wooden statuettes were often painted using similar techniques.



Nebamun hunting in the marshes, Nebamun's tomb-chapel. C. 1350 BCE, fresco, British Museum

See http://www.britishmuseum.org/visiting/galleries/ancient_egypt/room_61_tomb-chapel_nebamun/nebamun_animation.aspx for an interactive recreation of what Nebamun's funeral chapel might have looked like.

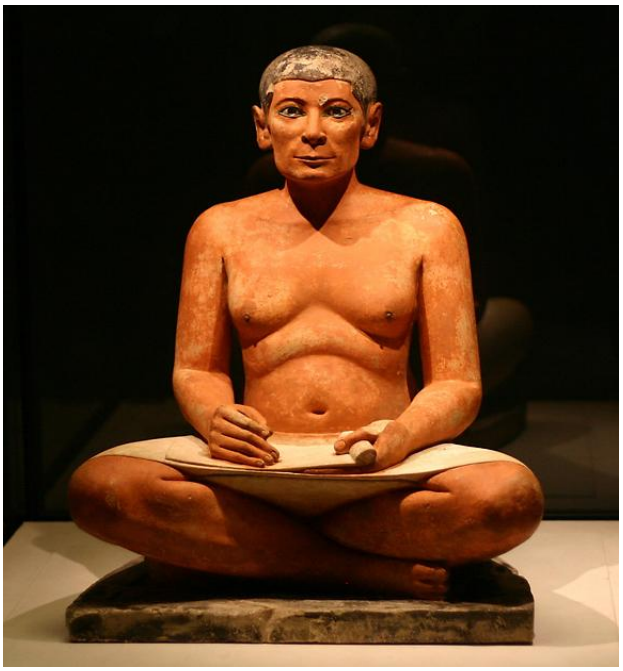
Many ancient Egyptian paintings have survived due to Egypt's extremely dry climate. The paintings were often made with the intent of making a pleasant afterlife for the deceased. The themes included journey through the afterworld or protective deities introducing the deceased to the gods of the underworld (such as Osiris). Some tomb paintings show activities that the deceased were involved in when they were alive and wished to carry on doing for eternity. Egyptian paintings are painted in such a way to show a profile view and a side view of the animal or person—a technique known as composite view. Their main colors were red, blue, black, gold, and green.



Wall painting of Nefertari: Egyptian paintings are painted in such a way to show a profile view and a side view of the animal or person. This painting, for example, shows the head from a profile view and the body from a frontal view. The main colors used were red, blue, black, gold, and green

Sculpture

The monumental sculpture of Ancient Egypt is world famous, but refined and delicate small works exist in much greater numbers. The Egyptians used the distinctive technique of sunk relief, which is well suited to very bright sunlight. The main figures in reliefs adhere to the same figure convention as in painting, with parted legs (where not seated) and head shown from the side, but the torso from the front, and a standard set of proportions making up the figure, using 18 “fists” to go from the ground to the hair-line on the forehead. This appears as early as the Narmer Palette from Dynasty I, but elsewhere the convention is not used for minor figures shown engaged in some activity, such as the captives and corpses. Other conventions make statues of males darker than females. Very conventionalized portrait statues appear from as early as Dynasty II (before 2,780 BCE), and, with the exception of the art of the Amarna period of Ahkenaten and some other periods such as Dynasty XII, the idealized features of rulers changed little until after the Greek conquest.



The Seated Scribe, Old Kingdom, Saqqara, painted limestone with inlaid rock crystal eyes, and nipples made of wood. Height: 53.7 cm; width: 44 cm; depth: 35 cm. Louvre, Paris. BY-Ivo Jansch via Flickr CC-BY-SA

By Dynasty IV (2680–2565 BCE) at the latest, the idea of the Ka statue was firmly established. These were put in tombs as a resting place for the *ka* portion of the soul. The so-called reserve heads, or plain hairless heads, are especially naturalistic, though the extent to which there was real portraiture in Ancient Egypt is still debated.

Early tombs also contained small models of the slaves, animals, buildings and objects – such as boats necessary for the deceased to continue his lifestyle in the afterworld – and later Ushabti figures. However, the great majority of wooden sculpture has been lost to decay, or probably used as fuel. Small figures of deities, or their animal personifications, are commonly found in popular materials such as pottery . There were also large numbers of small carved objects, from figures of the gods to toys and carved utensils. Alabaster was often used for expensive versions of these, while painted wood was the most common material, normally used for the small models of animals, slaves, and possessions that were placed in tombs to provide for the afterlife.

Very strict conventions were followed while crafting statues, and specific rules governed the appearance of every Egyptian god. For example, the sky god (Horus) was essentially to be represented with a falcon's head, while the god of funeral rites (Anubis) was to be always shown with a jackal's head. Artistic works were ranked according to their compliance with these conventions, and the conventions were followed so strictly that, over three thousand years, the appearance of statues changed very little. These conventions were intended to convey the timeless and non-aging quality of the figure's *ka*.

The monumental sculpture of Ancient Egypt is world famous, but refined and delicate small works exist in much greater numbers. The Egyptians used the distinctive technique of sunken relief, which is well suited to very bright sunlight. The main figures in reliefs adhere to the same figure convention as in painting, with parted legs (where not seated) and head shown from the side, but the torso from the front, and a standard set of proportions making up the figure, using 18 "fists" to go from the ground to the hair-line on the forehead. This appears as early as the Narmer Palette from Dynasty I (c. 31st century BCE), but there, as elsewhere, the convention is not used for minor figures shown engaged in some activity, such as the captives and corpses. Other conventions make statues of males darker than females. Figures shown from multiple perspectives – head in profile, shoulders front, legs and feet in profile – are called **composite** figures.

Early tombs contained small sculptural models of the slaves, animals, buildings, and objects, such as boats necessary for the deceased to continue his lifestyle in the afterlife, and later Ushabti figures. However, the great majority of wooden sculpture has been lost to decay, or probably used as fuel. Small figures of deities, or their animal personifications, are commonly found in popular materials such as pottery. There were also large numbers of small carved objects, from figures of the gods to toys and carved utensils. Alabaster was often used for expensive versions of these, while painted wood was the most common material, normally used for the small models of animals, slaves, and possessions that were placed in tombs to provide for the afterlife.



Shabti figures: Shabti were funerary figurines that were placed in tombs along with the deceased to assist them in the afterlife

Architecture of the New Kingdom

The golden age of the New Kingdom created huge prosperity for Egypt and allowed for the proliferation of monumental architecture.

It is the period of Hatshepsut, Tutankhamun, Ramses II, and other famous pharaohs. The wealth gained through military dominance created huge prosperity for Egypt and allowed for the proliferation of monumental architecture, especially works that glorified the pharaohs' achievements. Starting with Hatshepsut, buildings were of a grander scale than anything previously seen in the Middle Kingdom.

The Valley of the Kings

By this time, pyramids were no longer built by kings, but they continued to build magnificent tombs. This renowned valley in Egypt is where, for a period of nearly 500 years, tombs were constructed for the Pharaohs and powerful nobles of the New Kingdom. The valley is known to contain 63 tombs and chambers, the most well known of which is the tomb of Tutankhamun (commonly known as King Tut). Despite its small size, it is the most complete ancient Egyptian royal tomb ever found. In 1979, the Valley became a World Heritage Site, along with the rest of the Theban Necropolis.

Hatshepsut

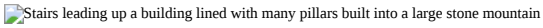
Sculpture in the New Kingdom continued in the traditional Egyptian style, with many great works produced by pharaohs over the years. However, during the later Amarna period, it underwent a drastic shift in style to emphasize more naturalistic (and less idealistic) human figures, such as those with drooping bellies. While reliefs and sculptures in the round continued to be painted, the skin tones of male and female figures was now the same value of brown. Some scholars believe that the shift was due to a new group of artists whose training was different from those trained in the traditional methods at Karnak.

Hatshepsut's (1508–1458 BCE) construction of statues was so prolific that, today, almost every major museum in the world has a statue of hers among their collections. While some statues show her in typically feminine attire, others depict her in the royal ceremonial attire. The physical aspect of the gender of pharaohs was rarely stressed in the art, and with few exceptions, subjects were idealized. The Osirian statues of Hatshepsut, located at her tomb, follow the Egyptian tradition of depicting the dead pharaoh as the god Osiris. However, many of the official statues commissioned by Hatshepsut show her less symbolically, and more naturally, as a woman in typical dresses of the nobility of her day.



Detail of Hatshepsut (c. 1473–1458 BCE): Hatshepsut is depicted in the clothing of a male king, though with a feminine form—differing from the Osirian statues in which she appears much more androgynous

The Temple of Hatshepsut was Hatshepsut's mortuary temple and was the first to be built in the area. The focal point of the tomb was the *Djeser-Djeseru*, a colonnaded structure of perfect harmony that predates the Parthenon by nearly one thousand years. Built into a cliff face, *Djeser-Djeseru*, or "the Sublime of Sublimes," sits atop a series of terraces that once were graced with lush gardens. Funerary goods belonging to Hatshepsut include a lioness "throne," a game board with carved lioness head, red-jasper game pieces bearing her title as Pharaoh, a signet ring, and a partial shabti figurine bearing her name.



Collonaded design of Hatshepsut temple: Hatshepsut's temple is most famous for its Djeser-Djeseru, a collonaded structure of such architectural skill that predates the Parthenon by nearly one thousand years

Amarna Art

The style of sculpture shifted drastically during the Amarna Period in the late Eighteenth Dynasty , when Pharaoh Akhenaten moved the capital to the city of Amarna. This art is characterized by a sense of movement and activity in images, with figures having raised heads, many figures overlapping, and many scenes full and crowded. Sunken relief was widely used. Figures are depicted less idealistically and more realistically, with an elongation and narrowing of the neck; sloping of the forehead and nose; prominent chin; large ears and lips; spindle-like arms and calves; and large thighs, stomachs, and hips. For example, many depictions of Akhenaten's body show him with wide hips, a drooping stomach, thick lips, and thin arms and legs. This is a divergence from the earlier Egyptian art which shows men with perfectly chiseled bodies, and there is generally a more "feminine" quality in male figures. Some scholars suggest that the presentation of the human body as imperfect during the Amarna period is in deference to Aten.



Artist's sketch: Walk In The Garden; limestone, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, c. 1335 BC: A relief of a royal couple in the Armana style. The figures are thought to be Akhenaten and Nefertiti, Smenkhkare and Meritaten, or Tutankhamen and Ankhesenamun

Like previous works, faces on reliefs continued to be shown exclusively in profile. The illustration of figures' hands and feet showed great detail, with fingers and toes depicted as long and slender. The skin color of both males and females was generally dark brown, in contrast to the previous tradition of depicting women with lighter skin. Along with traditional court scenes, intimate scenes were often portrayed. In a relief of Akhenaten, he is shown with his primary wife, Nefertiti, and their children in an intimate setting. His children are shrunken to appear smaller than their parents, a routine stylistic feature of traditional Egyptian art.



Relief portrait of Akhenaten (c. 1345 BCE): Akhenaten represented in the typical Amarna period style

While the religious changes of the Amarna period were brief, the styles introduced to sculpture had a lasting influence on Egyptian culture.



House altar showing Akhenaten, Nefertiti and three of their daughters. 18th dynasty, reign of Akhenaten, limestone, 12.8” H, 15.4” w. Egyptian Museum of Berlin. PD-US

Akhenaten’s extraordinary upheaval of Egyptian pictorial, religious, and governmental tradition lived only as long as he did. His son (by another wife, not Nefertiti) took everything back the way it had been before his father’s rule. He was a short-lived pharaoh, but one that left a very big impression on the world.

Tutankhamun

Tutankhamun was an Egyptian pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, who ruled from around 1332 BC to 1323 BCE. Popularly referred to as “King Tut,” the boy-king took the throne when he was nine and ruled until his early death at age nineteen. Tutankhamun was buried in a tomb that was small relative to his status. His death may have occurred unexpectedly, before the completion of a grander royal tomb, so that his mummy was buried in a tomb intended for someone else. His mummy still rests in his tomb in the Valley of the Kings, though is now on display in a climate-controlled glass box rather than his original golden sarcophagus . Relics and artifacts from his tomb, including his pectoral jewels and a red granite lion, are among the most traveled artifacts in the world.



Harry Burton, Howard Carter with Innermost Coffin of Tutankhamun, 1922 Copyright: Griffith Institute, University of Oxford’, (http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk)

Painted walls in the burial chamber of Tutankhamun’s tomb, Valley of the Kings, Egypt (late 14th century BCE): Tutankhamun’s burial chamber contained beautiful works of art, text, and hieroglyphics.



Tutankhamen Death Mask, gold, lapis lazuli, other precious stones. CC-BY-SA

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5.2: Ancient Greece

Introduction to Ancient Greece

Ancient Greek culture spans over a thousand years, from the earliest civilizations to the cultures that became the Ancient Greeks.

Key Points

- Ancient Greek culture is noted for its government, art, architecture, philosophy, and sports, all of which became foundations for modern western society. It was admired and adopted by others, including Alexander the Great and the Romans, who helped spread Greek culture around the world. Before Greek culture took root in Greece, early civilizations thrived on the Greek mainland and the Aegean Islands. The fall of these cultures and the aftermath, known as the Dark Age, is believed to be the time when the Homeric epics were first recited.
- Greek culture began to develop during the Geometric, Orientalizing, and Archaic periods, which lasted from 900 to 480 BCE. During this time the population of city-states began to grow, Panhellenic traditions were established, and art and architecture began to reflect Greek values.
- The Early, High, and Late Classical periods in Greece occurred from 480 to 323 BCE. During these periods, Greece flourished and the polis of Athens saw its Golden Age under the leadership of Pericles. However, city-state rivalries lead to wars, and Greece was never truly stable until conquered.
- The Hellenistic period in Greece is the last period before Greek culture becomes a subset of Roman hegemony. This period occurs from the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE, to the Greek defeat at the Battle of Actium in 30 BCE. It marks the spread of Greek culture across the Mediterranean.

Key Terms

- **polis**: A city, or a city-state. Its plural is poleis.

Ancient Greek Culture

Ancient Greek culture covers over a thousand years of history, from the earliest civilizations in the area to the cultures that became the Ancient Greeks. Following a Greek Dark Age, Greece once more flourished and developed into the ancient culture that we recognize today.



Classical Greece: Map of Ancient Greece

Greek culture is based on a series of shared values that connected independent city- states throughout the region and expanded as far north as Mount Olympus. Greek society was insular, and loyalties were focused around one's polis (city-state). Greeks considered themselves civilized and considered outsiders to be barbaric.

While Greek daily life and loyalty was centered on one's polis, the Greeks did create leagues, which vied for control of the peninsula, and were able to unite together against a common threat (such as the Persians).

Greek culture is focused on their government, art, architecture, philosophy, and sport. Athens was intensely proud of its creation of democracy, and citizens from all poleis (city-states) took part in civic duties. Cities commissioned artists and architects to honor their gods and beautify their cities.

As a religious people, the Greeks worshipped a number of gods through sacrifices, rituals, and festivals.

Review: Bronze Age and Proto-Greek Civilizations

Cycladic Civilization

During the Bronze Age, several distinct cultures developed around the Aegean. The Cycladic civilization, around the Cyclades Islands, thrived from 3,000 to 2,000 BCE. Little is known about the Cycladic civilization because they left no written records. Their material culture is mainly excavated from grave sites, which reveal that the people produced unique, geometric marble figures.

Minoan Civilization

The Minoan civilization stretches from 3700 BCE until 1200 BCE and thrived during their Neopalatial period (from 1700 to 1400 BCE), with the large-scale building of communal palaces. Numerous archives have been discovered at Minoan sites; however their language, Linear A, has yet to be deciphered. The culture was centered on trade and production, and the Minoans were great seafarers on the Mediterranean Sea.

Mycenaean Civilization

A proto-Greek culture known as the Mycenaeans developed and flourished on the mainland, eventually conquering the Aegean Islands and Crete, where the Minoan civilization was centered. The Mycenaeans developed a fractious, war-like culture that was centered on the authority of a single ruler. Their culture eventually collapsed, but many of their citadel sites were occupied through the Greek Dark Age and rebuilt into Greek city-states.

The Dark Age

From around 1200 BCE, the palace centers and outlying settlements of the Mycenaeans' culture began to be abandoned or destroyed. By 1050 BCE, the recognizable features of Mycenaean culture had disappeared. Many explanations attribute the fall of the Mycenaean civilization and the collapse of the Bronze Age to climatic or environmental catastrophe, combined with an invasion by the Dorians or by the Sea Peoples, or to the widespread availability of edged weapons of iron, but no single explanation fits the available archaeological evidence.

This two- to three-century span of history is also known as the Homeric Age. It is believed that the Homeric epics The Iliad and The Odyssey were first recited around this time.

Ancient Greece after the Dark Ages

The Geometric and Orientalizing Periods

The Geometric period (c. 900–700 BCE), which derives its name from the proliferation of geometric designs and rendering of figures in art, witnessed the emergence of a new culture on the Greek mainland. The culture's change in language, its adaptation of the Phoenician alphabet, and its new funerary practices and material culture suggest the ethnic population changed from the mainland's previous inhabitants, the Mycenaeans. During this time, the new culture was centered on the people and independent poleis, which divided the land into regional populations. This period witnessed a growth in population and the revival of trade.

The Orientalizing period (c. 700–600 BCE) is named for the cultural exchanges the Greeks had with Eastern, or Oriental civilizations. During this time, international trade began to flourish. Art from this period reflects contact with locations such as Egypt, Syria, Assyria, Phoenicia, and Israel.

Archaic Greece

Greece's Archaic period lasted from 600 to 480 BCE, in which the Greek culture expanded. The population in Greece began to rise and the Greeks began to colonize along the coasts of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The poleis at this time were typically ruled by a single ruler who commanded the city by force. For the city of Athens, this led to the creation of democracy. Several city-states emerged as major powers, including Athens, Sparta, Corinth, and Thebes. These poleis were often warring with each other and formed coalitions to gain power and allies. The Persian invasion of Greece in 480 BCE marked the end of the Archaic period.

Classical Greece

The era of Classical Greece began in 480 BCE with the sacking of Athens by the Persians. The Persian invasion of Greece, first lead by Darius I and then by his son Xerxes, united Greece against a common enemy.

With the defeat of the Persian threat, Athens became the most powerful polis until the start of the Peloponnesian War in 431 BCE. These wars continued on and off until 400 BCE. While marred by war, the Classical period saw the height of Greek culture and the creation of some of Greece's most famous art and architecture. However, peace and stability in Greece was not achieved until it was conquered and united by Macedonia under the leadership of Philip II and Alexander the Great in the mid-third century BCE.

Late Classical Greece

After the Peloponnesian wars a new style of sculpture seemed to emerge. Figures became taller in proportion and gods exhibited a new moral laxity unseen in earlier periods. For the first time, goddesses were pictured nude, or semi-nude.

Hellenistic Greece

The Hellenistic period began with the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE and ended with the Roman victory at the Battle of Actium in 30 BCE. Greece poleis spent this time under the hegemony of foreign rulers, first the Macedons and then the Romans, starting in 146 BCE.

New centers of Hellenic culture flourished through Greece and on foreign soil, including the cities of Pergamon, Antioch, and Alexandria—the capitals of the Attalids, Seleucids, and Ptolemies.

The Ancient Greek Gods and Their Temples

Greek religion played a central and daily role in the life of ancient Greeks, and group worship was centered on the temple and cult sites.

Greek religious traditions encompassed a large pantheon of gods, complex mythologies, rituals, and cult practices. Greece was a **polytheistic** society and looked to its gods and mythology to explain natural mysteries as well as current events. Religious festivals and ceremonies were held throughout the year, and animal sacrifice and **votive** offerings were popular ways to appease and worship the gods. Religious life, rituals, and practices were one of the unifying aspects of Greece across regions and **poleis** (cities, or city-states, such as Athens and Sparta).



The principal religious sanctuaries of the Greek Aegean: This map lists the major Greek gods and shows where their principal religious sanctuaries are located throughout the Greek Aegean region

Greek Gods

Greek gods were immortal beings who possessed human-like qualities and were represented as completely human – albeit perfectly formed – in visual art. They were moral and immoral, petty and just, and often vain. The gods were invoked to intervene and assist in matters large, small, private and public.

City-states claimed individual gods and goddess as their patrons. Temples and sanctuaries to the gods were built in every city. Many cities became cult sites due to their connection with a god or goddess and specific myths. For instance, the city of Delphi was known for its oracle and sanctuary of Apollo, because Apollo was believed to have killed a dragon that inhabited Delphi.

The history of the Greek pantheon begins with the primordial deities Gaia (Mother Earth) and Uranus (Father Sky), who were the parents of the first of twelve giants known as Titans. Among these Titans were six males and six females.

The Olympian Gods

Best known among the pantheon are the twelve Olympian gods and goddesses who resided on Mt. Olympus in northern Greece. Violence and power struggles were common in Greek mythology, and the Greeks used their mythologies to explain their lives around them, from the change in seasons to why the Persians were able to sack Athens.

The traditional pantheon of Greek gods includes:

- Zeus, the king of gods and the ruler of the sky.
- Zeus' two brothers, Poseidon (who ruled over the sea) and Hades (who ruled the underworld).
- Zeus's sister and wife, Hera, the goddess of marriage, who is frequently jealous and vindictive of Zeus's other lovers.
- Their sisters Hestia, the goddess of the hearth, and Demeter, the goddess of grain and culture.
- Zeus's children:
  - Athena (goddess of warfare and wisdom).
  - Hermes (a messenger god and god of commerce).
  - the twins Apollo (god of the sun, music, and prophecy) and Artemis (goddess of the hunt and of wild animals).
  - Dionysos (god of wine and theatre).
  - Aphrodite (goddess of beauty and love), who was married to Hephaestus (deformed god of the forge).
  - Ares (god of war and lover of Aphrodite) are also part of the traditional pantheon.
  - Hephaestus was in some mythologies the son of Zeus while in others the fatherless son of Hera.



Hermes and the Infant Dionysos by Praxiteles: Here, Hermes cares for the now motherless Dionysos. Originally, Hermes held a bunch of grapes, with which he teased the infant god of wine. c. 4th century BCE

Heroes

Heroes, who were often demigods, were also important characters in Greek mythology. The two most important heroes are Perseus and Hercules.

Perseus

Perseus is known for defeating the Gorgon, Medusa. He slew her with help from the gods: Athena gave him armor and a reflective shield, and Hermes provided Perseus with winged sandals so he could fly.

Hercules

Hercules was a strong but unkind man, a drunkard who conducted huge misdeeds and social faux pas. Hercules was sent on twelve labors to atone for his sins as punishment for his misdeeds. These deeds, and several other stories, were often depicted in art, on ceramic pots, or on temple metopes. The most famous of his deeds include slaying both the Nemean Lion and the Hydra, capturing Cerberus (the dog of the underworld), and obtaining the apples of the Hesperides.

Theseus

A third hero, Theseus, was an Athenian hero known for slaying King Minos's Minotaur. Other major heros in Greek mythology include the warriors and participants of the Trojan War, such as Achilles, Ajax, Odysseus, Agamemnon, Paris, Hector, and Helen.

Hero cults were another popular form of Greek worship that involved the honoring of the dead, specifically the dead heroes of the Trojan War. The sites of hero worship were usually old Bronze Age sites or tombs that the ancient Greeks recognized as important or sacred, which they then connected to their own legends and stories.



Hercules and Cerberus: Hercules bringing Cerberus back to King Eurystheus. Black figure hydra. c. 525 BCE

Sacred Spaces

Greek worship was centered on the temple. The temple was considered the home of the god, and a cult statue of the god would be erected in the central room, or the naos. Temples generally followed the same basic rectangular plan, although a round temple, known as a tholos, were used at some sites in starting in the Classical period.

Temples were oriented east to face the rising sun. Patrons would leave offerings for the gods, such as small votives, large statues, libations or costly goods. Due to the wealth dedicated to the gods, the temples often became treasuries that held and preserved the wealth of the city. Greek temples would be extensively decorated, and their construction was a long and costly endeavor.

Rituals and animal sacrifices in honor of the god or goddess would take place outside, in front of the temple. Rituals often included a large number of people, and sacrifice was a messy business that was best done outdoors. The development and decoration of temples is a primary focus in the study of Greek art and culture.



Sacrificial scene: Scene of a sacrifice. Attic red-figure bell krater. Circa 430–420 BCE. Athens, Greece

The Greek Geometric Period

The Geometric period in Greek art is distinguished by a reliance on geometric shapes to create human and animal figures as well as abstract décor.

Key Points

- The Geometric period marked the end of Greece's Dark Age and lasted from 900 to 700 BCE.
- The Geometric period derives its name from the dominance of geometric motifs in vase painting. Monumental kraters and amphorae were made and decorated as grave markers. These vessels are characteristic of Geometric vase painting during this period.
- The most famous vessels from this period uses a technique called horror vacui, in which every space of the surface is filled with imagery.

Key Terms

- **horrorvacui**: From the Latin, fear of empty space, it is a style of painting where the entire surface of a space is filled with patterns and figures.
- **amphora**: A two-handled jar with a narrow neck that was used in ancient times to store or carry wine or oils.
- **krater**: An ancient Greek vessel for mixing water and wine.

Geometric Pottery

In the eleventh century BCE, the citadel centers of the Mycenaeans were abandoned and Greece fell into a period with little cultural or social progression. Signs of civilization including literacy, writing, and trade were lost and the population on mainland Greece plummeted. During the Proto-Geometric period (1050–900 BCE), painting on ceramics began to re-emerge. These vessels were only decorated with abstract geometric shapes adopted from Mycenaean pottery. Ceramicists began using the fast wheel to create vessels, which allowed for new, more monumental objects.

Proto-Geometric amphora: Proto-Geometric amphora, c. 975–950 BCE

In the Geometric period that followed, figures once more became present on the vessel. The period lasted from 900 to 700 BCE and marked the end of the Greek Dark Ages. A new Greek culture emerged during this time. The population grew, trade began once more, and the Greeks adopted the Phoenician alphabet for writing. Unlike the Mycenaeans, this culture was more focused on the people of the polis, which is reflected in the art of this period. The period gets its name from the reliance on geometric shapes and patterns in its art, and even their use in depicting both human and animal figures.

Athens

The city of Athens became the center for pottery production. A potter's quarter in the section of the city known as the Kerameikos was located on either side of the Dipylon Gate, one of the city's west gates. The potters lived and work inside the gate in the city, while outside the gate, along the road, was a large cemetery. In the Geometric period, monumental-sized kraters and amphorae up to six feet tall were used as grave markers for the burials just outside the gate. Kraters marked male graves, while amphorae marked female graves.

The Dipylon Master, an unknown painter whose hand is recognized on many different vessels, displays the great expertise required for decorating these funerary markers. The vessels were first thrown a wheel, an important technological development at the time, before painting began. Both the Diplyon Krater and Dipylon Amphora demonstrate the main characteristics of painting during this time. For one, the entire vessel is decorated in a style known as horror vacui, a style in which the entire surface of the medium is filled with imagery. A decorative meander is on the lip of the krater and on many registers of the amphora. This geometric motif is constructed from a single, continuous line in a repeated shape or motif. The main scene is depicted on the widest part of the pot's body. These scenes relate to the funerary aspect of the pot and may depict mourners, a prothesis (a ritual of laying the body out and mourning), or even funerary games and processions.

On the Dipylon Krater, two registers depict a processional scene, an ekphora, (the transportation of the body to the cemetery) and the prothesis. The dead man of the prothesis scene is seen on the upper register. He is laid out on a bier and mourners, distinguished by their hands tearing at their hair, surround the body. Above the body is a shroud, which the artist depicts above and not over the body in order to allow the viewer to see the entirety of the scene.

On the register below, chariots and soldiers form a funerary procession. The soldiers are identified by their uniquely shaped shields. The Dipylon Amphora depicts just a prothesis in a wide a register around the pot.

In both vessels, men and women are distinguished by protruding triangles on their chest or waist to represent breasts or a penis. Every empty space in these scenes is filled with geometric shapes—M's, diamonds, starbursts—demonstrating the Geometric painter's horror vacui.



Geometric krater: Geometric krater. From the Dipylon Cemetery, Athens, Greece, c. 740 BCE

Sculpture in the Greek Geometric Period

Although derived from geometric shapes, the Ancient Greek sculptures of the Geometric period show some artistic observation of nature.

Key Points

- Geometric sculptures are primarily small scale and made of bronze, terra cotta, or ivory. The bronze figures were produced using the lost-wax method of casting.
- The human and animal figures produced during this period have geometric features, although the legs on humans appear relatively naturalistic.
- Geometric bronzes were typically left as votive offerings at shrines and sanctuaries, such as those at Delphi and Olympia.
- Horses came to symbolize wealth due to the high costs of their upkeep.

Key Terms

- **votive**: A type of offering deposited within a religious site without the purpose of display or retrieval.

The ancient Greek sculptures of the Geometric period, although derived from geometric shapes, bear evidence of an artistic observation of nature in some circumstances. Small-scale sculptures, usually made of bronze, terra cotta, or ivory, were commonly produced during this time. Bronzes were made using the lost-wax technique, probably introduced from Syria, and were often left as votive offerings at sanctuaries such as Delphi and Olympia.

Human Figures

The human figures are made of a triangle as a torso that supports a bulbous head with a triangular chin and nose. Their arms are cylindrical, and only their legs have a slightly more naturalistic shape. These attributes can be seen in a small sculpture of a seated man drinking from a cup that displays the typical modeling figures as simple, linear forms that enclose open space. Especially noteworthy are his elongated arms that mirror the dimensions of his legs.



Seated Male Figure: This is made of bronze and created around 750–700 BCE. Note how the statue's elongated arms mirror the dimensions of his legs

A relatively naturalistic rendering of human legs is also evident in Man and Centaur, also known as Heracles and Nessos (c. 750–730 BCE). Without the equine back and hind legs, the centaur portion of the sculpture is a shorter man with human legs. Like the seated man above, the two figures feature elongated arms, with the right arm of the centaur forming one continuous line with the left arm of the man. While the seated man appears to be clean shaven, the figures in Man and Centaur wear beards, which usually symbolized maturity. The hollow eye sockets of the figure of the man probably once held inlay for a more realistic appearance.



Man and Centaur (Heracles and Nessos): This bronze statue was made around 750–730 BCE

Animal Figures

Animals, including bulls, deer, horses, and birds, were also based in geometry. Horse figurines were commonly used as offerings to the gods. The animals themselves became symbols of wealth and status due to the high cost of keeping them. Equine bodies may be described as rectangles pinched in the middle with rectangular legs and tail and are similar in shape to deer or bulls.

The heads of these mammals are more distinctive, as the horse's neck arches, while the bull and deer have cylindrical faces distinguished by horns or ears. While the animals and people are based in basic geometric shapes, the artists clearly observed their subjects in order to highlight these distinguishing characters.

Geometric Horse statuette: This bronze statue from Olympia, Greece, circa 700 BCE

The Orientalizing Period

Ceramics in the Orientalizing Period

The Orientalizing Period followed the Geometric period and lasted for about a century, from 700 to 600 BCE. This period was distinguished by international influences—from the Ancient Near East, Egypt, and Asia Minor—each of which contributed a distinctive Eastern style to Greek art. The close contact between cultures developed from increasing trade and even colonization. Motifs, creatures, and styles were borrowed from other cultures by the Greeks, who transformed them into a unique Greek–Eastern mix of style and motifs.

Corinthian Pottery

During the Orientalizing period in Corinth human figures were rarely seen on vases. Animals such as lions, griffins, sphinxes, and sirens were depicted instead. Palmettes and lotus blossoms were used instead of geometric patterns to fill empty space, although on some vessels negative space became more prominent. This oriental black figure style originated in the city of Corinth, spread to Athens, and was exported throughout Greece.

Corinthian black figure jug: Corinthian black figure jug with animal frieze, circa 580 BCE

Black Figure Painting

The Corinthians developed the technique of black figure painting during this period. Black figure pottery was carefully constructed and fired three different times to produce the unique red and black colors on each vase.

The black color came from a slip painted onto the vessel, after which incised lines were drawn on to outline and detail the figures. Additionally, red and white pigments could be added for more color or to differentiate details. The unpainted portions of the vase would remain the original red-orange color of the pot. The full effect of this style of painting would not have been seen until after the vase emerged from its firings in the kiln. As the style spread, the subject matter changed from strictly Near Eastern animals to scenes from Greek mythology and everyday life.

The heat of the kiln in which the pottery was fired and the length of time each firing occupied was essential in the final look of the piece. The sophistication of the work in a culture without thermometers or clocks suggests the skill of the Greek artists.

Sculpture in the Greek Orientalizing Period

Sculpture produced during the Orientalizing period shares stylistic attributes with sculpture produced in Egypt and the Near East.

Key Points

- Sculpture during this time was influenced by Egyptian and Near Eastern artistic conventions. Rigid, plank-like bodies, as well as its reliance on pattern to depict texture, characterized Greek sculpture in the Orientalizing period.
- The Daedalic style, named for the mythical inventor Daedalus, refers the use of patterning and geometric shapes (reminiscent of the Geometric period) during the seventh century BCE.
- The differences between the Lady of Auxerre and the Mantiklos Apollo demonstrate the early establishment of traditional social expectations of the sexes in ancient Greek culture.

Key Terms

- **kore**: A sculpture of a young woman from pre-Classical Greece.

- **Daedalic**: A style of sculpture during the Greek Orientalizing period noted for its use of patterns to create texture, as well as its reliance on geometric shapes and stiff, rigid bodily postures.

The Orientalizing Period lasted for about a century, from 700 to 600 BCE. This period was distinguished by international influences, from the Ancient Near East, Egypt, and Asia Minor, each of which contributed a distinctive Eastern style to Greek art. The close contact between cultures developed from increasing trade and even colonization.

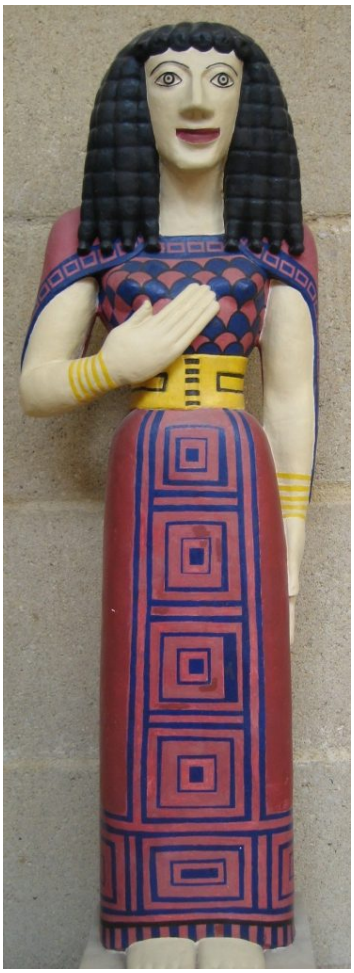
Styles were borrowed from other cultures by the Greeks who transformed them into a unique Greek-Eastern mix of style and motifs. Male and female sculptures produced during this time share interesting similarities, but also bear differences that inform the viewer about society's expectations of men and women.

The Lady of Auxerre

A small limestone statue of a kore (maiden), known as the Lady of Auxerre (650– 625 BCE), from Crete demonstrates the style of early Greek figural sculptures. This style is known as **Daedalic** sculpture, named for the mythical creator of King Minos's labyrinth, Daedalus. The style combines Ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian motifs.



The Lady of Auxerre, circa 650–625 BCE: This small limestone statue is possibly from Crete



Lady of Auxerre reconstruction: A painted reconstruction of the original Orientalizing sculpture. Cambridge University

The Lady of Auxerre is stocky and plank-like. Her waist is narrow and cinched, like the waists seen in Minoan art. She is disproportionate, with long rigid legs and a short torso. A dress encompasses nearly her entire body—it tethers her legs together and restricts her potential for movement. The rigidity of the body recalls pharaonic portraiture from Ancient Egypt.

Her head is distinguished with large facial features, a low brow, and stylized hair. The hair appears to be braided, and falls down in rigid rows divided by horizontal bands. This style recalls a Near Eastern use of patterns to depict texture and decoration, as in the bronze Akkadian head of Sargon.

Her face and hair are reminiscent of the Geometric period. The face forms an inverted triangle wedged between the triangles formed be the hair that frames her face. Traces of paint tell us that this statue would have originally been painted with black hair and a dress of red and blue with a yellow belt.

The Greek Archaic Period

Sculpture during the Archaic period became increasing naturalistic, although this varies depending on the gender of the subject.

Key Points

- Dedicatory male kouroi figures were originally based on Egyptian statues and over the Archaic period these figures developed more naturalistic nude bodies. The athletic body was an ideal form for a young Greek male and is comparable to the ideal body of the god Apollo.
- Instead of focusing on the body, female korai statues were clothed and throughout the Archaic period artists spent more time elaborating on the detailed folds and drapery of a woman's clothing. This reflected the Greek ideals for women, who were supposed to be fully clothed, modest, and demure.
- To add an additional naturalistic element to the body, the typical Archaic smile was added to both male and female statues. While today the smile seems false, to the ancient Greeks it added a level of realism.

- Pedimental sculpture in the Archaic period was often scaled to fit into the space of the pediment and served an apotropaic instead of a decorative function.
- Pedimental sculptures from the Temple of Aphaia at Aegina show a gradual move toward the naturalism of the Classical style that followed the Archaic.

Key Terms

- **Archaic smile**: A stylized expression used in sculpture from 600 to 480 BCE to suggest a sense of lifelikeness in the subject.
- **peplos**: An Ancient Greek garment, worn by women, made of a tubular piece of cloth that is folded back upon itself halfway down, until the top of the tube is worn around the waist, and the bottom covers the legs down to the ankles; the open top is then worn over the shoulders, and draped, in folds, down to the waist.
- **apotropaic**: Intended to ward off evil.
- **kouros**: A sculpture of a naked youth in Ancient Greece; the male equivalent of a kore.
- **kore**: An Ancient Greek statue of a woman, portrayed standing, usually clothed, painted in bright colors, and having an elaborate hairstyle.
- **chiton**: A loose, woolen tunic, worn by both men and women in Ancient Greece.

Sculpture in the Archaic Period

Sculpture in the Archaic Period developed rapidly from its early influences, becoming more natural and showing a developing understanding of the body, specifically the musculature and the skin. Close examination of the style's development allows for precise dating.

Most statues were commissioned as memorials and votive offerings or as grave markers, replacing the vast amphora (two-handled, narrow-necked jars used for wine and oils) and kraters (wide-mouthed vessels) of the previous periods, yet still typically painted in vivid colors.

Kouroi

Kouroi statues (singular, kouros), depicting idealized, nude male youths, were first seen during this period. Carved in the round, often from marble, kouroi are thought to be associated with Apollo; many were found at his shrines and some even depict him. Emulating the statues of Egyptian pharaohs, the figure strides forward on flat feet, arms held stiffly at its side with fists clenched. However, there are some importance differences: kouroi are nude, mostly without identifying attributes and are free-standing.

Early kouroi figures share similarities with Geometric and Orientalizing sculpture, despite their larger scale. For instance, their hair is stylized and patterned, either held back with a headband or under a cap. The New York Kouros strikes a rigid stance and his facial features are blank and expressionless. The body is slightly rounded and the musculature is indicated by incised lines.



New York Kouros, c. 600 BCE: New York Kouros. Marble. Origin unknown

As kouroi figures developed, they began to lose their Egyptian rigidity and became increasingly naturalistic. The kouros figure of Kroisos, an Athenian youth killed in battle, still depicts a young man with an idealized body. This time though, the body's form shows realistic modeling.

The muscles of the legs, abdomen, chest and arms appear to actually exist and seem to function and work together. Kroisos's hair, while still stylized, falls naturally over his neck and onto his back, unlike that of the New York Kouros, which falls down stiffly and in a single sheet. The reddish appearance of his hair reminds the viewer that these sculptures were once painted.

Kroisos, c. 530 BCE: Kroisos, from the Anavysos Group. Marble. Greece

Archaic Smile

Kroisos's face also appears more naturalistic when compared to the earlier New York Kouros. His cheeks are round and his chin bulbous; however, his smile seems out of place. This is typical of this period and is known as the Archaic smile. It appears to have been added to infuse the sculpture with a sense of being alive, and possibly to give an added quality of realism.

Kore

A kore (plural korai) sculpture depicts a female youth. Unlike the kouroi – athletic, nude young men – the female korai are fully-clothed, in the idealized image of decorous women. Male bodies were perceived as public, belonging to the state, while women's bodies were deemed private and belonged to their fathers (if unmarried) or husbands.

However, they also have Archaic smiles, with arms either at their sides or extended, holding an offering. The figures are stiff and retain more block-like characteristics than their male counterparts. Their hair is also stylized, depicted in long strands or braids that cascade down the back or over the shoulder.

The Peplos Kore (c. 530 BCE) depicts a young woman wearing a peplos, a heavy wool garment that drapes over the whole body, obscuring most of it. A slight indentation between the legs, a division between her torso and legs, and the protrusion of her breasts merely hint at the form of the body underneath.

Remnants of paint on her dress tell us that it was painted yellow with details in blue and red that may have included images of animals. The presence of animals on her dress may indicate that she is the image of a goddess, perhaps Artemis, but she may also just be a nameless maiden.



Peplos Kore: Reconstruction of the paint on the Peplos Kore

Later korai figures also show stylistic development, although the bodies are still overshadowed by their clothing. The example of a Kore (520–510 BCE) from the Athenian Acropolis shows a bit more shape in the body such as defined hips instead of a dramatic belted waistline, although the primary focus of the kore is on the clothing and the drapery. This kore figure wears a chiton (a woolen tunic), a himation (a lightweight undergarment), and a mantle (a cloak). Her facial features are still generic and blank, and she has an Archaic smile. Even with the finer clothes and additional adornments such as jewelry, the figure depicts the idealized Greek female, fully clothed and demure.



Acropolis Kore, c. 520–510 BCE: Wearing a chiton and himation. Marble. Athens, Greece

Ceramics in the Greek Archaic Period

Archaic black- and red-figure painting began to depict more naturalistic bodies by conveying form and movement.

Key Points

- Black-figure painting was used throughout the Archaic period before diminishing under the popularity of red-figure painting.
- Exekias is considered one of the most talented and influential black-figure painters due to his ability to convey emotion, use intricate lines, and create scenes that trusted the viewer to comprehend the scene.
- Red-figure painting was developed in 530 BCE by the Andokides Painter, a style that allows for more naturalism in the body due to the use of a brush.
- The first red-figure paintings were produced on bilingual vases, depicting one scene on each side, one in black figure and the other in red figure.
- The painters Euthyides and Euphronios were two of the most talented Archaic red-figure painters, with their vessels depict space, movement, and naturalism.

Key Terms

- **burin**: A chisel with a sharp point, used for engraving; an engraver.
- **slip**: A thin, slippery mix of clay and water.
- **red-figure**: One of the most important styles of figural Greek vase painting, based on the figural depictions in red color on a black background.
- **black-figure**: A style of Greek vase painting that is distinguished by silhouette-like figures on a red background.

Pottery Decoration Overview

The Archaic period saw a shift in styles of pottery decoration, from the repeating patterns of the Geometric period, through the Eastern-influenced Orientalizing style, to the more naturalistic black- and red-figure techniques. During this time, figures became more dynamic and defined by more organic—as opposed to geometric—elements.

Black-Figure Painting

Black-figure painting, which derives its name from the black figures painted on red backgrounds, was developed by the Corinthians in the seventh century BCE and became popular throughout the Greek world during the Archaic period. As painters became more confident working in the medium, human figures began to appear on vases and painters and potters began signing their creations.

Exekias

Exekias, considered the most prominent black-figure painter of his time, worked between 545 and 530 BCE in Athens. He is regarded by art historians as an artistic visionary whose masterful use of incision and psychologically sensitive compositions mark him as one of the greatest of all Attic vase painters. His vessels display attention to detail and precise, intricate lines.

Exekias is also well-known for reinterpreting mythologies. Instead of providing the entire story, as Kleitias did on the François Vase, he paints single scenes and relies on the viewer to interpret and understand the narrative.

One example is an amphora that depicts the Greek warriors Achilles and Ajax playing dice. Both men are decorated with fine incised details, showing elaborate textile patterns and almost every hair in place. As they wait for the next battle with the Trojans, their game foreshadows their fates. Inscribed text allows the two figures to speak: “Achilles has rolled a four, while Ajax rolled a three.” Both men will die during the the Trojan War, but Achilles dies a hero while Ajax is consistently considered second best, eventually committing suicide.

Achilles and Ajax: By Exekias, Achilles and Ajax Playing a Dice Game. Athenian Black-figure amphora, c. 540–530 BCE. Vulci, Italy

Architecture of the Classical Period

Mathematical Scale

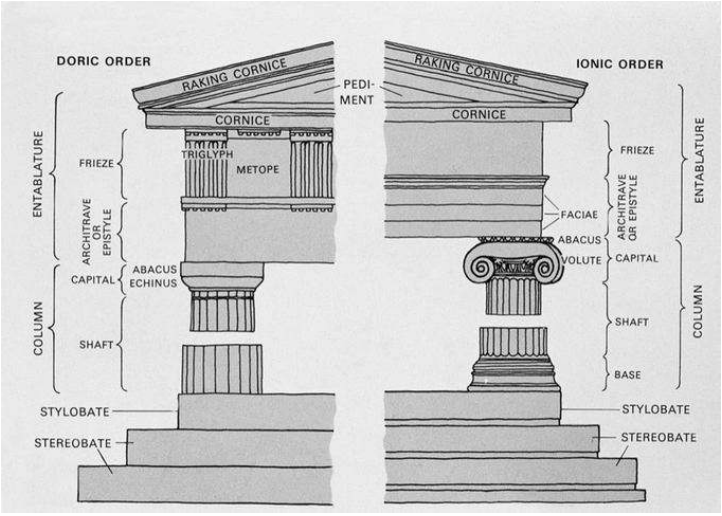
All temples, however, were built on a mathematical scale and every aspect of them is related to one another through ratios. For instance, most Greek temples (except the earliest) followed the equation 2x + 1 = y when determining the number of columns used in the peripteral colonnade.

In this equation, x stands for the number of columns across the front, the shorter end, while y designates the columns down the sides. The number of columns used along the length of the temple was twice the number plus one the number of columns across the front. Due to these mathematical ratios, we are able to accurately reconstruct temples from small fragments.

Doric Order

The style of Greek temples is divided into three different and distinct orders, the earliest of which is the Doric order. These temples had columns that rested directly on the stylobate without a base. Their shafts were fluted with twenty parallel grooves that tapered to a sharp point.

The capitals of Doric columns had a simple, unadorned square abacus and a flared echinus that was often short and squashed. Doric columns are also noted for the presence of entasis, or bulges in the middle of the column shaft. This was perhaps a way to create an optical illusion or to emphasize the weight of the entablature above, held up by the columns.



Doric and Ionic order: This drawing illustrates the stylistic differences between the Doric and Ionic order

The Doric entablature was also unique to this style of temples. The frieze was decorated with alternating panels of triglyphs and metopes. The triglyphs were decorative panels with three grooves or glyphs that gave the panel its name. The stone triglyphs mimicked the head of wooden beams used in earlier temples. Between the triglyphs were the metopes.

Decorative Spaces

Sculptors used the metope spaces to depict mythological occurrences, often with historical or cultural links to the site on which the temple stood.



Herakles fights the Cretan Bull: This is one of the metopes from the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. It is one of the Twelve Labors depicted on the temple

The Early Classical Period

Marble Sculpture and Architecture

Early Classical Greek marble sculptures and temple decorations display new conventions to depict the body and severe style facial expressions.

Key Points

- The sculpture found on the pediment and metopes at the Temple of Zeus at Olympia represent the style of relief and pedimental sculptural during the Early Classical period.
- The Severe style is an Early Classical style of sculpting where the body is depicted naturalistically and the face remains blank and expressionless. This style notes the artist's understanding of the body's musculature, while maintaining a screen between art and reality with the stoic face.
- Contrapposto is a weight shift depicted in the body that rotates the waist, hips, chest, shoulders, and sometimes even the neck and head of the figure. It increases that naturalism in the body since it correctly mimics the inner workings of human musculature.
- Kritios Boy is an early example of contrapposto and Severe style. This marble statue depicts a nude male youth, muscular and well built, with an air of naturalism that dissolves when examining his Severe style face.
- Polykleitos, an artist and art theorist, developed a canon for the creation of the perfect male body based on mathematical proportions. His Doryphoros (Spear Bearer) is believed to be a sculptural representation of his treatise. The figure stands in contrapposto, with a Severe-style face.

Key Terms

- **Severestyle**: The dominant idiom of Greek sculpture in the period from 490 to 450 BCE. It marks the breakdown of the canonical forms of Archaic art and the transition to the greatly expanded vocabulary and expression of the classical movement of the late 5th century.
- **Perserchutt**: A German term meaning Persian debris or rubble, that refers to the location of ritually buried architectural and votive sculptures that were destroyed following the sack of Athens by the Persians. The area was first excavated by the Germans in the late 19th century.
- **hexastyle**: Describes a building with six columns in the front and back and 13 down each side.

Kritios Boy

A slightly smaller-than-life-sized sculpture known as the Kritios Boy was dedicated to Athena by an athlete and found in the rubble of the Athenian Acropolis. Its title derives from a famous artist to whom the sculpture was once attributed.

The marble statue is a prime example of the Early Classical sculptural style and demonstrates the shift away from the stiff style seen in Archaic kouroi. The torso suggests an understanding of the body and the plasticity of the muscles and skin that allows the statue to appear life-like. Part of this illusion is created by a stance known as **contrapposto**. This describes a person with his or her weight shifted onto one leg, which initiates a shift in the hips, chest, and shoulders and gives a stance that is more dramatic and naturalistic than a stiff, frontal pose. This contrapposto position animates the figure through the relationship of tense and relaxed limbs.

However, the face of the Kritios Boy is expressionless, which contradicts the naturalism seen in his body. This is known as the **Severe style**. The blank expression causes the sculpture to appear less naturalistic, which creates a psychological remove between the art and the viewer. This differs from the use of the **Archaicsmile** (now gone), which was added to sculpture to increase the naturalism. Contradicting the emotionless expression would have been the eyes which originally held inlaid stone to give the sculpture a more lifelike appearance.



Kritios Boy, marble, c. 480 BCE, Acropolis, Athens, Greece: This marble statue is a prime example of the Early Classical sculptural style and demonstrates the shift away from the style seen in Archaic kouroi

Polykleitos

Polykleitos was a well-known Greek sculptor and art theorist during the early- to mid-fifth century BCE. He is most renowned for his treatise on the male nude, known as the Canon, which describes the ideal, aesthetic body based on mathematical proportions and Classical conventions such as contrapposto.

His Doryphoros, or Spear Bearer, is believed to be his representation of the Canon in sculpted form. The statue depicts a young, well-built soldier holding a spear in his left hand with a shield attached to his left wrist. Both military implements are now lost. The figure has a Severe-style face and a contrapposto stance. In another development away from the stiff and seemingly immobile Archaic style, the Doryphoros' left heel is raised off the ground, implying an ability to walk.



Doryphoros: Polykleitos's Doryphoros, or Spear Bearer, is believed to be his representation of the Canon in sculpted form. This is a Roman marble copy of a Greek bronze original, c. 450 BCE

This sculpture demonstrates how the use of contrapposto creates an S-shaped composition. The juxtaposition of a tension leg and tense arm and relaxed leg and relaxed arm, both across the body from each other, creates an S through the body. The dynamic power of this composition shape places elements—in this case the figure's limbs—in opposition to each other and emphasizes the tension this creates. The statue, as a visualization of Polykleitos' canon, also depicts the Greek sense of symmetria, the harmony of parts, seen here in the body's proportions.

Bronze Sculpture in the Greek Early Classical Period

Surviving Greek bronze sculptures from the Early Classical period showcase the skill of Greek artists in representing the body and expressing motion.

Key Points

- While bronze was a popular material for Greek sculptors, few Greek bronzes exist today. We know a majority of famous sculptors and sculptures only through marble Roman copies and the few bronzes that survived, often from shipwrecks.
- Early Classical bronzes are sculpted in the lost wax method of casting. The figures are created in the Severe style with naturalistic bodies and blank, expressionless faces. The sculptures' lightweight appearance is due to their hollowness and contributes to their implied potential energy and movement.
- The Charioteer of Delphi, the Riace Warriors, and the Artemision Bronze all display the sculpting characteristics of the Early Classical Severe style while also demonstrating the characteristics of bronze sculpting, including the lightness of the material and liveliness that could be achieved.

Key Terms

- **strut**: A support rod.
- **contrapposto**: The position of a figure whose hips and legs are twisted away from the direction of the head and shoulders.
- **lostwax**: A method of casting in which a model of the sculpture is made from wax. The model is used to make a mold. When the mold has set, the wax is made to melt and is poured away, leaving the mold ready to be used to cast the sculpture.

Greek Bronze Sculpture

Bronze was a popular sculpting material for the Greeks. Composed of a metal alloy of copper and tin, it provides a strong and lightweight material for use in the ancient world, especially in the creation of weapons and art. The Greeks used bronze throughout their history.

Because bronze is a valuable material, throughout history bronze sculptures were melted down to forge weapons and ammunition or to create new sculptures. The Greek bronzes that we have today mainly survived because of shipwrecks, which kept the material from being reused, and the sculptures have since been recovered from the sea and restored.

The Greeks used bronze as a primary means of sculpting, but much of our knowledge of Greek sculpture comes from Roman copies. The Romans were very fond of Greek art and collecting marble replicas of them was a sign of status, wealth, and intelligence in the Roman world.

Roman copies worked in marble had a few differences from the original bronze. Struts, or supports, were added to help buttress the weight of the marble as well as the hanging limbs that did not need support when the statue was originally made in the lighter and hollow bronze. The struts appeared either as rectangular blocks that connect an arm to the torso or as tree stumps against the leg, which supports the weight of the sculpture, as in this Roman copy of the Diadoumenos Atenas.



Diadoumenos Atenas (Roman copy): The extension connecting the tree trunk to the leg of the figure is an example of a strut used in marble Roman copies of original Greek bronzes

Lost Wax Technique

The lost wax technique, which is also known by its French name, cire perdue, is the process that ancient Greeks used to create their bronze statues. The first step of the process involves creating a full-scale clay model of the intended work of art. This would be the

core of the model.

Once completed, a mold is made of the clay core and an additional wax mold is also created. The wax mold is then be placed between the clay core and the clay mold, creating a pocket, and the wax is melted out of the mold, after which the gap is filled with bronze. Once cooled, the exterior clay mold and interior clay core is are carefully removed and the bronze statue is cleaned, polished, and finished.

The multiple pieces are welded together, imperfections smoothed, and any additional elements, such as inlaid eyes and eyelashes, are then added. Because the clay mold must be broken when removing the figure, the lost wax method can be used only for making one-of-a-kind sculptures.

Riace Warriors

The Riace Warriors are a set of two nude, bronze sculptures of male warriors that were recovered off the coast of Riace, Italy. They are a prime example of Early Classical sculpture and the transition between Archaic to Classical sculpting styles. The figures are nude, unlike the Charioteer. Their bodies are idealized and appear dynamic, with freed limbs, a contrapposto shift in weight, and turned heads that imply movement. The muscles are modeled with a high degree of plasticity, which the bronze material amplifies through natural reflections of light. Additional elements, such as copper for the lips and nipples, silver teeth, and eyes inlaid with glass and bone, were added to the figures to increase their naturalism. Both figures originally held a shield and spear, which are now lost. Warrior B wears a helmet, and it appears that Warrior A once wore a wreath around his head.



Riace Warriors: Warrior A (right) and Warrior B (left). Bronze, c. 460–450 BCE, Riace, Italy

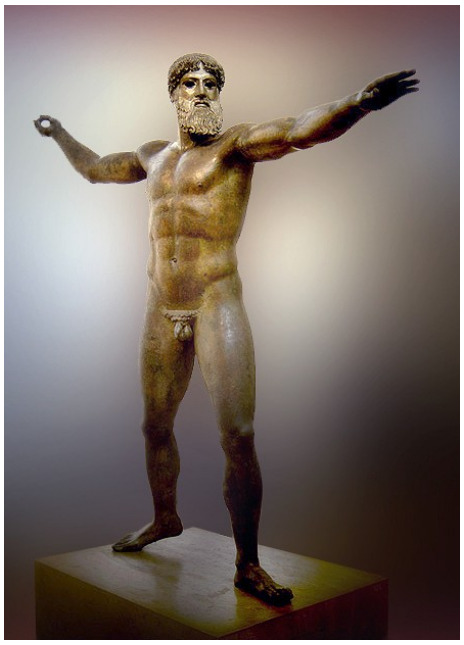
Artemision Bronze

The Artemision Bronze represents either Zeus or Poseidon. Both gods were represented with full beards to signify maturity. However, it is impossible to identify the sculpture as one god or the other because it can either be a lightning bolt (symbolic of Zeus) or a trident (symbolic of Poseidon) in his raised right hand.

The figure stands in heroic nude, as would be expected with a god, with his arms outstretched, preparing to strike. The bronze is in the Severe style with an idealized, muscular body and an expressionless face.

Like the Charioteer and the Riace Warriors, the Artemision Bronze once held inlaid glass or stone in its now-vacant eye sockets to heighten its lifelikeness. The right heel of the figure rises off the ground, which anticipates the motion the figure is about to undertake.

The full potential of the god’s motion and energy, as well as the grace of the body, is reflected in the modeling of the bronze.



Artemision Bronze: The Artemision Bronze figure depicts either Zeus or Poseidon, c. 460–450 BCE, Cape Artemision, Greece

The High Classical Period

Architecture in the Greek High Classical Period

High and Late Classical architecture is distinguished by its adherence to proportion, optical refinements, and its early exploration of monumentality.

Key Points

- Architecture during the Early and High Classical periods was refined and the optical illusions corrected to create the most aesthetically pleasing proportions. The High and Late Classical periods begin to tweak these principles and experiment with monumentality and space.
- Temples during the Late Classical period began to experiment with new architectural designs and decoration. The Tholos of Athena Pronaia at Delphi is a circular shrine with two rings of columns, the outer Doric and the inner Corinthian.
- The Temple of Epicurious at Bassae is noted for its unique ground plan and the use of architectural elements from all three Classical orders: Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian. The temple's use of architectural decoration and a ground plan demonstrate changing aesthetics.
- The theater in the city of Epidauros is a prime example of advanced engineering skills during this period. The theater is built with refined acoustics that could amplify the sounds on the stage to every one of the theater's 14,000 spectators.

Key Terms

- **aniconic**: Of, or pertaining to, representations without human or animal form.
- **tholos**: A circular structure, often a temple.
- **peripteral**: Surrounded by a single row of columns.
- **prostyle**: Free-standing columns across the front of a building.
- **entablature**: The area of a temple facade that lies horizontally atop the columns.
- **elevation**: A geometric projection of a building, or other object, on a plane perpendicular to the horizon.
- **Geometric period**: An era of abstract and stylized motifs in ancient Greek vase painting and sculpture. The period was centered in Athens and flourished from 900 to 700 BCE.
- **Pericles**: A prominent and influential Greek statesman, orator, and the general of Athens during the city's Golden Age—specifically, the time between the Persian and Peloponnesian wars.
- **capital**: The topmost part of a column.

Classical Greek Architecture Overview

During the Classical period, Greek architecture underwent several significant changes. The columns became more slender, and the entablature lighter during this period. In the mid-fifth century BCE, the Corinthian column is believed to have made its debut. Gradually, the Corinthian order became more common as the Classical period came to a close, appearing in conjunction with older orders, such as the Doric. Additionally, architects began to examine proportion and the chromatic effects of Pentelic marble more closely. In the construction of theaters, architects perfected the effects of acoustics through the design and materials used in the seating area. The architectural refinements perfected during the Late Classical period opened the doors of experimentation with how architecture could define space, an aspect that became the forefront of Hellenistic architecture.

Temples

Throughout the Archaic period, the Greeks experimented with building in stone and slowly developed their concept of the ideal temple. It was decided that the ideal number of columns would be determined by a formula in which twice the number of columns across the front of the temple plus one was the number of columns down each side ($2x + 1 = y$).

Many temples during the Classical period followed this formula for their peripteral colonnade, although not all. Furthermore, many temples in the Classical period and beyond are noted for the curvature given to the stylobate of the temple that compensated for optical distortions.

The Acropolis

The Athenian Acropolis is an ancient citadel in Athens containing the remains of several ancient buildings, including the Parthenon.

Key Points

- The Acropolis, dedicated to the goddess Athena, has played a significant role in the city from the time that the area was first inhabited during the Neolithic era. In recent centuries, its architecture has influenced the design of many public buildings in the Western hemisphere.
- Immediately following the Persian war in the mid-fifth century BCE, the Athenian general and statesman Pericles coordinated the construction of the site's most important buildings including the Parthenon, the Propylaea, the Erechtheion, and the temple of Athena Nike.
- The structures on the Acropolis incorporated the Cyclopean foundations of older Mycenaean-era structures.
- In its heyday, the Parthenon featured a Doric facade and Ionic frieze interior, while the Doric Propylaea—the gateway to the Acropolis and an art gallery in the Classical era—lacked friezes and pedimental sculptures. The Ionic Erechtheion, believed to have been dedicated to the legendary King Erechtheus, features a porch supported by columnar caryatids. The Temple of Athena Nike, which celebrates Athenian war victories, was built in the Ionic order.
- The sculptures from each of these buildings depict scenes specific to their historical and mythological significance to Athens.

The Athenian Acropolis

The study of Classical-era architecture is dominated by the study of the construction of the Athenian Acropolis and the development of the Athenian agora. The Acropolis is an ancient citadel located on a high, rocky outcrop above and at the center of the city of Athens. It contains the remains of several ancient buildings of great architectural and historic significance.

The word acropolis comes from the Greek words ἄ (akron, meaning edge or extremity) and π (polis, meaning city). Although there are many other acropoleis in Greece, the significance of the Acropolis of Athens is such that it is commonly known as The Acropolis without qualification.



The Acropolis at Athens: The Acropolis has played an important role in the city of Athens from the time the area was first inhabited

The Acropolis has played a significant role in the city from the time that the area was first inhabited during the Neolithic era. While there is evidence that the hill was inhabited as far back as the fourth millennium BCE, in the High Classical Period it was Pericles (c. 495–429 BCE) who coordinated the construction of the site's most important buildings, including the Parthenon, the Propylaea, the Erechtheion, and the temple of Athena Nike.

The buildings on the Acropolis were constructed in the Doric and Ionic orders, with dramatic reliefs adorning many of their pediments, friezes, and metopes. In recent centuries, its architecture has influenced the design of many public buildings in the Western hemisphere.

Early History

Archaeological evidence shows that the acropolis was once home to a Mycenaean citadel. The citadel's Cyclopean walls defended the Acropolis for centuries, and still remains today. The Acropolis was continually inhabited, even through the Greek Dark Ages when Mycenaean civilization fell.

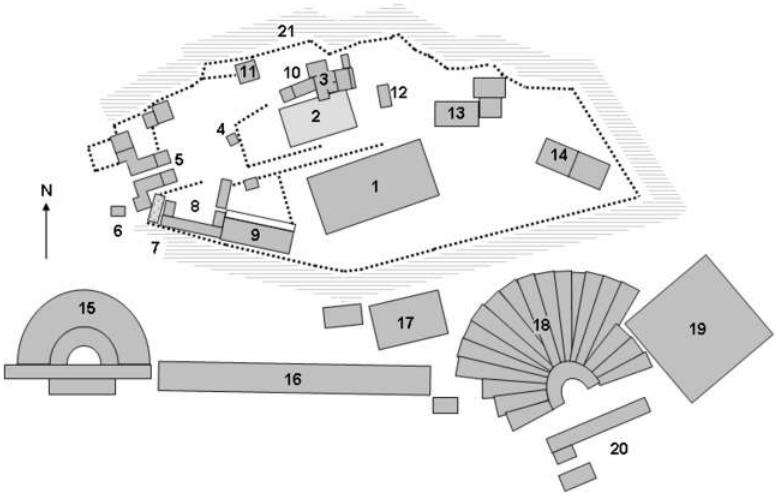
It is during the Geometric period that the Acropolis shifted from being the home of a king to being a sanctuary site dedicated to the goddess Athena, whom the people of Athens considered their patron. The Archaic-era Acropolis saw the first stone temple dedicated to Athena, known as the Hekatompedon (Greek for hundred-footed).

This building was built from limestone around 570 to 550 BCE and was a hundred feet long. It has the original home of the olive-wood statue of Athena Polias, known as the Palladium, that was believed to have come from Troy.

In the early fifth century the Persians invaded Greece, and the city of Athens—along with the Acropolis—was destroyed, looted, and burnt to the ground in 480 BCE. Later the Athenians, before the final battle at Plataea, swore an oath that if they won the battle—that if Athena once more protected her city—then the Athenian citizens would leave the Acropolis as it is, destroyed, as a monument to the war. The Athenians did indeed win the war, and the Acropolis was left in ruins for thirty years.

Periclean Revival

It was immediately following the Persian war that the Athenian general and statesman Pericles funded an extensive building program on the Athenian Acropolis. Despite the vow to leave the Acropolis in a state of ruin, the site was rebuilt, incorporating all the remaining old materials into the spaces of the new site. The building program began in 447 BCE and was completed by 415 BCE. It employed the most famous architects and artists of the age and its sculpture and buildings were designed to complement and be in dialog with one another.



Plan of the Acropolis: Plan of the Acropolis and surrounding area. The buildings include: (1) Parthenon (2) Old Temple of Athena (3) Erechtheum (4) Statue of Athena Promachos (5) Propylaea (6) Temple of Athena Nike (7) Eleusinion (8) Sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia or Brauroneion (9) Chalkotheke (10) Pandroseion (11) Arrephorion (12) Altar of Athena (13) Sanctuary of Zeus Polieus (14) Sanctuary of Pandion (15) Odeon of Herodes Atticus (16) Stoa of Eumenes (17) Sanctuary of Asclepius or Asclepieion Theatre of Dionysus Eleuthereus (19) Odeon of Pericles (20) Temenos of Dionysus Eleuthereus (21) Aglaureion

The Parthenon

The Parthenon represents a culmination of style in Greek temple architecture. The optical refinements found in the Parthenon—the slight curve given to the whole building and the ideal placement of the metopes and triglyphs over the column capitals —represent the Greek desire to achieve a perfect and harmonious design known as **symmetria**.

While the artist **Phidias** was in charge of the overall plan of the Acropolis, a sort of general contractor, the architects **IktinosandKallikrates** designed and oversaw the construction of the Parthenon (447–438 BCE), the temple dedicated to Athena. The Parthenon is built completely from Pentalic marble, although parts of its foundations are limestone from a pre-480 BCE temple that was never completed. The design of the Parthenon varies slightly from the basic temple ground plan. The temple is peripteral, and so is surrounded by a row of columns. In front of both the pronaos (porch) and opisthodomos is a single row of prostyle columns. The opisthodomos is large, accounting for the size of the treasury of the Delian League, which Pericles moved from Delos to the Parthenon, appropriating the funds in order to restore the Akropolis. The pronaos is so small it is almost non-existent. Inside the naos is a two-story row of columns around the interior, and set in front of the columns is the cult statue of Athena. It is the most important surviving building of Classical Greece.



The Parthenon: The Parthenon, designed by Iktinos and Kallikrates, is a temple on the Athenian Acropolis, Greece, dedicated to the maiden goddess Athena, the patron of Athens. Its construction began in 447 BCE when the Athenian Empire was at the height of its power

The Parthenon's elevation has been streamlined and shows a mix of Doric and Ionic elements. The exterior Doric columns are more slender and their capitals are rigid and cone-like. The entablature also appears smaller and less weighty then earlier Doric temples. The exterior of the temple has a Doric frieze consisting of **metopes** and **triglyphs**.

Inside the temple are Ionic columns and an Ionic frieze that wraps around the exterior of the interior building. The whole building curves slightly in the center to compensate for the human eye. The columns also are said to have an **entasis,** a slight swelling in the center to make them appear more solid and stable. If the building was built perfectly at right angles and with straight lines, the human eye would see the lines as bowed. In order for the Parthenon to appear straight to the eye, Iktinos and Kallikrates added curvature to the building that the eye would interpret as straight.

The sculpted reliefs on the Parthenon's metopes are both decorative and symbolic, and relate stories of the Greeks against the others. Each side depicts a different set of battles.

- Over the entrance on the east side is a **Gigantomachy,** depicting the battle between the giants and the Olympian gods.
- The west side depicts an **Amazonomachy**, showing a battle between the Athenians and the Amazons.
- The north side depicts scenes of the Greek sack of Troy at the end of the Trojan War.
- The south side depicts a **Centauromachy**, or a battle with centaurs. The Centauromachy depicts the mythical battle between the Greek Lapiths and the Centaurs that occurred during a Lapith wedding.

These scenes are the most preserved of the metopes and demonstrate how Phidias mastered fitting episodic narrative into square spaces. Taken in total, they symbolize the Greeks' pride in their victory over the Persians represented by the various "monstrous" or barbaric creatures in the metopes.

Centauromachy: A metope from the south side of the Parthenon, of a Lapith and a centaur. Acropolis, Athens, Greece. c. 447–438 BCE

The interior Ionic processional frieze wraps around the exterior walls of the naos. While the frieze may depict a mythical or historical procession, many scholars believe that it depicts a **Panatheniacprocession**.

The Panathenaic procession occurred yearly through the city, leading from the Dipylon Gate to the Acropolis and culminating in a ritual changing of the **peplos,** or garment, worn by the ancient olive-wood statue of Athena. The processional scene begins in the southwest corner and wraps around the building in both directions before culminating in the middle of the of the west wall.

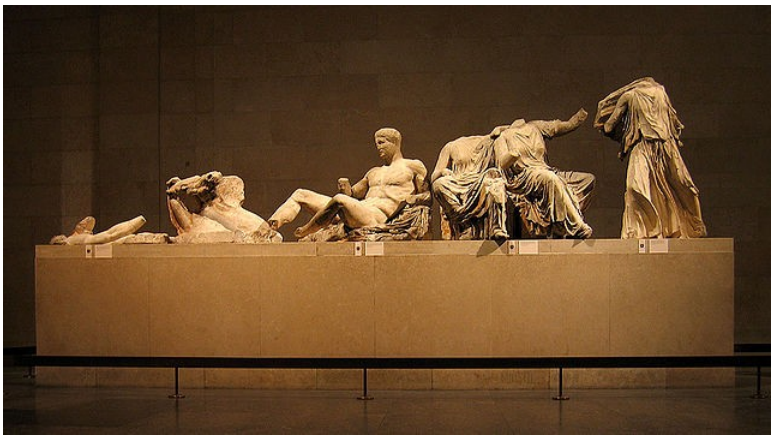
It begins with images of horsemen preparing their mounts, followed by riders and chariots, Athenian youth with sacrificial animals, elders and maidens, then the gods before culminating at the central event. The central image depicts Athenian maidens with textiles, replacing the old peplos with a new one.



Horsemen in the Processional Scene: An Ionic frieze from the interior of the Parthenon. Acropolis, Athens, Greece. c. 447–438 BCE

The east and west pediments depict scenes from the life of Athena and the east pediment is better preserved than the west; fortunately, both were described by ancient writers. The west pediment depicted the contest between Athena and Poseidon for the patronage of Athens. At the center of the pediment stood Athena and Poseidon, pulling away from each to create a strongly charged, dynamic, diagonal composition.

The east pediment depicted the birth of Athena. While the central image of Zeus, Athena, and Haphaestus has been lost, the surrounding gods, in various states of reaction, have survived.



Sculpture group from the east pediment of the Parthenon: While the central image of Zeus, Athena, and Haphaestus has been lost, the surrounding gods, in various states of reaction, have survived (c. 447– 439 BCE)



Three Goddesses from the east pediment of the Parthenon: Hestia, Dione, and Aphrodite. Attributed to Agoracritos. British Museum. CC-BY MaryG90

Notice how the figures are all to the same scale and are arranged in a composition that allows them to fill the long, increasingly narrow space of the pediment. In addition, it is keeping with tradition up to this point in Greek art that the Goddesses are clothed while the male Gods are not. The drapery on the three Goddesses, however, is fluid and reveals the forms of the bodies underneath.

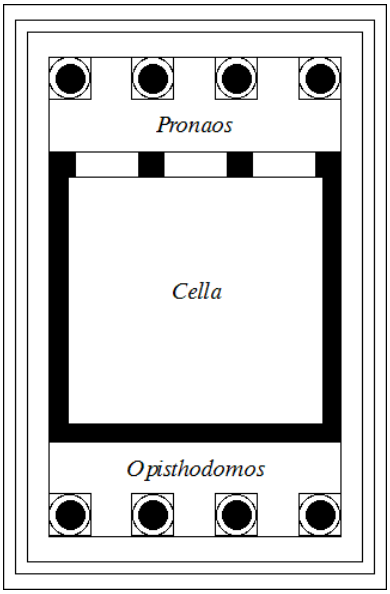
Upon entering the Acropolis from the Propylaea, or central gateway, visitors were greeted by a colossal bronze statue of Athena Promachos (c. 456 BCE), designed by Phidias. Accounts and a few coins minted with images of the statue allow us to conclude that the bronze statue portrayed a fearsome image of a helmeted Athena striding forward, with her shield at her side and her spear raised high, ready to strike.



Temple of Athena Nike: The Temple of Athena Nike, c. 427–425 BCE. Acropolis, Athens, Greece

The Temple of Athena Nike

One of the smaller but most elegant structures on the Acropolis is the Temple of Athena Nike (427–425 BCE), designed by Kallikrates in honor of the goddess of victory. It stands on the parapet of the Acropolis, to the southwest and to the right of the Propylaea. The temple is a small Ionic temple that consists of a single naos, where a cult statue stood fronted by four piers. The four piers aligned to the four Ionic prostyle columns of the pronaos. Both the pronaos and opisthodomos are very small, nearly non-existent, and are defined by their four prostyle columns.



The plan for the Temple of Athena Nike: This temple is a small Ionic temple that consists of a single naos, where a cult statue stood fronted by four piers, c. 427–425 BCE

The continuous frieze around the temple depicts battle scenes from Greek history. These representations include battles from the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars, including a cavalry scene from the Battle at Marathon and the Greek victory over the Persians at the Battle of Plataea.

The scenes on the Temple of Athena Nike are similar to the battle scenes on the Parthenon, which represented Greek dominance over non-Greeks and foreigners in mythical allegory. The scenes depicted on the frieze of the Temple of Athena Nike frieze display Greek and Athenian dominance and military power throughout historical events.



Nike Adjusting Her Sandal: This statue is in the Temple of Athena Nike, c. 425–420 BCE. It is located in the Acropolis in Athens, Greece

A parapet was added on the balustrade to protect visitors from falling down the steep hillside. Images of Nike, such as Nike Adjusting Her Sandal, are carved in relief. In this scene Nike is portrayed standing on one leg as she bends over a raised foot and knee to adjust her sandal. Her body is depicted in the new High Classical style.

Unlike Archaic sculpture, this scene actually depicts Nike's body. Her body and muscles are clearly distinguished underneath her transparent yet heavy clothing.

This style, known as **wetdrapery,** allows sculptors to depict the body of a woman while still preserving the modesty of the female figure. Although Nike's body is visible, she remains fully clothed. This style is found elsewhere on the Acropolis, such as on the caryatids and, as noted above, on the women in the Parthenon's pediment.

Sculpture in the Greek High Classical Period

High Classical sculpture demonstrates the shifting style in Greek sculptural work as figures became more dynamic and less static.

Key Points

- After mastering the portrayal of naturalistic bodies from stone, Greek sculptors began to experiment with new poses that expanded the repertoire of Greek art. The sculptures of this later period are moving away from the Classical characteristics they still maintain: idealism and the Severe style.

- Polykleitos is most well known for his Canon, depicted in the Doryphoros, but is also known for his Diadumenos and Discophoros. These two, sculpted athletes are also done in accordance to his canon and are depicted in contrapposto with chiastic poses.
- Phidias was one of the most renowned sculptors his time. He oversaw the sculptural program for the Athenian Acropolis and is also known for his giant chryselephantine cult statues of Zeus and Athena Parthenos.
- Myron is a bronze sculptor of the High Classical period. His statues are known for being imbued with potential energy. His Discobolos is poised to spring, preparing to throw a discus. While still idealized, the figure appears to be frozen in an action of intense movement.

Key Terms

- **chryselephantine**: Made of gold and ivory.
- **aegis**: An attribute of Zeus or Athena, usually represented as a goatskin shield.

Polykleitos

Polykleitos was a famous Greek sculptor who worked in bronze. He was also an art theorist who developed a **canon of proportion** (called the Canon) that is demonstrated in his statue of Doryphoros (Spear Bearer) Many of Polykleitos's bronze statues from the Classical period, including the Doryphoros, survive only as Roman copies executed in marble. Polykleitos, along with Phidias, is thought to have created the style recognized as Classical Greek sculpture.

Another example of the Canon at work is seen in Polykleitos's statue of Diadumenos, a youth trying on a headband, and his statue Discophoros, a discus bearer. Both Roman marble copies depict athletic, nude, male figures. The bodies of the two figures are idealized. The nudity allows the harmony of parts, or **symmetria**, to easily be seen and illustrates the principles discussed in the Canon. The Canon focused on the proportion of parts of the body in relationship to each other to create the ideal male form. Both statues demonstrate fine proportion, ideal balance, and the definable parts of the body.



Polykleitos, Doryphoros (the Canon), c. 1st century BCE, Carrara marble, 78.7" High. Naples

Doryphoros is shown in the contrapposto stance. He shifts his weight to his right leg. The sculpture, demonstrates the flexibility of composition based on the Canon and the innate liveliness produced by contrapposto postures. Despite the lively aspects and unique pose of the figure, it still retain the Severe style and expressionless face of early Greek sculpture.

Polykleitos not only worked in bronze but is also known for his chryselephantine cult statue of Hera at Argos, which in ancient times was compared to Phidias' colossal chryselephantine cult statues.

Phidias

Phidias was the sculptor and artistic director of the Athenian Acropolis and oversaw the sculptural program of all the Acropolis' buildings. He was considered one of the greatest sculptors of his time and he created monumental cult statues of gold and ivory for city-states across Greece.

Phidias is well known for the Athena Parthenos, the colossal cult statue in the naos of the Parthenon. While the statue has been lost, written accounts and reproductions (miniatures and representations on coins and gems) provide us with an idea of how the sculpture appeared.

It was made out of ivory, silver, and gold and had a wooden core support. Athena stood crowned, wearing her helmet and **aegis**. Her shield stood upright at her left side and her left hand rested on it while in her right hand she held a statue of Nike. An artist's reconstruction is housed in the Parthenon in Nashville.

Reconstruction of Phidias's Athena Parthenos: This is housed in the Parthenon in Centennial Park, Nashville, TN

Sculpture in the Hellenistic Period

A key component of Hellenistic sculpture is the expression of a sculpture's face and body to elicit an emotional response from the viewer.

Key Points

- Hellenistic sculpture takes the naturalism of the body's form and expression to level of hyper-realism where the expression of the sculpture's face and body elicit an emotional response.
- Drama and pathos are new factors in Hellenistic sculpture. The style of the sculpting is no longer idealized. Rather, they are often exaggerated, and details are emphasized to add a new, heightened level of motion and pathos.
- New compositions and states of mind are explored in Hellenistic sculptures including old age, drunkenness, sleep, agony, and despair.
- Portraiture became popular in this period. The subjects are depicted with a sense of naturalism that displays their imperfections.
- Hellenistic sculpture was in especially high demand after the Greek peninsula fell to the Romans in 146 BCE. Notable sculptures produced for Roman patrons include Laocoön and His Sons and the Farnese Bull.

Key Terms

- **satyr**: A male companion of Pan or Dionysus with the tail of a horse and a perpetual erection. Also known as a faun.
- **patrician**: An aristocrat or other elite member of society; it may also be used as an adjective.
- **pathos**: That quality or property of anything that touches the feelings or excites emotions and passions, especially that which awakens tender emotions, such as pity, sorrow, and the like; a contagious warmth of feeling, action, or expression; a pathetic quality.

Hellenistic sculpture continues the trend of increasing naturalism seen in the stylistic development of Greek art. During this time, the rules of Classical art were pushed and abandoned in favor of new themes, genres, drama, and pathos that were never explored by previous Greek artists.

Furthermore, the Greek artists added a new level of naturalism to their figures by adding an elasticity to their form and expressions, both facial and physical. These figures interact with their audience in a new theatrical manner by eliciting an emotional reaction from their view—this is known as pathos.

Nike of Samothrace

One of the most iconic statues of the period, the Nike of Samothrace, also known as the Winged Victory (c. 190 BCE), commemorates a naval victory. This Parian marble statue depicts Nike, now armless and headless, alighting onto the prow of the ship. The prow is visible beneath her feet, and the scene is filled with theatricality and naturalism as the statue reacts to her surroundings.

Nike's feet, legs, and body thrust forward in contradiction to her drapery and wings that stream backwards. Her clothing whips around her from the wind and her wings lift upwards. This depiction provides the impression that she has just landed and that this is the precise moment that she is settling onto the ship's prow. In addition to the sculpting, the figure was most likely set within a fountain, creating a theatrical setting where both the imagery and the auditory effect of the fountain would create a striking image of action and triumph.



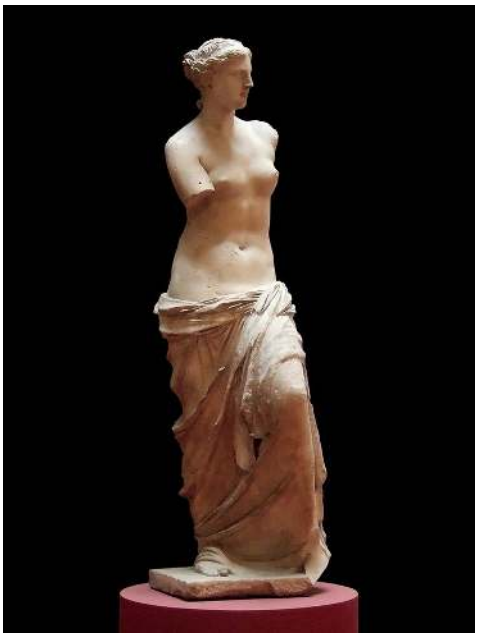
Nike of Samothrace: Also known as the Winged Victory (c. 190 BCE), this marble statue, in Samothrace, Greece, commemorates a naval victory

Venus de Milo

Also known as the Aphrodite of Melos (c. 130–100 BCE), this sculpture by Alexandros of Antioch, is another well-known icon of the Hellenistic period. Today the goddess's arms are missing. It has been suggested that one arm clutched at her slipping drapery while the other arm held out an apple, an allusion to the Judgment of Paris and the abduction of Helen.

Originally, like all Greek sculptures, the statue would have been painted and adorned with metal jewelry, which is evident from the attachment holes. This image is in some ways similar to Praxitiles' Late Classical sculpture Aphrodite of Knidos (fourth century BCE), but it is considered to be more erotic than its earlier counterpart.

For instance, while she is covered below the waist, Aphrodite makes little attempt to cover herself. She appears to be teasing and ignoring her viewer, instead of accosting him and making eye contact.



Venus de Milo: This marble statue, in Melos, Greece, was sculpted by Alexandros of Antioch, c. 130–100 BCE

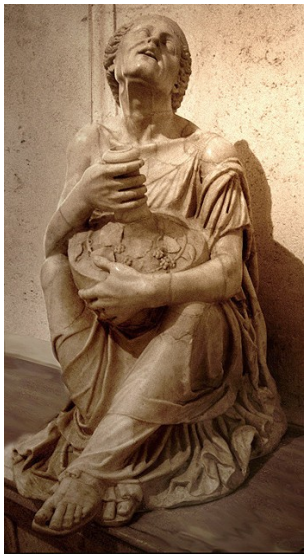
Altered States

While the Nike of Samothrace exudes a sense of drama and the Venus de Milo a new level of feminine sexuality, other Greek sculptors explored new states of being. Instead of reproducing images of the ideal Greek male or female, as was favored during the Classical period, sculptors began to depict images of the old, tired, sleeping, and drunk—none of which are ideal representations of a man or woman.

Drunken Old Woman

Images of drunkenness were also created of women, which can be seen in a statue attributed to the Hellenistic artist Myron of a drunken beggar woman. This woman sits on the floor with her arms and legs wrapped around a large jug and a hand gripping the jug's neck.

Grape vines decorating the top of the jug make it clear that it holds wine. The woman's face, instead of being expressionless, is turned upward and she appears to be calling out, possibly to passersby. Not only is she intoxicated, but she is old: deep wrinkles line her face, her eyes are sunken, and her bones stick out through her skin.



Drunken Old Woman: This is a Roman marble copy of the Greek bronze original by Myron, c. 200–180 BCE

Roman Patronage

The Greek peninsula fell to Roman power in 146 BCE. Greece was a key province of the Roman Empire, and the Roman's interest in Greek culture helped to circulate Greek art around the empire, especially in Italy, during the Hellenistic period and into the Imperial period of Roman hegemony.

Greek sculptors were in high demand throughout the remaining territories of the Alexander's empire and then throughout the Roman Empire. Famous Greek statues were copied and replicated for wealthy Roman patricians and Greek artists were commissioned for large-scale sculptures in the Hellenistic style. Originally cast in bronze, many Greek sculptures that we have today survive only as marble Roman copies. Some of the most famous colossal marble groups were sculpted in the Hellenistic style for wealthy Roman patrons and for the imperial court. Despite their Roman audience, these were purposely created in the Greek style and continued to display the drama, tension, and pathos of Hellenistic art.

Laocoön and His Sons

Laocoön was a Trojan priest of Poseidon who warned the Trojans, "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts," when the Greeks left a large wooden horse at the gates of Troy. Athena or Poseidon (depending on the story's version), upset by his vain warning to his people, sent two sea serpents to torture and kill the priest and his two sons.

Laocoön and His Sons, a Hellenistic marble sculpture group (attributed by the Roman historian Pliny the Elder to the sculptors Agesander, Athenodoros, and Polydorus from the island of Rhodes) was created in the early first century CE to depict this scene from Virgil's epic, The Aeneid.



Laocoön and His Sons: This marble statue is attributed by the Roman historian Pliny the Elder to the sculptors Agesander, Athenodoros, and Polydorus from the island of Rhodes

Similar to other examples of Hellenistic sculpture, Laocoön and His Sons depicts a chiastic scene filled with drama, tension, and pathos. The figures writhe as they are caught in the coils of the serpents. The faces of the three men are filled with agony and toil, which is reflected in the tension and strain of their muscles. Laocoön stretches out in a long diagonal from his right arm to his left as he attempts to free himself.

His sons are also entangled by the serpents, and their faces react to their doom with confusion and despair. The carving and detail, the attention to the musculature of the body, and the deep drilling, seen in Laocoön's hair and beard, are all characteristic elements of the Hellenistic style.

Laocoön and His Sons: This detail of Laocoön's face shows the carving and detail, the attention to the musculature of the body, and the deep drilling that are all characteristic elements of the Hellenistic style

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5.3: Ancient Rome

The Etruscans

Italy as a unified country did not exist until the 19th century. The area we know as Italy, or the boot-shaped peninsula that extends into the Mediterranean Sea was originally colonized by peoples from Greece, areas from around the Mediterranean and other areas from the North including the Celts. By the 6th c. BCE a group known as the Etruscans had gained control of much of the north and central Italy. The Etruscan society was largely centered on Etruria (modern Tuscany) but would eventually rule the little Latin-speaking town on the Tiber River, Rome. With the rise of Romans, the Etrurians were assimilated into that larger body that would go on to be the largest Empire of the early Common Era.

Key Points

- Etruscans were originally located in what is present-day Tuscany.
- Much of Etruscan architecture was inspired by ancient Greece.
- They were both an agrarian and sea-faring people trading with the Greeks and Phoenicians.
- Women in Etruria were given a position of greater equality than had been those of ancient Greece.
- Etruscans incorporated Greek deities and elements of Greek temple architecture.
- Etruscan cemeteries (necropolis – city of the dead) were planned like urban cities with tomb chambers or tumula partly carved from the local limestone.

Key Terms

- **Atrium –** a shallow indoor pool for household uses that collected rainwater through an opening in the roof.
- **Prostyle** – a style of temple with a row of columns across the front.
- **Tuscan order** – Vetruvius described this sturdy, unfluted column with a pedestal, base, and cornice, capital and entablature as coming from the Etruscan-modified Doric order.
- **Archaic smile** – as in the early Greek koroi; a small up-turning of the corners of the mouth, apparently to signify life.
- **Sarcophagi** – coffins or “eaters of the dead”. Etrurian sarcophagi were often made of terra-cotta.
- **Apotropaic** – meant to ward off evil, protective images.

The Etruscan peoples were originally the most successful of the early populations of what is today Italy. The height of the civilization was around 900–27 BCE. They were a highly organized society with a religion gleaned largely from the Greek pantheon and a government that would be something of a model for the early Romans. The first Roman kings were from Etruscan heritage.

The Etruscans had a written language that seems to have been based on early Greek. It has not been entirely translated by modern scholars and so much of what can be known about the early Etruscans is through the objects they left behind and from a few oblique historical references. The objects that have been recovered from places like the necropolises of Cerveteri and Veii.



Map of Ertruria. CC BY-SA 3.0

The Etruscans built walled cities and houses of mud brick that were probably square. The tombs in the cities they built for their dead were elaborate and seem to have echoed the interior decoration of their homes. The tumuli tombs were mounds over chambers carved into the dark limestone of the region.

The Etruscans were also navigators of the seas surrounding the Italian peninsula trading with the advanced cultures of Greece, the islands, and areas further to the north and south. They were adept at bronze work and created sculpture, practical implements and weapons for exchange in trade. Etruscans built their cities on high places, which is not uncommon in areas vulnerable to attack across the land. Early Rome seems to have been built on the Etruscan model with the seven hills proving an optimum site.

They had an organized system of governance, the groups were still individual city-states although there is evidence that some of these organized themselves into a confederation or league at one point with a more centralized rule. Because trade was so lucrative, families could accrue wealth and so move up in the social construct of the city. That family life was central to the Etruscans is evidenced by the multiple members buried in the tombs and that they were wealthy by the burial goods placed with them. There is something of an Egyptian quality to the focus on burial places and goods in the Etruscan necropolis.



Etruscan, Chimera of Arezzo, bronze, CC BY-SA 3.0, unknown source, created ca. 400 BCE

The prominence of the names of mothers and the picturing of the wives on sarcophagi may indicate that they enjoyed a greater degree of freedom and significance than did the more sequestered women of Greece. Greek women could never have attended symposia, or social gatherings like the one pictured here.



Sarcophagus of the Spouses (Villa Giulia). CC SA-BY 3.0. Orig. Sailko

The image most suggestive of this is the Sarcophagus of the Spouses which is a terra-cotta burial casket decorated with the images of the couple that occupy it, or that is the implication. The couple is shown reclining in the sort of posture that later Romans will adopt for social occasions. Their hands suggest they might originally have held cups or eating utensils as if they were at a banquet. This sort of social freedom was not allowed Greek women; Theopompus, a Greek historian of the fourth century BCE, commented on the scandalous behaviour of the Etruscan women although he also commented that they were all very good looking.

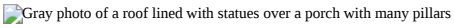
Etruscan Temples

As with many aspects of Etruscan life, Greek models are suggestive but with significant differences. Firstly, Etruscan temples, like their homes, were made of mud brick instead of marble or stone. This means that unlike the Parthenon history has no examples remaining of actual Etruscan temple architecture. However, Vetruvius, a 1st c. BCE Roman writer, architect, and engineer, gave an account of the Etruscan temple in his *De Architectura*.



Foundation of an Etruscan temple at Orvieto. From Boundless

According to Vitruvius the temples had a wooden structure with mud brick walls which were then covered in stucco which could be painted or polished. Two rows of columns stood across the front porch (or pronaos) and were usually made of painted wood, although a temple at Veii had marble columns. There was a central staircase approach. There might be more than one cella, or interior space, on a tufa foundation. The tufa foundation you see in the image above is what remains of an Etruscan temple at Orvieto. While Greek temples tended to be rectangular the Etruscan model was more square in configuration.



Model of Portonaccio Sanctuary of Minerva, c. 510 BCE, Veii. From Boundless

Etruscan temples had low wooden roofs covered in tile that extended beyond the foundation. This created some protection from the elements for the mud brick structure. Unlike Greek temples with relief carving primarily reserved for the pediment and entablature areas, Etruscan temples had akroteria on the roofline which added to the visibility of the sculpture.

Like most sculpture of the ancient world, this would have been painted in bright colors. The Apulu (Apollo) of Veii is a terra cotta figure that would have been affixed to the roofline of the temple. According to Barbara Borg, the statue may have been made by the artist known as Vulca, the only Etruscan artist known by name. Note the dynamic striding posture of the figure with drapery that falls in stylized decorative folds. His lyre sits between his feet and he wears the archaic smile that signified life.

Other stone carvings called antefixes stood at the ends of the wooden roof beams offering some physical protection to the organic materials. They were often carved to represent the god Dionysus or Medusa, the Gorgon – **apotropaic** figures meant to offer spiritual protection from evil.



Vulca, Apulu, terracotta life-sized figure from Portonaccio at Veii

Etruscan Tombs

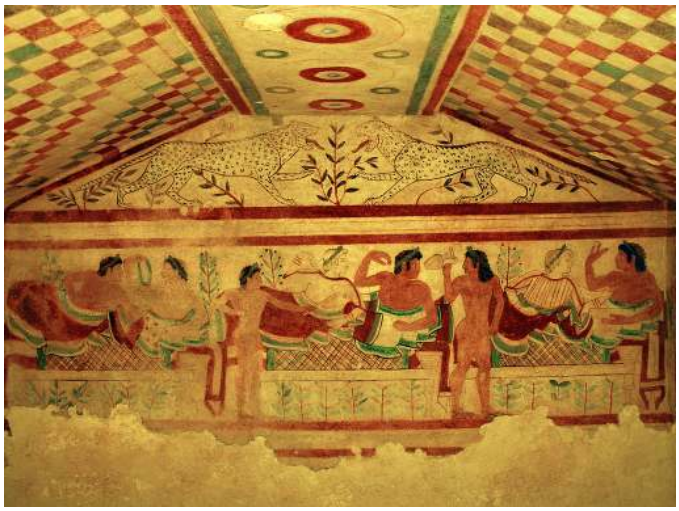
Etruscan tombs are sophisticated and complex structures which are very suggestive of the outlook on life and death shared by that culture. Like other ancient peoples the Etruscans created special “cities of the dead” (necropolises) outside the walls of the cities of the living, but arranged them both outside and in to mirror the places they had occupied while alive. The tumulus, or mound, of the tombs stood over multichambered depressions or rooms cut out of the tufa, a kind of local limestone. These tombs could cover a very large area and are thought to have housed the remains of generations of entire families. The tombs were laid out in an orderly manner like streets in a literal city. A number of these necropolises have been discovered, among them the large one of Banditaccia which contains several significant structures.

Tomb of the Reliefs

Built in the Banditaccia necropolis at Cerveteri, Italy, during the late fourth or early third century BCE, the Tomb of the Reliefs has walls decorated with painted relief sculpture of the household items that would have been found in an Etruscan home. The knives, jugs, lengths of rope and other domestic items suggest that the Etruscans shared the desire of the Egyptians to continue their earthly lives in their next. Religious imagery is also included is the three-headed dog – Cerberus – under the carved relief of a funeral couch. Cerberus was the guardian of the gate to the underworld, a reference to passage from one life to the another.



Tomb of the Reliefs, Cerveteri. CC BY-SA2.0 Roberto Ferrari



Tomb of the Leopards, Tarquinia, c. 480 BCE. CC By-SA 3.0 Waugsberg

Tomb of the Leopards

Like the Egyptians, Etruscans painted scenes of activities from life on the walls of their tombs. In the Tomb of the Leopards from the necropolis at Monterozzi in Tarquinia, Italy, c. 480 BCE, an elaborate banquet scene decorates the room. Male figures – signified by dark skin – and females – light skin – recline on couches while musicians play and servants bring food and drink. On the pediment above them on the back wall of the tomb a pair of leopards face each other like the guardians of ancient gates and temples. One couple shows a man holding up an egg, a symbol of regeneration or renewed life. The figures interact in lively poses

with composite bodies in both profile and frontal positions. The eyes, however, are depicted in profile, unlike those of the Egyptian figures and the plant life that surrounds them suggests a garden party. The colors are a reddish brown, blue, and crème with black outlines. Two figures have blonde hair while all the rest are dark.

End of the Etruscans

The eventual dominance of Rome spelled the end of the Etruscan wealth and society. The people and their art continue but under the rule of the Romans and in the service of that culture. One of the objects from this later period of Etruscan art is the Capitoline Wolf, ca. 500-480 BCE. Some scholars suggest this work is not Etruscan and the two infants, Romulus and Remus, were definitely created during the 15th century. But most agree this represents an Etruscan workshop at the height of its powers, even if the subject belongs to the origin story of their successors.



Capitoline Wolf, Rome, 500-480 BCE. CC BY-SA 3.0 Marcin Floryan

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The Romans

Rome was founded in the mid-eighth century BCE by eight tribes who settled in Etruria and on the famous Seven Hills. The early inhabitants were called "Etruscans" and the present day area is called "Tuscany" after them.

Key Points

- The foundation myths of Romulus and Aeneas are the most common means of recounting the founding of Rome, and ancient historians used them to justify their often violent and warlike culture. However, the historical record provides a more reliable story. April 21, 753 BCE, is the date given by ancient Roman historians to the founding of Rome. Archaeological research supports this assertion, confirming that the site of Rome was inhabited by the mid-eighth century BCE.
- The Romans were descended from the Italic tribes, mainly the Latins (originally from the Alban Hills to the southeast) and the Sabines (originally from the Apennines to the northeast).
- What was to become Rome originally existed as a collection of autonomous villages atop each of the city's famous Seven Hills. The Palatine Hill, located at the city center, marked the original settlement of the Romans, as well as significant temples and religious festivals. The Quirinal Hill became the home of the Sabines until the sixth century BCE, as well as the sites of significant temples and sanctuaries.

Key Terms

- **Septimontium**: A festival celebrating the first federation of the Seven Hills of Rome.

- **wattle-and-daub**: A composite building material used for making walls, in which a woven lattice of wooden strips are coated with a sticky material usually made of some combination of wet soil, clay, sand, animal dung and straw.

Foundation Myths

The Romans relied on two sets of myths to explain their origins: the first story tells the tale of Romulus and Remus, while the second tells the story of Aeneas and the Trojans, who survived the sack of Troy by the Greeks. Oddly, both stories relate the founding of Rome and the origins of its people to brutal murders. Romulus killed his twin brother, Remus, in a fit of rage, and Aeneas slaughtered his rival Turnus in combat. Roman historians used these mythical episodes as the reason for Rome's own bloody history and periods of civil war. While foundation myths are the most common vehicle through which we learn about the origins of Rome and the Roman people, the actual history is often overlooked.

The Historical Record

Archaeological evidence shows that the area that eventually became Rome has been inhabited continuously for the past 14,000 years. The historical record provides evidence of habitation on and fortification of the Palatine Hill during the eighth century BCE, which supports the date of April 21, 753 BCE, as the date that ancient historians applied to the founding of Rome in association with a festival to Pales, the goddess of shepherds. Given the importance of agriculture to pre-Roman tribes, as well as most ancestors of civilization, it is logical that the Romans would link the celebration of their founding as a city to an agrarian goddess.

Romulus, whose name is believed to be the namesake of Rome, is credited for Rome's founding. He is also credited with establishing the period of monarchical rule. Six kings ruled after him until 509 BCE, when the people rebelled against the last king, Tarquinius Superbus, and established the Republic. Throughout its history, the people—including plebeians, patricians, and senators—were wary of giving one person too much power and feared the tyranny of a king.

Roman Society

Ancient Roman society was based on class-based and political structures, as well as by religious practices.

Key Points

- Roman society consisted of several divisions of social classes that held varying degrees of power and prestige. This structure was echoed on a familial level under the power of the father, or pater familias.
- In matters of government, the Senate remained a fixture from the founding of Rome to the collapse of the Empire, although its power and influence grew and weakened over time.
- As Rome became a global power, its government consisted of levels on the colonial and municipal levels, as well as on the central level in the imperial capital.
- The Roman pantheon of gods is comparable to its Greek counterparts, who Romans worshiped and sent prayers to throughout their lives. The Romans were flexible in their worship and absorbed foreign gods into their pantheon.
- In the Imperial period, an imperial cult developed to worship the emperors who were deified upon their death.

Key Terms

- **PontifexMaximus**: The official head, or chief priest, of the Roman state's religion. In Imperial Rome this title and office was given to the Emperor.
- **plebeian**: A free Roman citizen who was not a patrician.
- **equite**: The lower of the two aristocratic classes of ancient Rome, ranking below the patricians.
- **paterfamilias**: The father, or (male) head of household.
- **insula**: An apartment building that housed most of the urban citizen population of ancient Rome, including ordinary people of lower- or middle- class status (the plebians) and all but the wealthiest from the upper-middle class (the equites).
- **patrician**: A member of a hereditary ruling-class family.

Social Structure

Life in ancient Rome centered around the capital city with its for a (plural for forum or civic center), temples, theaters, baths, gymnasia, brothels, and other forms of culture and entertainment. Private housing ranged from elegant urban palaces and country villas for the social elites to crowded insulae (apartment buildings) for the majority of the population.The large urban population required an endless supply of food, which was a complex logistical task. Area farms provided produce, while animal-derived products were considered luxuries. The aqueducts brought water to urban centers, and wine and oil were imported from Hispania (Spain and Portugal), Gaul (France and Belgium), and Africa. Egypt became known as the breadbasket of Rome.

Highly efficient technology allowed for frequent commerce among the provinces.While the population within the city of Rome might have exceeded one million, most Romans lived in rural areas, each with an average population of 10,000 inhabitants.

Roman society consisted of patricians, equites (equestrians, or knights), plebeians, and slaves. All categories except slaves enjoyed the status of citizenship. In the beginning of the Roman republic, plebeians could neither intermarry with patricians or hold elite status, but this changed by the Late Republic, when the plebeian-born Octavian rose to elite status and eventually became the first emperor.

Over time, legislation was passed to protect the lives and health of slaves. Although many prostitutes were slaves, for instance, the bill of sale for some slaves stipulated that they could not be used for commercial prostitution. Slaves could become freedmen—and thus citizens—if their owners freed them or if they purchased their freedom by paying their owners. Free-born women were considered citizens, although they could neither vote nor hold political office.

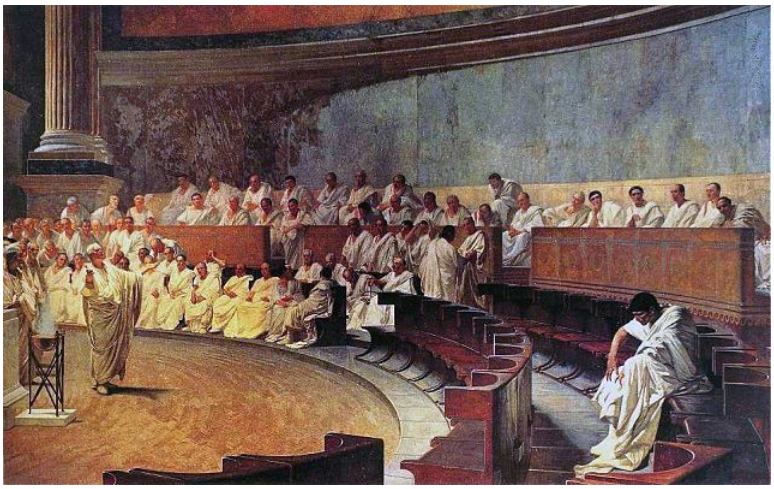
Government

Over the course of its history, Rome existed as a kingdom (hereditary monarchy), a republic (in which leaders were elected), and an empire (a kingdom encompassing a wider swath of territory). From the establishment of the city in 753 BCE to the fall of the empire in 476 CE, the Senate was a fixture in the political culture of Rome, although the power it exerted did not remain constant.

During the days of the kingdom, it was little more than an advisory council to the king. Over the course of the Republic, the Senate reached the height of its power, with old-age becoming a symbol of prestige, as only elders could serve as senators. The modern term “senior citizen” derives from this moment and was represented in sculpture by “**veristic** (**verism**)” portraits in which male age was often exaggerated. However the late Republic witnessed the beginning of its decline. After Augustus ended the Republic to form the Empire, the Senate lost much of its power, and with the reforms of Diocletian in the third century CE, it became irrelevant.

As Rome grew as a global power, its government was subdivided into colonial and municipal levels. Colonies were modeled closely on the Roman constitution, with roles being defined for magistrates, council, and assemblies. Colonists enjoyed full Roman citizenship and were thus extensions of Rome itself. The second most prestigious class of cities was the municipium (a town or city). Municipia were originally communities of non-citizens among Rome’s Italic allies.

Later, Roman citizenship was awarded to all Italy, with the result that a municipium was effectively now a community of citizens. The category was also used in the provinces to describe cities that used Roman law but were not colonies.



The Roman Senate: A nineteenth-century fresco in the Palazzo Madama in Rome, depicting a sitting of the Roman Senate in which the senator Cicero attacks the senator Catiline. Public Domain

Religion

The Roman people considered themselves to be very religious. Religious beliefs and practices helped establish stability and social order among the Romans during the reign of Romulus and the period of the legendary kings. Some of the highest religious offices, such as the Pontifex Maximus, the head of the state’s religion— which eventually became one of the titles of the emperor—were sought-after political positions. Women who became Vestal Virgins served the goddess of the hearth, Vesta, and received a high degree of autonomy within the state, including rights that other women would never receive.

The Roman pantheon corresponded to the Etruscan and Greek deities. Jupiter was considered the most powerful and important of all the Gods, corresponding to the Greek's Zeus. In nearly every Roman city, there was a central temple known as the Capitolia that was dedicated to the supreme triad of deities: Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva (Zeus, Hera, and Athena). Small household gods, known as Lares, were also popular.

Roman religious practice often centered around prayers, vows, oaths, and sacrifice. Many Romans looked to the gods for protection and would complete a promise sacrifice or offering as thanks when their wishes were fulfilled. The Romans were not exclusive in their religious practices and easily participated in numerous rituals for different gods. Furthermore, the Romans readily absorbed foreign gods and cults into their pantheon. With the rise of imperial rule, the emperors were considered gods, and temples were built to many emperors upon their death. Their family members could also be deified, and the household gods of the emperor's family were also incorporated into Roman worship.

The Republic

Roman Sculpture under the Republic

During the Roman Republic, members of all social classes used a variety of sculptural techniques to promote their distinguished social statuses.

Key Points

- Continuous narration arose during the Republic as a means of telling a story from beginning to end in a visual form. Art patrons used it on public monuments to celebrate their status in society.
- The patronage of public sculpture extended to freedmen, as seen in the massive and uniquely decorated tomb of Marcus Vergilius Eurysaces the Baker.
- Veristic portraiture depicts the subject in hyper- realism, wrinkles and individual facial characteristics are carefully formed in these images.
- Portraits of Pompey the Great and Julius Caesar set precedents for future imperial portraiture by quoting iconographic characteristics and introducing a likeness of the living imperator on coins.
- Death masks provided a means for a family to remember their ancestors as well as to remind others of the illustriousness of their ancestry.

Key Terms

- **verism**: The style of portraiture favored during the Roman Republic in which the subjects were portrayed in a super-realistic likeness; from the Latin word for true. Age was exaggerated for effect.
- **continuousnarration**: A visual art technique that illustrates multiple scenes of a story within a single frame and without any separation between scenes and actions.
- **Imperator**: A Latin word meaning general or ruler; a title given to triumphant generals during the Republic.

Roman Art in the Republic

Early Roman art was influenced by the art of Greece and that of the neighboring Etruscans, themselves greatly influenced by their Greek trading partners. As the expanding Roman Republic began to conquer Greek territory, its official sculpture became largely an extension of the Hellenistic style, with its departure from the idealized body and flair for the dramatic. This is partly due to the large number of Greek sculptors working within Roman territory.

However, Roman sculpture during the Republic departed from the Greek traditions in several ways.

- It was the first to feature a new technique called continuous narration.
- Commoners, including freedmen, could commission public art and use it to cast their professions in a positive light.
- Portraiture throughout the Republic celebrated old age with its verism.
- In the closing decades of the Republic, Julius Caesar counteracted traditional propriety by becoming the first living person to place his own portrait on a coin.

In the examples that follow, the patrons use these techniques to promote their status in society.

Portraiture

Roman portraiture during the Republic is identified by its considerable realism, known as veristic portraiture. Verism refers to a hyper-realistic portrayal of the subject's facial characteristics. The style originated from Hellenistic Greece; however, its use in the

Roman Republic is due to Roman values, customs, and political life.

As with other forms of Roman art, portraiture borrowed certain details from Greek art but adapted these to their own needs. Veristic images often show their male subjects with receding hairlines, deep winkles, and even with warts. While the faces of the portraits often display incredible detail and likeness, the subjects' bodies are idealized and do not correspond to the age shown in the face.



Portrait of a Roman General: When created as full-length sculptures, the veristic portrait busts appear to have been paired with idealized (mass-produced?) bodies that create a sense of disunity

TheDoublePortraitofGratidiaM.L.ChriteandM.GratidiusLibanus is another example of **verism**. This double bust was originally mounted on a funeral crypt or tomb and is illustrative on several levels. The wife of the couple makes a gesture of familial belonging that we have already seen in Egyptian representations like that of Menkaure and a Queen. It was also a gesture from the Roman marriage ceremony. [1]She is notably younger in appearance; perhaps she had her portrait done when she was a younger woman for use after her death at whatever age. Alternately, she may have been a second, younger wife. Or more likely, the tradition of verism in men to underscore age, wisdom, and service to the city was not valued in women. Son of an ex-slave, Gratidius Libanus draws attention to his mark of citizenship, his toga.



Double Portrait of Gratidia M.L. Chrite and M. Gratidius Libanus. Late 1st century BCE. White marble with traces of color. Height 23.75 inches. Museo Pio Clementino, Musei Vaticani, Rome Photo© LaCour Slide Library. PD-US



Bust of an old man: Verism refers to a hyper-realistic portrayal of the subject's facial characteristics, such as the wrinkles on this man's face

The popularity and usefulness of verism appears to derive from the need to have a recognizable image. Veristic portrait busts provided a means of reminding people of distinguished ancestors or of displaying one's power, wisdom, experience, and authority. Statues were often erected of generals and elected officials in public forums—and a veristic image ensured that a passerby would recognize the person when they actually saw them.

The Late Republic

The use of veristic portraiture began to diminish in the first century BCE. During this time, civil wars threatened the empire, and individual men began to gain more power. The portraits of Pompey the Great and Julius Caesar, two political rivals who were also the most powerful generals in the Republic, began to change the style of the portraits and their use.

The portraits of Pompey are not fully idealized, nor were they created in the same veristic style of Republican senators. Pompey borrowed a specific parting and curl of his hair from Alexander the Great. This similarity served to link Pompey visually with the likeness of Alexander and to remind people that he possessed similar characteristics and qualities.



Marble bust of Pompey the Great: Portraits of Pompey combine a degree of verism with an idealized hairstyle reminiscent of Alexander the Great

Death Masks

The creation and use of death masks demonstrate Romans' veneration of their ancestors. These masks were created from molds taken of a person at the time of his or her death. Made of wax, bronze, marble, and terra cotta, death masks were kept by families and displayed in the atrium of their homes.

Visitors and clients who entered the home would have been reminded of the family's ancestry and the honorable qualities of their ancestors. Such displays served to bolster the reputation and credibility of the family.

Death masks were also worn and paraded through the streets during funeral procession. Again, this served not only a memorial for the dead, but also to link the living members of a family to their illustrious ancestors in the eyes of the spectator. With the Empire which was ushered in with the elevation of Augustus Ceasar, verism became less important. Empirical portraiture was idealized with the ruler depicted as youthful and powerful.

The Empire

After the death of Julius Caesar at the hands of the Senators who believed him about to declare himself Emperor for life, Rome devolved into chaos for a time. Ironically, it took another strong man – Augustus Caesar – to actually declare himself Emperor to get Roman society back into line. The Empire stretched from 27 BC – 395 CE, then as a divided Empire with the Western rule in Italy from 395 -476/80 and Constantinople (present-day Istanbul) in the East from 395-1453 when it was conquered by Islamic peoples.

Sculpture in the Empire

Augustus Caesar ushered in a period of more than 100 years peace called the Pax Romana. He turned away from verism and was always pictured as young and vital. In this well-known sculpture, Augustus of Prima Porta, from the 1st century CE, the Emperor is shown as both a soldier and an orator, his armor decorated with images of Mars, the God of War, and barefoot as gods or heroes in classical sculpture are pictured. His upraised arm suggests the traditional pose of an orator and his body and facial features are idealized. At his feet is Cupic, son of Venus, the goddess Augustus reputedly was descended from. Emperors were elevated upon death to the position of a god. Here, Augustus's sculpture is essentially political propaganda for the position of Emperor in a Rome previously hostile to that office. It is believed that this sculpture, like most ancient work, was painted in vivid polychromy.

Images of Emperors after Augustus followed this idealized format until late in the Empire. Eventually, figural types began to change and become more abstract opening the door to the conceptual images of medieval Christianity.



Augustus of Prima Porta, 1st c. CE, marble, 80.3″ high. Vatican Museums, PD-US

Architecture

Concrete

The Romans perfected the recipe for concrete during the third century BCE by mixing together water, lime, and pozzolana, volcanic ash mined from the countryside surrounding Mt. Vesuvius. Concrete became the primary building material for the Romans, and it is largely the reason that they were such successful builders.

Most Roman buildings were built with concrete and brick that was then covered in façade of stucco, expensive stone, or marble. Concrete was a cheaper and lighter material than most other stones used for construction. This helped the Romans build structures that were taller, more complicated, and quicker to build than any previous ones.

Once dried, concrete was also extremely strong, yet flexible enough to remain standing during moderate seismic activity. The Romans were even able to use concrete underwater, allowing them build harbors and breakers for their ports. The ruins of a tomb on the Via Appia (the most famous thoroughfare through ancient Rome) expose the stones and aggregate that the Romans used to mix concrete.

Arches, Vaults, and Domes

The Romans effectively combined concrete and the structural shape of the arch. These two elements became the foundations for most Roman structures. Arches can bear immense weight, as they are designed to redistribute weight from the top, to its sides, and down into the ground. While the Romans did not invent the arch, they were the first culture to manipulate it and rely on its shape.

An arch is a pure compression form. It can span a large area by resolving forces into compressive stresses (pushing downward) that, in turn, eliminate tensile stresses (pushing outward). As the forces in the arch are carried to the ground, the arch will push outward at the base (called thrust). As the height of the arch decreases, the outward thrust increases. In order to maintain arch action and prevent the arch from collapsing, the thrust needs to be restrained, either with internal ties or external bracing, such as abutments.

The arch is a shape that can be manipulated into a variety of forms that create unique architectural spaces. Multiple arches can be used together to create a vault. The simplest type is known as a barrel vault. Barrel vaults consist of a line of arches in a row that create the shape of a tunnel.

When two barrel vaults intersect at right angles, they create a groin vault. These are easily identified by the x-shape they create in the ceiling of the vault. Furthermore, because of the direction, the thrust is concentrated along this x-shape, so only the corners of a groin vault need to be grounded. This allows an architect or engineer to manipulate the space below the groin vault in a variety of ways.

Arches and vaults can be stacked and intersected with each other in a multitude of ways. One of the most important forms that they can create is the dome. This is essentially an arch that is rotated around a single point to create a large hemispherical vault. The largest dome constructed during the Republic was on the Temple of Echo at Baiae, named for its remarkable acoustic properties

The Pantheon

This Roman temple dedicated to all the Gods (pan – theis) was made possible by the Roman use of concrete. It was for centuries one of the most iconic structures in the world. See a very good video about the Pantheon here:



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://boisestate.pressbooks.pub/arthistory/?p=691

Flavian Amphitheater (Colosseum)

Upon his succession, the emperor Vespasian began a vast building program in Rome that was continued by Titus and Domitian. It was a cunning political scheme to garner support from the people of Rome.

Vespasian transformed land from hated emperor Nero's Domus Aurea (Gold House) into public buildings for leisure and entertainment, such as the Baths of Titus and the Flavian Amphitheatre. Nero's private lake was drained and became the foundations for the amphitheater, the first permanent amphitheater built in the city of Rome. Before this time, gladiatorial contests in the city were held in temporary wooden arenas.



Flavian Amphitheater (Colosseum): The exterior of the Flavian Amphitheater or Colosseum, 70–80 CE, in Rome, Italy

The amphitheater became known as the Colosseum for its size, but in also in reference to a colossal golden statue of Nero that stood nearby. Vespasian had the colossus reworked into an image of the sun god, Sol.

Painting in the Early Roman Empire

Roman frescoes were the primary method of interior decoration and their development is generally categorized into four different styles or periods. While it isn't necessary to categorize each style, it is notable that examples of each remain in buildings preserved in Pompeii.

Key Points

- The development of fresco -painting styles is a visual example of the changing tastes from the third century BCE through the first century CE. The change in styles reflects the changes that occurred in Roman society.

Key Terms

- **triclinium**: Formal dining room.
- **buonfresco**: A painting that involves applying wet paint to wet lime plaster. As both components dry, a chemical reaction causes them to fuse together, literally making the painting part of the wall.
- **encaustic**: A wax-based paint that is fixed in place by heating; a painting produced using this paint.
- **fresco**: In painting, the technique of applying water-based pigment to lime mortar or plaster.
- **Egyptomania**: Roman fascination with all things related to Egypt following the death of Cleopatra in 31 BCE and the annexation of Egypt in 30 BCE.
- **trompel'oeil**: A genre of still-life painting that exploits human vision to create the illusion that the subject of the painting is real.

Roman Painting

Roman painters often painted frescoes, specifically buon fresco, a technique that involved painting pigment on wet plaster. When the painting dried, the image became an integral part of the wall. Fresco painting was the primary method of decorating an interior

space. However, few examples survive, and the majority of them are from the remains of Roman houses and villas around Mt. Vesuvius.

Other examples of frescoes come from locations that were buried (burial protected and preserved the frescoes), such as parts of Nero's Domus Aurea and at the Villa of Livia. These frescoes demonstrate a wide variety of styles. Popular subjects include mythology, portraiture, still-life painting, and historical accounts.

The surviving Roman paintings reveal a high degree of sophistication. They employ visual techniques that include atmospheric and near one-point linear perspective to properly convey the idea of space. Furthermore, portraiture and still-life images demonstrate artistic talent when conveying real-life objects and likenesses. The attention to detail seen in still-life paintings include minute shadows and an attention to light to properly depict the material of the object, whether it be glass, food, ceramics, or animals.

Roman portraiture further exhibits the talent of Roman painters and often shows careful study on the artist's part in the techniques used to portray individual faces and people. Some of the most interesting portraits come from Egypt, from late first century BCE to early third century CE, when Egypt was a province of Rome.



Fayum mummy portrait: A mummy portrait of a young women found in the Fayum Necropolis, Egypt, from the second century CE

These encaustic-on-wood panel images from the Fayum necropolis were laid over the mummified body. They show remarkable realism, while conveying the ideals and changing fashions of the Egypto-Roman people.

Villa of the Mysteries

At the Villa of the Mysteries, just outside of Pompeii, there is a fantastic scene filled with life-size figures that depicts a ritual element from a Dionysian mystery cult. In this Second-Style example, architectural elements play a small role in creating the illusion of ritual space. The people and activity in the scene are the main focus. The architecture present is mainly piers or wall panels that divide the main scene into separate segments. The figures appear life-size, which brings them into the space of the room.



Villa of the Mysteries: One wall on the ritual scene depicted at the Villa of Mysteries, in Pompeii, Italy, c. 60–50 BCE

The scene wraps around the room, depicting what may be a rite of marriage. A woman is seen preparing her hair. She is surrounded by other women and cherubs while a figure, identified as Dionysus, waits. The ritual may reenact the marriage between Dionysus and Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos.

All the figures, except for Dionysus and one small boy, are female. The figures also appear to interact with one other from across the room. On the two walls in one corner, a woman reacts in terror to Dionysus and the mask over his head. On the opposite corner, a cherub appears to be whipping a woman on the adjoining wall. While the cult aspects of the ritual are unknown, the fresco demonstrates the ingenuity and inventiveness of Roman painters.

Pompeii

The eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE preserved many structures in the city of Pompeii, allowing scholars a rare glimpse into Roman life.

Key Points

- Pompeiian houses deviated greatly from the standard model created by historians. Examples demonstrate how the standard elements could be rearranged to fit almost any footprint and the wealth of the patron.

Key Terms

- **atrium**: A square hall lit by daylight from above, into which rooms open at one or more levels.
- **peristyle**: A colonnade that surrounds a courtyard, temple, etc.
- **patrician**: Originally, a member of any of the families constituting the populus Romanus, or body of Roman citizens, before the development of the plebeian order; later, one who, by right of birth or by special privilege conferred, belonged to the senior class of Romans, who, with certain property, had by right a seat in the Roman Senate.

During the Roman Republic and into the early Empire, the area today known as the Bay of Naples was developed as a resort-type area for elite Romans to escape the pressure and politics of Rome. The region was dominated by Mt. Vesuvius, which famously erupted in August 79 CE, burying and preserving the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, along with the region's villas and farms.

When Vesuvius erupted on August 25, a cloud of ash spewed south, burying the cities of Pompeii, Nuceria, and Stabiae. While not everyone left prior to the eruption, archaeological evidence shows that people did leave the city. Some houses give the impression of having been packed up and in some cases furniture and objects were excavated jumbled together. Other objects of value appear to have been buried or hidden. There is evidence of people returning after the eruption to dig through the remains—either recovering lost goods or looting for valuables.



The eruption of Mount Vesuvius: The black and gray areas show the direction in which the wind blew the ash and pyroclastic clouds

In Pompeii, an ash flow suffocated the remaining population and allowed all organic matter to decompose. However, where bodies and other organic objects (from bodies to wooden architectural frames) once lay or stood, empty cavities within the ash remained and preserved their outer forms.

A pyroclastic flow of superheated gas and rock went west to the coast and the city of Herculaneum. Unlike the ash blanket of Pompeii, the pyroclastic flow in Herculaneum petrified organic material, ensuring the preservation of human remains and wood, including the preservation of wooden screens, beds, and shelving. Many of the frescoes, mosaics, and other non-organic materials in both the ash and pyroclastic flows were preserved until their excavation in the modern period.



Part of a Roman mosaic from Pompeii (house n. 16, insula 2, Regio VIII; first century CE) that described predator–prey interactions between an octopus, a spiny lobster, and a moray eel (Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei) https://www.researchgate.net/figure/...2_fig5_Figure- 5-Part-of-a-Roman-mosaic-from-Pompeii-house-n-16-insula-2-Regio-VIII-first

Returning to images from Fayum in Egypt, the mummy case of Artemidoros, 100 – 200 CE, shows the conflation of cultures at the end of the Roman period.



Mummy case of Artemidoros, from Fayum. 100-200 CE. Stucco casing with portrait in encaustic on limewood with added gold leaf, 67 ¼" H. The British Museum, London. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0

The image of the young man is done in a Roman style; his name is Greek and he wears a Greek victory wreath, yet his mummy case is covered in traditional Egyptian burial symbols. Rome's influence would end with the rise of a new religion and that will be where we will turn our attention next.

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5.4: High Renaissance

The High Renaissance was centered in Rome, and lasted from about 1490 to 1527, with the end of the period marked by the Sack of Rome. Stylistically, painters during this period were influenced by classical art, and their works were harmonious. The restrained beauty of a High Renaissance painting is created when all of the parts and details of the work support the cohesive whole. While earlier Renaissance artists would stress the perspective of a work, or the technical aspects of a painting, High Renaissance artists were willing to sacrifice technical principles in order to create a more beautiful, harmonious whole. The factors that contributed to the development of High Renaissance painting were twofold. Traditionally, Italian artists had painted in tempera paint. During the High Renaissance, artists began to use oil paints, which are easier to manipulate and allow the artist to create softer forms. Additionally, the number and diversity of patrons increased, which allowed for greater development in art.

The High Renaissance represents the culmination of the goals of the Early Renaissance, namely the realistic representation of figures in space rendered with credible motion and in an appropriately decorous style. The most well known artists from this phase are Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Titian, and Michelangelo. Their paintings and frescoes are among the most widely known works of art in the world. Da Vinci's *Last Supper*, Raphael's *The School of Athens* and Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel Ceiling paintings are the masterpieces of this period and embody the elements of the High Renaissance.



Marriage (Betrothal) of the Virgin, by Raphael: The painting depicts a marriage ceremony between Mary and Joseph. PD-US

Painting in the High Renaissance

The 16th century (1500's) is considered to be the high point in the development of Renaissance art. We look mainly at three figures from this period: Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michelangelo. This is the moment when artists begin to be recognized for their skill and sought after accordingly. The term "genius" is used for these figures. Giorgio Vasari, in possibly the first art history text, *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, allies the talents of artists like Michelangelo with the Divine – literally, touched by God.

Leonardo Da Vinci

Leonardo was the oldest of the three. Born in the Tuscan town of Vinci – Italian artists are often called after their place of origin – he was apprenticed at 14 to the Florentine artist Verrochio. This was one of the most successful studiolos in Florence with the

Medicis as patrons among others. Perugino and Botticelli were also associated with Verrocchio's studio.2 Leonardo painted very few actual paintings in his lifetime. He made money inventing weapons, waterworks and other things for wealthy condotierri and others as his many notebooks attest. His paintings were, however, of such a unique quality that they are revered today.

His *Madonna of the Rocks*, from 1491 – 99, and 1506 – 08, shows his skill with glazes of oil paint and manipulation of light to create the **sfumato**, or smoky softness, of the edges of things.



Leonardo da Vinci and workshop, Virgin of the Rocks, c. 1491-99, 1506-08, oil on poplar wood, 74.6 x 47.2", National Gallery, London. PD-US



Leonardo da Vinci, Madonna and Child with Saint Anne, c. 1503-06, oil on wood, 5’61/8” x 3’8”, Louvre. By C2RMF (digitizaed) / user:Dcoetzee (retouched) – original file: C2RMF: Galerie de tableaux en très haute définition: image page, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/inde...curid=15474941

The Madonna and Child with St. Anne uses the compositional device of the triangle to arrange the figures of a grown woman on another’s lap in a typically Renaissance rational, geometric arrangement.

The Last Supper

Da Vinci’s most celebrated painting of the 1490s is *The Last Supper*, which was painted for the refectory of the Convent of Santa Maria della Grazie in Milan. The painting depicts the last meal shared by Jesus and the 12 Apostles where he announces that one of them will betray him. When finished, the painting was acclaimed as a masterpiece of design. This work demonstrates something that da Vinci did very well: taking a very traditional subject matter, such as the Last Supper, and completely re-inventing it.

Prior to this moment in art history, every representation of the Last Supper followed the same visual tradition: Jesus and the Apostles seated at a table. Judas is placed on the opposite side of the table of everyone else and is effortlessly identified by the viewer. When da Vinci painted The Last Supper he placed Judas on the same side of the table as Christ and the Apostles, who are shown reacting to Jesus as he announces that one of them will betray him. They are depicted as alarmed, upset, and trying to determine who will commit the act. The viewer also has to determine which figure is Judas, who will betray Christ. By depicting the scene in this manner, da Vinci has infused psychology into the work.

Unfortunately, this masterpiece of the Renaissance began to deteriorate immediately after da Vinci finished painting, due largely to the painting technique that he had chosen. Instead of using the technique of fresco, da Vinci had used tempera over a ground that was mainly gesso in an attempt to bring the subtle effects of oil paint to fresco. His new technique was not successful, and resulted in a surface that was subject to mold and flaking.



The Last Supper: Leonardo da Vinci’s Last Supper, although much deteriorated, demonstrates the painter’s mastery of the human form in figurative composition. PD-US

Where do the orthogonals lead in the one-point linear perspective in this painting?

Mona Lisa

Among the works created by da Vinci in the 16th century is the small portrait known as the *Mona Lisa*, or *La Gioconda*, wife of Francesco del Giocondo who commissioned the painting (but never got it). In the present era it is arguably the most famous painting in the world. Its fame rests, in particular, on the elusive smile on the woman's face—its mysterious quality brought about perhaps by the fact that the artist has subtly shadowed the corners of the mouth and eyes so that the exact nature of the smile cannot be determined.

The shadowy quality for which the work is renowned came to be called sfumato, the application of subtle layers or "glazes" of translucent paint so that there is no visible transition between colors, tones, and often objects. Other characteristics found in this work are the unadorned dress, in which the eyes and hands have no competition from other details; the dramatic landscape background, in which the world seems to be in a state of flux; the subdued coloring; and the extremely smooth nature of the painterly technique, employing oils, but applied much like tempera and blended on the surface so that the brushstrokes are indistinguishable. And again, da Vinci is innovating upon a type of painting here. Portraits were very common in the Renaissance. However, portraits of women were always in profile, which was seen as proper and modest. Here, da Vinci present a portrait of a woman who not only faces the viewer but follows them with her eyes.



Mona Lisa: In the Mona Lisa, da Vinci incorporates his sfumato technique to create a shadowy quality. PD-US

Sculpture in the High Renaissance

Sculpture in the High Renaissance demonstrates the influence of classical antiquity and ideal naturalism.

During the Renaissance, an artist was not just a painter, or an architect, or a sculptor. They were typically all three. As a result, we see the same prominent names producing sculpture and the great Renaissance paintings. Additionally, the themes and goals of High Renaissance sculpture are very much the same as High Renaissance painting. Sculptors during the High Renaissance were deliberately quoting classical precedents and they aimed for ideal naturalism in their works. Michelangelo (1475–1564) is the prime example of a sculptor during the Renaissance; his works best demonstrate the goals and ideals of the High Renaissance sculptor.

Michelangelo

Bacchus

The *Bacchus* is Michelangelo's first recorded commission in Rome. The work is made of marble, it is life sized, and it is carved in the round. The sculpture is of the god of wine, who is holding a cup and appears drunk. The references to classical antiquity are clear in the subject matter, and the body of the god is based on the Apollo Belvedere, which Michelangelo would have seen while in Rome. Not only is the subject matter influenced by antiquity, but so are the artistic influences.



Apollo Belvedere, ca. 120-140 CE; copy of bronze original of ca. 350-325 BCE, marble, Vatican CC BY- SA Livioandronico2013



Bacchus by Michelangelo, 1496–97: Bacchus is Michelangelo's first recorded commission in Rome. The statue clearly demonstrates the classical influence that became so important to sculptors during the High Renaissance. PD-US

Pieta

While the *Pieta* is not based on classical antiquity in subject matter, the forms display the restrained beauty and ideal naturalism that was influenced by classical sculpture. Commissioned by a French Cardinal for his tomb in Old St. Peter's, it is the work that made Michelangelo's reputation. The subject matter of the Virgin cradling Christ after the crucifixion was uncommon in the Italian Renaissance, indicating that it was chosen by the patron.



Pieta by Michelangelo, 1498–9: This work by Michelangelo demonstrates the classical beauty and idealism that characterizes sculptures of the High Renaissance. PD-US

David

When the *David* was completed, it was intended to be sit on the roofline of the Florentine Cathedral. But Florentines during that time recognized it as so special and beautiful that they actually had a meeting about where to place the sculpture. Members of the group that met included the artists Leonardo da Vinci and Botticelli. What about this work made it stand out so spectacularly to Michelangelo's peers? The work demonstrates classical influence. The work is nude, in emulation of Greek and Roman sculptures, and the *David* stands in a contrapposto pose. He shows restrained beauty and ideal naturalism. Additionally, the work demonstrates an **interest in psychology**, which was new to the High Renaissance, as Michelangelo depicts David concentrating in the moments before he takes down the giant. The subject matter was also very special to Florence as David was traditionally a civic symbol. The work was ultimately placed in the Palazzo Vecchio and remains the prime example of High Renaissance sculpture.





David by Michelangelo, c.1504: This work by Michelangelo remains the prime example of High Renaissance sculpture. Detail CC BY-SA 3.0 Jorg Bittner Unna

Michelangelo believed sculpture to be the purest, highest form of art. Nevertheless, he is just as well-known for the fresco paintings he did for a number of popes. In 1508 Pope Julius II asked Michelangelo to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Ceiling in the Vatican. He offered him the chance to do all the sculpture on his, Julius', tomb in return. Reluctantly, Michelangelo agreed and created one of the most iconic set of images in the Western canon.

The program is drawn from the Old Testament, but as in much of Christian imagery it prefigures the New. Prophets and Sibyls line the ceiling foretelling the coming of the Christian Messiah. Stories, like that of Jonah and the Whale (dead for 3 days then alive again) prefigure the Resurrection. Down the center Michelangelo has created individual frames with the stories from Genesis – God creating Adam is possibly the best-known. Michelangelo creates heroic Classical male bodies that suggest the sculpture he would rather have been making. Dividing each frame and perched on plinths are male youths called "ignudi" whose purpose is not clear. For a basic introduction to the Sistine Ceiling from the Khan Academy see:



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Raphael

Raphael Sanza was an Italian Renaissance painter and architect whose work is admired for its clarity of form and ease of composition.

Key Points

- Together with Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael forms the traditional trinity of great masters of the High Renaissance. He was enormously productive, running an unusually large workshop, and despite his death at 30, he had a large body of work.
- Some of Raphael's most striking artistic influences come from the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci; because of this inspiration, Raphael gave his figures more dynamic and complex positions in his earlier compositions.
- Raphael's "Stanze" masterpieces are very large and complex compositions that have been regarded among the supreme works of the High Renaissance. They give a highly idealized depiction of the forms represented, and the compositions, though very carefully conceived in drawings, achieve *sprezzatura*, the art of performing a task so gracefully it looks effortless.

Key Terms

- **sprezzatura**: The art of performing a difficult task so gracefully that it looks effortless.
- **loggia**: A roofed, open gallery.
- **contrapposto**: The position of a figure whose hips and legs are twisted away from the direction of the head and shoulders.

Overview

Raphael (1483–1520) was an Italian painter and architect of the High Renaissance. His work is admired for its clarity of form and ease of composition and for its visual achievement of the Neoplatonic ideal of human grandeur. Together with Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael forms the traditional trinity of great masters of that period. He was enormously productive, running an unusually large workshop; despite his death at 30, a large body of his work remains among the most famous of High Renaissance art.

Influences

Some of Raphael's most striking artistic influences come from the paintings of Leonardo da Vinci. In response to da Vinci's work, in some of Raphael's earlier compositions he gave his figures more dynamic and complex positions. For example, Raphael's *Saint Catherine of Alexandria* (1507) borrows from the contrapposto pose of da Vinci's *Leda and the Swans*. Note the white wing of the swan as it folds around Leda's body.



Leonardo da Vinci, Leda and the Swan, c. 1510-15, oil on panel, 44.1 x 33.9". Galleria Borghese PD Web Gallery of Art: Image, Info about artwork



Saint Catherine of Alexandria: Saint Catherine of Alexandria (1507) borrows from the contrapposto pose of da Vinci's Leda. PD-US

While Raphael was also aware of Michelangelo's works, he deviates from his style. In his *Deposition of Christ*, Raphael draws on classical sarcophagi to spread the figures across the front of the picture space in a complex and not wholly successful arrangement.



The Deposition by Raphael, 1507: This painting depicts the body of Christ being carried and a woman fainting. PD-US

The Stanze Rooms and the Loggia

In 1511, Raphael began work on the famous Stanze paintings, which made a stunning impact on Roman art, and are generally regarded as his greatest masterpieces. The Stanza della Segnatura contains *The School of Athens*, *Poetry*, *Disputa*, and *Law*. *The School of Athens*, depicting Plato and Aristotle, is one of his best known works. These very large and complex compositions have been regarded ever since as among the supreme works of the High Renaissance, and the "classic art" of the post-antique West.

They give a highly idealized depiction of the forms represented, and the compositions—though very carefully conceived in drawings— achieve *sprezzatura*, a term invented by Raphael's friend Castiglione, who defined it as "a certain nonchalance that conceals all artistry and makes whatever one says or does seem uncontrived and effortless."



Raphael, School of Athens, 1511, Stanze della Segnatura, Rome. PD-US

View of the Stanze della Segnatura, frescoes painted by Raphael

In the later phase of Raphael's career, he designed and painted the Loggia at the Vatican, a long thin gallery that was open to a courtyard on one side and decorated with Roman style grottos, or cave-like garden ornaments. He also produced a number of significant altarpieces, including *The Ecstasy of St. Cecilia* and the *Sistine Madonna*. His last work, on which he was working until his death, was a large *Transfiguration* which, together with *Il Spasimo(Christ Falling on the Way to Calvary)*, shows the direction his art was taking in his final years, becoming more proto-Baroque than Mannerist.

The Master's studio

Raphael ran a workshop of over 50 pupils and assistants, many of whom later became significant artists in their own right. This was arguably the largest workshop team assembled under any single old master painter, and much higher than the norm. They included established masters from other parts of Italy, probably working with their own teams as sub-contractors, as well as pupils and journeymen.

Draftsman

Raphael was one of the finest draftsmen in the history of Western art, and used drawings extensively to plan his compositions. According to a near-contemporary, when beginning to plan a composition, he would lay out a large number of his stock drawings on the floor, and begin to draw "rapidly," borrowing figures from here and there. Over 40 sketches survive for the *Disputa* in the Stanze, and there may well have been many more originally (over 400 sheets survived altogether).

As evidenced in his sketches for the *Madonna and Child*, Raphael used different drawings to refine his poses and compositions, apparently to a greater extent than most other painters. Most of Raphael's drawings are rather precise—even initial sketches with naked outline figures are carefully drawn, and later drawings often have a high degree of finish, with shading and sometimes highlights in white. They lack the freedom and energy of some of da Vinci's and Michelangelo's sketches, but are almost always very satisfying aesthetically.



Raphael Sketch: This drawing shows Raphael's efforts in developing the composition for the Madonna and Child

Renaissance Architecture in Florence

Renaissance architecture first developed in Florence in the 15th century and represented a conscious revival of classical styles.

Key Points

- The Renaissance style of architecture emerged in Florence not as a slow evolution from preceding styles, but rather as a conscious development put into motion by architects seeking to revive the golden age of classical antiquity.
- The Renaissance style eschewed the complex proportional systems and irregular profiles of Gothic structures, and placed emphasis on symmetry, proportion, geometry, and regularity of parts.
- 15th century architecture in Florence featured the use of classical elements such as orderly arrangements of columns, pilasters, lintels, semicircular arches, and hemispherical domes.
- Filippo Brunelleschi was the first to develop a true Renaissance architecture.
- While the enormous brick dome that covers the central space of the Florence Cathedral used Gothic technology, it was the first dome erected since classical Rome and became a ubiquitous feature in Renaissance churches.
- The buildings of the early Renaissance in Florence expressed a new sense of light, clarity, and spaciousness that reflected the enlightenment and clarity of mind glorified by the philosophy of Humanism.

Key Terms

- **quattrocento**: Term that denotes the 1400s, which may also be referred to as the 15th century Renaissance Italian period.
- **entablature**: The part of a classical temple above the capitals of the columns; includes the architrave, frieze, and cornice but not the roof.
- **pilaster**: A rectangular column that projects partially from the wall to which it is attached; it gives the appearance of a support, but is only for decoration.

The Quattrocento, or the 15th century in Florence, was marked by the development of the Renaissance style of architecture, which represented a conscious revival and development of ancient Greek and Roman architectural elements. The rules of Renaissance architecture were first formulated and put into practice in 15th century Florence, whose buildings subsequently served as an inspiration to architects throughout Italy and Western Europe.

The Renaissance style of architecture emerged in Florence not as a slow evolution from preceding styles, but rather as a conscious development put into motion by architects seeking to revive a golden age. These architects were sponsored by wealthy patrons including the powerful Medici family and the Silk Guild, and approached their craft from an organized and scholarly perspective that coincided with a general revival of classical learning. The Renaissance style deliberately eschewed the complex proportional systems and irregular profiles of Gothic structures. Instead, Renaissance architects placed emphasis on symmetry, proportion, geometry, and regularity of parts as demonstrated in classical Roman architecture. They also made considerable use of classical antique features such as orderly arrangements of columns, pilasters, lintels, semicircular arches, and hemispherical domes.

The person generally credited with originating the Renaissance style of architecture is Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446), whose first major commission—the enormous brick dome that covers the central space of the Florence Cathedral—was also perhaps architecturally the most significant. Known as the *Duomo*, the dome was engineered by Brunelleschi to cover a spanning in the already existing Cathedral. The dome retains the Gothic pointed arch and the Gothic ribs in its design. The dome is structurally influenced by the great domes of Ancient Rome such as the Pantheon, and it is often described as the first building of the Renaissance. The dome is made of red brick and was ingeniously constructed without supports, using a deep understanding of the laws of physics and mathematics. It remains the largest masonry dome in the world and was such an unprecedented success at its time that the dome became an indispensable element in church and even secular architecture thereafter. Khan Academy gives a good, brief overview of what it took for Brunelleschi to create the dome on the Florence Cathedral:



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Duomo of Florence: The Florence Cathedral is the first example of a true dome in Renaissance architecture

Another key figure in the development of Renaissance architecture in Florence was Leon Battista Alberti (1402—1472), an important Humanist theoretician and designer, whose book on architecture *De re aedificatoria* was the first architectural treatise of the Renaissance. Alberti designed two of Florence's best known 15th century buildings: the Palazzo Rucellai and the facade of the church of Santa Maria Novella. The Palazzo Rucellai, a palatial townhouse built 1446–51, typified the newly developing features of Renaissance architecture, including a classical ordering of columns over three levels and the use of pilasters and entablatures in proportional relationship to each other.



Palazzo Rucellai, Florence: Designed by Leon Battista Alberti between 1446–1451

The buildings of the early Renaissance in Florence expressed a new sense of light, clarity, and spaciousness that reflected the enlightenment and clarity of mind glorified by the philosophy of Humanism.

The Venetian Painters of the High Renaissance

Giorgione, Titian, and Veronese were the preeminent Venetian painters of the High Renaissance.

Key Points

- The Venetian High Renaissance artists Giorgione, Titian, and Veronese employed novel techniques of color, scale, and composition, which established them as acclaimed artists north of Rome.
- In particular, these three painters followed the Venetian School ‘s preference of color (colorito) over disegno.
- Giorgio Barbarelli da Castlefranco, known as Giorgione (c. 1477–1510), is an artist who had considerable impact on the Venetian High Renaissance. Giorgione was the first to paint with oil on canvas.
- Tiziano Vecelli, or Titian (1490–1576), was arguably the most important member of the Venetian school, as well as one of the most versatile. His use of color would have a profound influence not only on painters of the Italian Renaissance, but on future generations in Western art.
- Paolo Veronese (1528–1588) was one of the primary Renaissance painters in Venice, known for his paintings such as *The Wedding at Cana* and T*he Feast in the House ofLevi*.

Key Terms

- **disegno**: Drawing or design, linear style.
- **colorito**: color and painterly brushwork.
- **Venetian School**: The distinctive, thriving, and influential art scene in Venice, Italy, starting from the late 15th century.

Giorgione, Titian, and Veronese were the preeminent painters of the Venetian High Renaissance. All three similarly employed novel techniques of color and composition, which established them as acclaimed artists north of Rome. In particular, Giorgione, Titian, and Veronese follows the Venetian School’s preference of color over disegno.

Giorgione

Giorgio Barbarelli da Castlefranco, known as Giorgione (c. 1477–1510), is an artist who had considerable impact on the Venetian High Renaissance. Unfortunately, art historians do not know much about Giorgione, partly because of his early death at around age 30, and partly because artists in Venice were not as individualistic as artists in Florence. While only six paintings are accredited to him, they demonstrate his importance in the history of art as well as his innovations in painting.

Giorgione was the first to paint with oil on canvas. Previously, people who used oils were painting on panel, not canvas. His works do not contain much under-drawing, demonstrating how he did not adhere to Florentine disegno, and his subject matters remain elusive and mysterious. One of his works that demonstrates all three of these elements is *The Tempest* (c. 1505–1510). This work is oil on canvas, x-rays show there is very little under drawing, and the subject matter remains one of the most debated issues in art history.



The Tempest, c, 1505–1510, Giorgione.: This work by Giorgione encapsulates all of the innovations he brought to painting during the Venetian High Renaissance and remains one of the most debated paintings of all time for its elusive subject matter. PD-US

Titian

Tiziano Vecelli, or Titian (1490–1576), was arguably the most important member of the 16th century Venetian school, as well as one of the most versatile; he was equally adept with portraits, landscape backgrounds, and mythological and religious subjects. His painting methods, particularly in the application and use of color, would have a profound influence not only on painters of the Italian Renaissance, but on future generations of Western art. Over the course of his long life Titian's artistic manner changed drastically, but he retained a lifelong interest in color. Although his mature works may not contain the vivid, luminous tints of his early pieces, their loose brushwork and subtlety of polychromatic modulations were without precedent.

In 1516, Titian completed his well-known masterpiece, the *Assumption of the Virgin*, or the *Assunta*, for the high altar of the church of the Frari. This extraordinary piece of colorism, executed on a grand scale rarely before seen in Italy, created a sensation. The pictorial structure of the *Assumption*—uniting in the same composition two or three scenes superimposed on different levels, earth and heaven, the temporal and the infinite.



Assunta, Titian: It took Titian two years (1516–1518) to complete his Assunta. The painting's dynamic three-tier composition and color scheme established him as the preeminent painter north of Rome. PD-US

Veronese

Paolo Veronese (1528–1588) was one of the primary Renaissance painters in Venice, well known for paintings such as *The Wedding at Cana* and *The Feast in the House of Levi.* Veronese is known as a supreme colorist, and for his illusionistic decorations in both fresco and oil. His most famous works are elaborate narrative cycles, executed in the dramatic and colorful style, full of majestic architectural settings and glittering pageantry.

His large paintings of biblical feasts executed for the refectories of monasteries in Venice and Verona are especially notable. For example, in *The Wedding at Cana*, which was painted in 1562–1563 in collaboration with Palladio, Veronese arranged the architecture to run mostly parallel to the picture plane, accentuating the processional character of the composition. The artist's decorative genius was to recognize that dramatic perspective effects would have been tiresome in a living room or chapel, and that the narrative of the picture could best be absorbed as a colorful diversion.

The Feast in the House of Levi was originally meant as a Last Supper. The Counter- Reformation church found it not to display the proper decorum and called Veronese before the Inquisition. Rather than repaint his masterpiece, Veronese changed the name to a story that put Christ in the colorful company of ordinary people. Christ would say when questioned about why he would want to rub shoulders with such rabble that he wasn't needed by the already converted. The Inquisition couldn't argue with that.



Paolo Veronese, Feast in the House of Levi, 2nd third of 16th c., oil on canvas, 218.5 x 503.9”, Accademia of Venice. PD The Yorck Project: 10.000 Meisterwerke der Malerei. DVD-ROM, 2002. ISBN 3936122202. Distributed by DIRECTMEDIA Publishing GmbH

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6: Art History - Early 20th Century

The Rise of Modernism

Modernism was a philosophical movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries that was based on an underlying belief in the progress of society.

Key Points

- Among the factors that shaped modernism were the development of modern industrial societies and the rapid growth of cities, followed by the horror of World War I.
- Modernism was essentially based on a utopian vision of human life and society and a belief in progress, or moving forward.
- Modernist ideals pervaded art, architecture, literature, religious faith, philosophy, social organization, activities of daily life, and even the sciences.
- In painting, modernism is defined by Surrealism, late Cubism, Bauhaus, De Stijl, Dada, German Expressionism, and Matisse as well as the abstractions of artists like Piet Mondrian and Wassily Kandinsky, which characterized the European art scene.
- The end of modernism and beginning of postmodernism is a hotly contested issue, though many consider it to have ended roughly around 1940.

Modernism is a philosophical movement that, along with cultural trends and changes, arose from enormous transformations in Western society during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Among the factors that shaped modernism were the development of modern industrial societies and the rapid growth of cities, followed by the horror of World War I.

Modernism was essentially based on a utopian vision of human life and society and a belief in progress, or moving forward. It assumed that certain ultimate universal principles or truths such as those formulated by religion or science could be used to understand or explain reality.

Modernist ideals were far-reaching, pervading art, architecture, literature, religious faith, philosophy, social organization, activities of daily life, and even the sciences. The poet Ezra Pound's 1934 injunction to "Make it new!" was the touchstone of the movement's approach towards what it saw as the now obsolete culture of the past. In this spirit, its innovations, like the stream-of-consciousness novel, atonal (or pantonal) and twelve-tone music, divisionist (or pointillist) painting and abstract art, all had precursors in the 19th century.

In painting, during the 1920s and the 1930s and the Great Depression, modernism is defined by Surrealism, late Cubism, Bauhaus, De Stijl, Dada, German Expressionism, and Modernist and masterful color painters like Henri Matisse as well as the abstractions of artists like Piet Mondrian and Wassily Kandinsky, which characterized the European art scene. In Germany, Max Beckmann, Otto Dix, George Grosz, and others politicized their paintings, foreshadowing the coming of World War II, while in America, modernism is seen in the form of American Scene painting and the social realism and regionalism movements that contained both political and social commentary dominated the art world.

Modernism is defined in Latin America by painters Joaquín Torres García from Uruguay and Rufino Tamayo from Mexico, while the muralist movement with Diego Rivera, David Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, Pedro Nel Gómez, and Santiago Martinez Delgado, and Symbolist paintings by Frida Kahlo, began a renaissance of the arts for the region, characterized by a freer use of color and an emphasis on political messages. The end of modernism and beginning of postmodernism is a hotly contested issue, though many consider it to have ended roughly around 1940.



Les Desmoiselles D'Avignon by Picasso, 1907: Picasso is a ubiquitous (common) example of a modernist painter

Fauvism and Expressionism

Fauvism

The Fauves were a group of early 20th century Modern artists based in Paris whose works challenged Impressionist values.

Key Points

- The Fauvist movement, led by Henri Matisse and Andre Derain, officially lasted for only four years: 1904–1908.
- Vivid color, simplification, abstraction, and unusual brush strokes are hallmarks of the Fauvist style. Fauvist influences and references include Van Gogh's Post- Impressionism and the Neo-Impressionist technique of Pointillism.
- Gustave Moreau, a controversial professor at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, mentored several of the Fauves, including Matisse, and profoundly influenced their work.

Key Terms

- **Post-Impressionism**: (Art) a genre of painting that rejected the naturalism of impressionism, using color and form in more expressive manners.
- **pointillism**: In art, the use of small areas of color to construct an image.
- **Fauvism**: An artistic movement of the last part of the 19th century that emphasized spontaneity and the use of extremely bright colors.

Fauvism is the style of *les Fauves* (French for "the wild beasts"), a short-lived and loose group of early 20th century Modern artists whose works emphasized painterly qualities and strong color over the representational or realistic values retained by Impressionism. While Fauvism as a style began around 1900 and continued beyond 1910, the movement as such lasted only a few years, 1904–1908, and had three exhibitions. The leaders of the movement were Henri Matisse and André Derain.

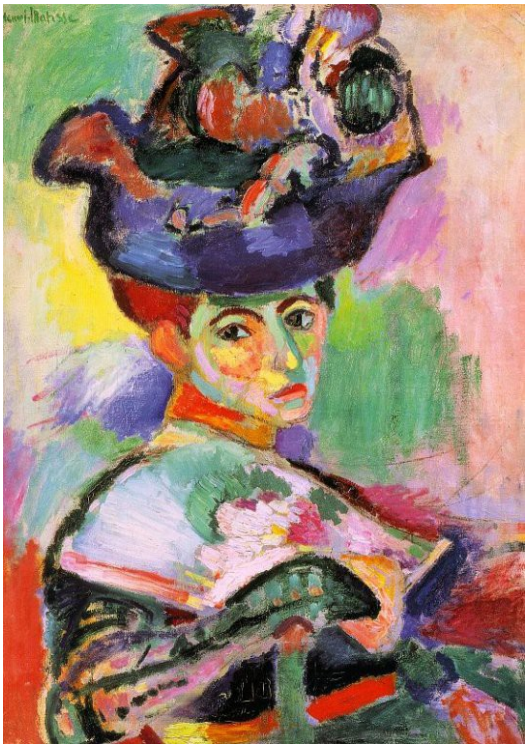


Charing Cross Bridge, London by André Derain, 1906: The vibrant, surprising use of color in this work is characteristic of the Fauvist style

Apart from Matisse and Derain, other artists included Albert Marquet, Charles Camoin, Louis Valtat, the Belgian painter Henri Evenepoel, Maurice Marinot, Jean Puy, Maurice de Vlaminck, Henri Manguin, Raoul Dufy, Othon Friesz, Georges Rouault, the Dutch painter Kees van Dongen, the Swiss painter Alice Bailly, and Georges Braque (subsequently Picasso's partner in Cubism).

The paintings of the Fauves were characterized by seemingly wild brushwork and strident colors, while their subject matter had a high degree of simplification and abstraction. Fauvism can be classified as an extreme development of Van Gogh's Post-Impressionism fused with the pointillism of Seurat and other Neo-Impressionist painters, in particular Paul Signac. Other key influences were Paul Cézanne and Paul Gauguin, whose employment of areas of saturated color—notably in paintings from Tahiti—strongly influenced Derain's work.

Derain and Matisse worked together through the summer of 1905 in the Mediterranean village of Collioure, and later that year displayed their highly innovative paintings at the Salon d'Automne. The vivid, unnatural colors led the critic Louis Vauxcelles to derisively dub their works as *les Fauves*, or "the wild beasts," which the artists then appropriated as the title for their movement. The painting that was singled out for special condemnation, Matisse's *Woman with a Hat*, was subsequently bought by the major patrons of the avant-garde scene in Paris, Gertrude and Leo Stein.



Woman with a Hat by Henri Matisse, 1905.: This painting was rejected by critics when initially exhibited, but was soon acquired by avant-garde collectors Leo and Gertrude Stein



Henri Matisse, The Joy of Life, 1905-06. Oil on canvas, 5'81/2" x 7'91/4", Philadelphia. PD US

Matisse vied for the title of King of the Avant-garde with Picasso during the first decade or so of the twentieth century. Paintings like *Joie de Vivre* or *Joy of Life* had conventional subject matter – a pastorale setting for music, dance, and love – but pictured very differently. He divorces color from form and creates a gentle fantasy that delights the American chemist, businessman, and art collector. His Barnes collection in Philadelphia has many of Matisse's most formidable works.

“Primitivism” and Cubism

As one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, Pablo Picasso is widely known for his involvement in Cubism and Primitivism.

Key Points

- 1906–1909 is referred to as Picasso’s African period, during which he produced *Les Demoiselles d’Avignon* and several other paintings incorporating primitivist elements.
- Picasso was inspired by African artifacts as well as the work of Post-Impressionist artist Paul Gauguin.
- The formal elements of *Les Desmoisellesd’Avignon* bridged Picasso’s African Period and subsequent Cubist work.
- Picasso and Georges Braque co-founded the Cubist movement, one of the most influential movements in Modern Art.
- Cubism stressed basic abstract geometric forms that presented the subject from many angles simultaneously.

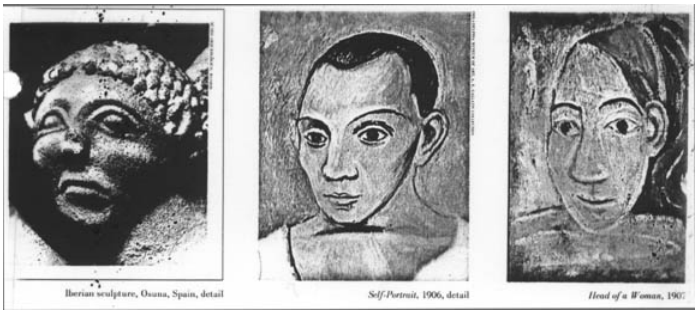
Key Terms

- **primitivism**: Primitivism is a term that borrows visual forms from non-Western or prehistoric peoples, a practice that was central to the development of modern art. Generally considered today to be a colonialist or derogatory way of describing the culture of the other civilizations.

African Period (1906–1910)

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the European cultural elite were discovering African, Micronesian, and Native American art. African artifacts were being brought back to Paris museums following the expansion of the French empire into Africa. The press was abuzz with exaggerated stories of cannibalism and exotic tales about the African kingdom of Dahomey. The mistreatment of Africans in the Belgian Congo was exposed in Joseph Conrad’s popular book, *Heart of Darkness*.

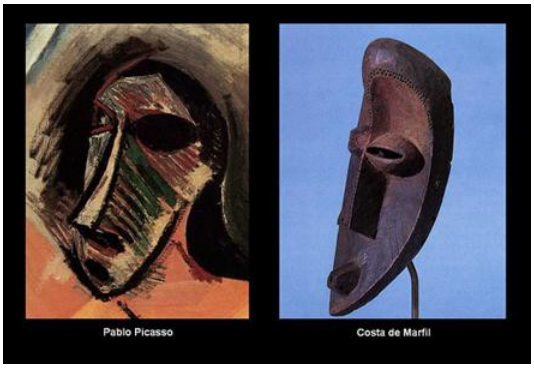
Artists such as Paul Gauguin, Henri Matisse, and Picasso were intrigued and inspired by the stark power and simplicity of styles of “primitive” cultures. Around 1906, Picasso, Matisse, Derain, and other Paris-based artists had acquired an interest in Primitivism, Iberian sculpture, African art, and tribal masks, in part due to the works of Paul Gauguin that had recently achieved recognition in Paris’s avant-garde circles. Gauguin’s powerful posthumous retrospective exhibitions at the Salon d’Automne in Paris in 1903 and 1906 had a powerful influence on Picasso’s paintings. Picasso created a style of portraiture that seems to have been based, largely, on Iberian masks – appealing because they came from the Iberian, or Spanish and Portuguese, peninsula just as Picasso himself had.





Pablo Picasso, Self-Portrait, 1906, oil on canvas. PD US

In 1907, Picasso experienced a “revelation” while viewing African art at the ethnographic museum at Palais du Trocadéro. African art influenced Picasso’s painting *Les Demoiselles d’Avignon* (1907), especially in its treatment of the two figures on the right side of the composition. This painting is also considered a protocubist work bridging Picasso’s African and Cubist periods.



Cerrar o aprete tecla ESC http://www.elacontecer.com.uy/contra...e-moderno.html



Les Desmoiselles D’Avignon by Picasso, 1907: Picasso is a ubiquitous (common) example of a modernist painter

George Braque was a little older than Picasso. He had been painting in an Impressionist, then Fauvist style. After Cézanne died in 1906, his paintings were exhibited in a large retrospective in 1907. The breaking up of forms into planes of space with brushwork

and color greatly influenced Braque. He even painted some of Cézanne's motifs like the Castle at Roche-Guyon.



George Braque, Castle at Roche-Guyon, 1909, oil on canvas, 251/2 x 211/2, MoMA. PD US © 2017 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Analytic Cubism (1909–1912)

Cubism, established by Picasso and his colleague Georges Braque, was marked by a revolutionary departure from representational art. In Cubist artwork, objects were analyzed, broken up, and reassembled in an abstracted form instead of being depicted from one viewpoint. Picasso, Braque, and other Cubists depicted subjects from a multitude of viewpoints to create a greater scope of context. Cubism has been considered the most influential art movement of the 20th century.



Violin and Candlestick by Georges Braque, 1910: Georges Braque, with Picasso, was one of the founders of Cubism

Cubism had a global reach as a movement, influencing similar schools of thought in literature, music, and architecture. Particular offshoots beyond France included the movements of Futurism, Suprematism, Dada, Constructivism, and De Stijl, which all developed in response to Cubism. Early Futurist paintings have some commonalities with Cubism: the fusing of the past and the present and the representation of different views of the subject pictured at the same time, also called multiple perspective, simultaneity or multiplicity. Constructivism was influenced by Picasso's technique of constructing sculpture from separate elements. Other common threads between these disparate movements include the faceting or simplification of geometric forms, and the association of mechanization and modern life.

The first phase of Cubism is called Analytic Cubism; the multiple perspectives and planes in space in a limited, neutral palette is characteristic of this moment.



Braque, The Portuguese, 1911, oil on canvas, 81 x 118.8 cm, Basel Public domain US

In Cubist artwork, objects are analyzed, broken up, and reassembled in an abstracted form. Instead of depicting objects from one viewpoint, the artist depicts the subject from a multitude of viewpoints to represent the subject in a greater context.

Synthetic Cubism (1912-14)

The second phase of Cubism from about 1912 – 1914 is called Synthetic Cubism. It features papier collé, or cut paper collage, as well as Analytic Cubist painting. Braque is credited with the first of these collage/paintings, but Picasso wasn't far behind. In his *Still Life with Chair Caning*, commercially printed oilcloth creates the "seat" of the chair and the objects on a café tabletop are painted. The scalloped edge of the table is created from rope with an invisible join!



Pablo Picasso, Still Life with Chair Caning, 1912, oil on oil-cloth over canvas edged with rope, 29 x 37 cm (Musée Picasso)

Futurism

Futurism was an Italian movement that emphasized and glorified themes associated with contemporary concepts of the future such as speed, technology, youth, and violence, as well as objects such as the car, the airplane, and the industrial city. In 1910 and 1911 futurist painters made use of the technique of divisionism, which entails breaking light and color down into a field of stippled dots and stripes. Severini was the first to come into contact with Cubism. Following a visit to Paris in 1911, the Futurist painters adopted the methods of the Cubists. Cubism offered them a means of analyzing energy in paintings and visually expressing their desired focus on dynamism, motion, and speed. The adoption of Cubism determined the style of much subsequent Futurist painting.

Futurism as a movement didn't survive WWI. After witnessing the carnage machines enacted on the human body in that war the idealistic concept of progress by way of technology was diminished in Europe.



Abstract Speed + Sound, by Giacomo Balla 1913–1914: This is a seminal work from the Futurist movement which was influenced by Cubism. Public domain US



Umberto Boccioni, Unique Forms of Continuity in Space, 1913. Bronze sculpture. MoMA PD US

German Expressionism

German Expressionism refers to a number of related creative movements beginning before WWI and peaking in Berlin during the 1920s.

Key Points

- Kathe Kollwitz and are among the independent German Expressionists who were unaffiliated with other Expressionist groups but nonetheless successful.
- Kollwitz is best remembered for her compassionate series, The Weavers.
- Many of Egon Schiele's contemporaries found the explicit sexual themes of his work disturbing.
- Paula Modersohn-Becker is among the first recognized female artists to create nude self-portraits.

Key Terms

- **Weimar Republic**: The democratic regime of Germany from 1919 to the assumption of power by Adolf Hitler in 1933.
- **expressionism**: A movement in the arts in which the artist does not depict objective reality, but rather a subjective expression of inner experience.
- **Fauvism**: An artistic movement of the last part of the 19th century that emphasized spontaneity and the use of extremely bright colors.

Expressionism

Expressionism was a modernist movement, beginning with poetry and painting, that originated in Germany at the start of the 20th century. It emphasized subjective experience, manipulating perspective for emotional effect in order to evoke moods or ideas. Expressionist artists sought to express meaning or emotional experience rather than physical reality.

Expressionism was developed as an avant-garde style before the First World War and remained popular during the Weimar Republic, particularly in Berlin. The style extended to a wide range of the arts, including painting, literature, theatre, dance, film, architecture, and music.



Still from the 1920 film The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Robert Wieni, director. PD US

Expressionist painters had many influences, among them Edvard Munch, Vincent van Gogh, and several African artists. They were also aware of the Fauvist movement in Paris, which influenced Expressionism's tendency toward arbitrary colors and jarring compositions.



Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Berlin Street Scene, 1913. Oil on canvas, 47.6 x 37.4", New York, MoMA, 2008. PD US

Kathe Kollwitz

Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945) was a German painter, printmaker, and sculptor whose work offered an eloquent and often searing account of the human condition, and the tragedy of war, in the first half of the 20th century. Initially, her work was grounded in Naturalism, and later took on Expressionistic qualities. Inspired by a performance of Gerhart Hauptmann's The Weavers, which dramatized the oppression of the Silesian weavers in Langembielau and their failed revolt in 1842, Kollwitz produced a cycle of six works on the Weavers theme. Rather than a literal illustration of the drama, the works were a free and naturalistic expression of the workers' misery, hope, courage, and, eventually, doom. The Weavers became Kollwitz' most widely acclaimed work.



Mother with her Dead Son by Käthe Kollwitz: This Kollwitz sculpture is a WWII war memorial

Influence of Cubism

Cubist sculpture developed in parallel with Cubist painting, centered in Paris beginning around 1909 and evolving through the early 1920s. The style is most closely associated with the formal experiments of Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso. Others were quick to follow Braque and Picasso's lead in Paris, including Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Alexander Archipenko, Joseph Csaky, Jacques Lipchitz, Henri Laurens, and Ossip Zadkine.

During his period of Cubist innovation, Picasso revolutionized the art of sculpture by combining disparate objects and materials into one sculptural work—the sculptural equivalent of collage in two dimensional art. Just as collage was a radical development in two dimensional art, so was Cubist construction a radical development in three dimensional sculpture.

Dada and Surrealism

Dada and Surrealism were multidisciplinary cultural movements of the European avant-garde that emerged in Zurich and Paris respectively during the time of WWI.

Key Points

- Dada was a political movement opposed to artistic and social conformity as well as the capitalist forces that led to WWI.
- Dada artists worked in non-traditional media including collage, photomontage, and assemblage. Dada artist Michel Duchamp pioneered the notion of the "readymade;" everyday objects appropriated for artistic purposes.
- Dada spread throughout Europe and North America following WWI; by the early 1920s the center of Dada activity was Paris.
- Dada informed many of the major avant-garde movements of the 20th century century, including Surrealism and Social Realism.
- Surrealism began in the 1920s and had a lot in common with Dadaism.
- Surrealist works drew inspiration from intuition, the power of the unconscious mind, and various psychological schools of thought.
- Surrealist artists and writers regarded their work as an expression of the philosophical movement, with the artwork being an artifact.

Key Terms

- **readymade**: Everyday objects found or purchased and declared art. The readymades of Marcel Duchamp are ordinary manufactured objects that the artist selected and modified as an antidote to what he called "retinal art." By simply choosing the object (or objects) and repositioning, joining, titling, and signing it, the object became art.
- **collage**: A composite object or collection (abstract or concrete) created by the assemblage of various media; especially for a work of art like text, film, etc.
- **social realism**: An artistic movement that depicted social and racial injustice and economic hardship through unvarnished pictures of life's struggles.

Dada

World War I was a cataclysmic event in Europe. A generation of young men were lost and many countries had their cities and landscapes devastated. The psychic toll on those who endured the war was very great. Artists reacted against the war in a variety of ways, but one of the most influential was the Dada movement.

Dada was a multi-disciplinary art movement that rejected the prevailing artistic standards by producing “anti-art” cultural works. Dadaism was intensely anti-war, anti-bourgeois, and held strong political affinities with the radical left. For many participants, the movement was a protest against the bourgeois nationalist and colonialist interests, which many Dadaists believed were the root cause of the war, and against the cultural and intellectual conformity—in art and more broadly in society—that corresponded to the war. Many Dadaists believed that the reason and logic of bourgeois capitalist society had led people into war. They expressed their rejection of that ideology in artistic expression that appeared to reject logic and embrace chaos and irrationality.

The origin of the name Dada is unclear. Some believe that it is a nonsensical word while others maintain that it originates from the Romanian artists Tristan Tzara’s and Marcel Janco’s frequent use of the words “da, da,” meaning “yes, yes” in Romanian. Another theory posits that the name “Dada” came during a meeting of when a knife stuck into a French–German dictionary happened to point to *dada*, a French word for “hobbyhorse.” Likely, the origin of the name Dada is another attempt to devalue a system of logic, namely that of language.

Dada began in Zurich, Switzerland, at the Café Voltaire in 1916. Key figures in the Dada movement included Hugo Ball, Emmy Hennings, Hans Arp, Hannah Hoch, and Raoul Hausmann, among others. The movement influenced later styles like avant-garde, and movements including Surrealism, Nouveau réalisme, pop art and Fluxus.



Hannah Hoch, Cut with a Kitchen Knife through the Weimar Beer Belly of the First Cultural Epoch in Germany, 1919, collage, 144 x 90 cm, Berlin. PD US Jennifer Mei via https://www.flickr.com/photos/47357563@N06/8235465163



Plaque commemorating the birth of Dada movement: This plaque is from the Cabaret Voltaire, the first venue where Dada artists showcased their work in 1916

Dada was an informal international movement with participants in Europe and North America that employed all kinds of media but are known especially for collage, writing, photomontage and performance. Dadaists worked in collage, creating compositions by pasting together transportation tickets, maps, plastic wrappers and other artifacts of daily life. Dada artists also worked in photomontage, a variation on collage that utilized actual or reproductions of photographs printed in the press. In Cologne, Max Ernst used photographs taken from the front during World War I to comment on the war. Another variation on collage used by Dadaists was assemblage, the assembly of everyday objects to produce meaningful or meaningless pieces of work, including war objects and trash.

When World War I ended in 1918, most of the Zurich Dadaists returned to their home countries, while some began Dada activities in other cities.



Dada poster from 1923: This poster for a Dada soiree references the medium of collage

Like Zurich, New York City was a refuge for writers and artists from World War I. Frenchmen Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia met American artist Man Ray in New York City in 1915. The trio soon became the center of radical anti-art activities in the United States.

One of those influenced by Dada's freedom from constraint in art was Marcel Duchamp who brought some of those ideas to New York with him before WWI. Through his "readymades" – ordinary objects like a bicycle wheel and a wooden stool or the famous urinal that became known as *Fountain*, 1917 – this repurposing of objects as art introduced very radical ideas about what art could be and who it could be for. Initially an object of scorn within the arts community, the *Fountain* has since become almost canonized by some as one of the most recognizable modernist works of sculpture. The committee presiding over Britain's prestigious Turner Prize in 2004, for example, called it "the most influential work of modern art."

Duchamp's work would bear fruit in the 1960s and after with the movements of Pop Art, Happenings, Fluxus, and Conceptual Art.



Marcel Duchamp, Fountain, 1917. Photograph by Alfred Stieglitz. Porcelain urinal with paint. MoMA. PD US

Surrealism

Surrealism was a cultural movement beginning in the 1920s that sprang directly out of Dadaism and overlapped in many senses. Surrealist works drew inspiration from intuition, the power of the unconscious mind, and various psychological schools of thought. The work often features unexpected juxtapositions, non sequiturs, and elements of surprise.

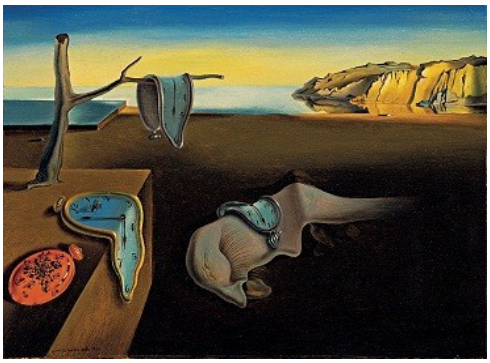
First and foremost, Surrealist artists and writers regarded their work as an expression of the philosophical movement, with the artwork being an artifact. Leader André Breton was explicit in his assertion that Surrealism was above all a revolutionary movement. Breton had studied the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud, and his concept of the unconscious became a centerpiece of Surrealist thought. The most important center of the movement was Paris. From the 1920s onward, the movement spread around the globe, eventually affecting the visual arts, literature, film, and music of many countries and languages, as well as political thought and practice, philosophy, and social theory.

As the Surrealists developed their philosophy, they believed that Surrealism would advocate the idea that ordinary and representative expression was vital and important, but that expression must be fully open to the imagination. Freud's work with free association, dream analysis, and the unconscious was of utmost importance to the Surrealists as they developed methods to liberate their imaginations.

Like Dada, Surrealism aimed to revolutionize human experience, in terms of the personal, cultural, social, and political aspects. Surrealists wanted to free people from false rationality, and also from restrictive customs and structures. Breton proclaimed that the true aim of Surrealism was "long live the social revolution, and it alone!"



Meret Oppenheim, Object (Luncheon in Fur), 1936. Fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon; h. 2 7/8". MoMA via http://leslouille.blogspot.com/2012/...-dejeuner.html



Salvador Dali, The Persistence of Memory, 1931. Oil on canvas, 9 ½ x 13", MoMA. Image taken from About.com

Europe from 1920-1945 CE

Soviet Constructivism

Constructivism, an artistic and architectural philosophy that originated in Russia in 1919, rejected the idea of autonomous art.

Key Points

- As much as involving themselves in designs for industry, the Constructivists worked on public festivals and street designs for the post-October revolution Bolshevik government.
- The canonical work of Constructivism was Vladimir Tatlin's proposal for the Monument to the Third International (1919), which combined a machine aesthetic with dynamic components celebrating technology such as searchlights and projection screens.
- The First Working Group of Constructivists defined Constructivism as the combination of faktura—the particular material properties of an object—and tektonika, its spatial presence.

Key Terms

- **Vladimir Tatlin:** (1885–1953) A Russian and Soviet painter and architect. With Kazimir Malevich he was one of the two most important figures in the Russian avant-garde art movement of the 1920s, and he later became an important artist in the Constructivist movement. He is most famous for his attempts to create the giant tower, The Monument to the Third International.
- **constructivism:** An artistic and architectural philosophy that originated in Russia beginning in 1919, which was a rejection of the idea of autonomous art. The movement was in favor of art as a practice for social purposes. Constructivism had a great effect on modern art movements of the 20th century, influencing major trends such as Bauhaus and the De Stijl movement.
- **suprematism:** A genre of abstract art based on simple, geometric forms.

Overview

Constructivism was an artistic and architectural philosophy that originated in Russia beginning in 1919. At the heart of the movement was a rejection of the idea of autonomous art. The movement was in favor of art as a practice for social purposes and participation in industry. Constructivism had a considerable effect on modern art movements of the 20th century, influencing major trends such as Bauhaus and the De Stijl movement. Its influence was pervasive, with major impacts upon architecture, graphic and industrial design, theatre, film, dance, fashion, and to some extent music.

Origins and Evolution

The term Construction Art was first used as a derisive term by Kazimir Malevich, an artist of the Suprematist movement, to describe the work of Alexander Rodchenko in 1917. Constructivism as theory and practice was derived largely from a series of debates at INKhUK (Institute of Artistic Culture) in Moscow, from 1920–22. After deposing its first chairman, Wassily Kandinsky, for his "mysticism," The First Working Group of Constructivists (including Liubov Popova, Alexander Vesnin, Rodchenko, Varvara Stepanova, and the theorists Alexei Gan, Boris Arvatov, and Osip Brik) would develop a definition of Constructivism as the combination of *faktura*—the particular material properties of an object—and *tektonika*, its spatial presence. Initially the Constructivists worked on three-dimensional constructions as a means of participating in industry: the OBMOKhU (Society of Young Artists) exhibition showed these three-dimensional compositions by Rodchenko, Stepanova, Karl Ioganson, and the Stenberg Brothers. Later the definition would be extended to designs for two-dimensional works such as books or posters, with montage and factography becoming important concepts.

Public Art

As much as involving themselves in designs for industry, the Constructivists worked on public festivals and street designs for the post-October revolution Bolshevik government. Perhaps the most famous of these was in Vitebsk, where Malevich's UNOVIS Group painted propaganda plaques and buildings (the best known being El Lissitzky's 1919 poster *Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge*). Inspired by Vladimir Mayakovsky's declaration "the streets our brushes, the squares our palettes," artists and designers participated in public life during the Civil War. A striking instance was the proposed festival for the Comintern congress in 1921 by Alexander Vesnin and Liubov Popova, which resembled the constructions of the OBMOKhU exhibition as well as their work for the theater.

There was a great deal of overlap during this period between Constructivism and Proletkult; the ideas of Proletkult concerning the need to create an entirely new culture struck a chord with the Constructivists. In addition, some Constructivists were heavily involved in the "ROSTA Windows," a Bolshevik public information campaign carried out around 1920. Some of the most famous of these were by the poet-painter Vladimir Mayakovsky and Vladimir Lebedev.



Agitprop poster by Mayakovsky: Mayakovsky worked for the Russian State Telegraph Agency (ROSTA) creating—both graphic and text—satirical Agitprop posters

Tatlin's Vision Versus Gabo's

The canonical work of Constructivism was Vladimir Tatlin's proposal for the Monument to the Third International (1919), which combined a machine aesthetic with dynamic components celebrating technology such as searchlights and projection screens. Gabo publicly criticized Tatlin's design, saying he should "Either create functional houses and bridges or create pure art, not both." This position had already caused a major controversy in the Moscow group in 1920, when Gabo and Pevsner's Realistic Manifesto asserted a spiritual core for the movement. This was opposed to the utilitarian and adaptable version of Constructivism held by Tatlin and Rodchenko. Tatlin's work was immediately hailed by artists in Germany as a revolution in art. A 1920 photograph shows George Grosz and John Heartfield holding a placard saying "Art is Dead–Long Live Tatlin's Machine Art. " The designs for the tower were published in Bruno Taut's magazine *Fruhlicht*.



Vladimir Tatlin, Monument to the Third International, 1919, model. PD US source; http://barista.media2.org/?cat=14&paged=2

Tatlin's tower started a period of exchange of ideas between Moscow and Berlin, something reinforced by El Lissitzky and Ilya Ehrenburg's Soviet-German magazine *Veshch-Gegenstand-Objet*, which spread the idea of "Construction art," as did the Constructivist exhibits at the 1922 Russische Ausstellung in Berlin, organised by Lissitzky. A "Constructivist international" was

formed, which met with Dadaists and De Stijl artists in Germany in 1922. Participants in this short-lived international group included Lissitzky, Hans Richter, and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy.

However, the idea of "art" was becoming anathema to the Russian Constructivists. The INKhUK debates of 1920–22 had culminated in the theory of Productivism propounded by Osip Brik and others, which demanded direct participation in industry and the end of easel painting. Tatlin was one of the first to attempt to transfer his talents to industrial production, with his designs for an economical stove, for workers' overalls, and for furniture. The Utopian element in Constructivism was maintained by his "letatlin," a flying machine which he worked on until the 1930s.

German Bauhaus Art

The Bauhaus was a school in Germany that combined crafts and the fine arts and was famous for its functionalist approach to design.

Key Points

- The Bauhaus had a profound influence on subsequent developments in art, architecture, graphic design, interior design, industrial design, and typography.
- The Bauhaus style was marked by the absence of ornamentation and by harmony between function and overall design.
- The design innovations commonly associated with Gropius and the Bauhaus—radically simplified forms, rationality, functionality, and the idea that mass-production was reconcilable with the individual artistic spirit—were already partly developed in Germany before the Bauhaus was founded.

Key Terms

- **Bauhaus:** A style in Modernist architecture and modern design, popularized at the "Staatliches Bauhaus" originally in Weimar, Germany.
- **Walter Gropius:** (1883—1969) A German architect and founder of the Bauhaus School who is widely regarded as one of the pioneering masters of modern architecture.

The Bauhaus was a school in Germany that operated from 1919 to 1933, combined crafts and the fine arts, and was famous for the functional design approach it taught and publicized. Despite its name meaning "house of construction" in German and the founder, Walter Gropius, being an architect, the Bauhaus did not have an architecture department during its first years. Nonetheless, the school was founded on the idea of "total" creativity, or *gesamtkunstwerk*, in which all arts would be brought together. Many well-known artists attended the Bauhaus, including Josef Albers, Anni Albers, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, Max Bill, and Herbert Bayer. The Bauhaus style became one of the most influential currents in Modernist architecture and modern design, having a profound influence on subsequent developments in art, architecture, graphic design, interior design, industrial design, and typography.



Gerrit Rietveld, Schroeder House, Utrecht, The Netherlands, 1924

Germany's defeat in World War I, the fall of the German monarchy, and the abolition of censorship under the new, liberal Weimar Republic allowed an upsurge in artistic experimentation. Many Germans of left-wing views were influenced by the cultural radicalization that followed the Russian Revolution. Yet the political influences can be overstated: Gropius himself did not have radical views and said Bauhaus was entirely apolitical. Another significant influence was the 19th century English designer

William Morris, who had argued that art should meet the needs of society and that there should be no distinction between form and function. Thus the Bauhaus style was marked by the absence of ornamentation and by harmony between function and overall design.



Marcel Breuer, Armchair, c. 1928. Chrome plated tubular steel with canvas slings. MoMA PDUS read more about Breuer here: https://www.1stdibs.com/furniture/se...d-f_5801443/#0

The school existed in three German cities: Weimar from 1919 to 1925, Dessau from 1925 to 1932, and Berlin from 1932 to 1933, under three different architect-directors: Walter Gropius from 1919 to 1928, Hannes Meyer from 1928 to 1930, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe from 1930 until 1933, when the school was closed by its own leadership under pressure from the Nazi regime, having being painted as a centre of communist intellectualism. Although the school was closed, the staff continued to spread its idealistic precepts as they left Germany and emigrated all over the world.

The influence of the Bauhaus on design education was significant. One of the main objectives of the Bauhaus was to unify art, craft, and technology, and this approach was incorporated into the curriculum of the Bauhaus. The structure of the Bauhaus *Vorkurs* (preliminary course) reflected a pragmatic approach to integrating theory and application. In their first year, students learned the basic elements and principles of design and color theory, and experimented with a range of materials and processes. This approach to design education became a common feature of architectural and design school in many countries.



The Bauhaus in Dessau, Germany: Bauhaus means “house of construction”

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6.1: Futurism, Dada and World War I

Introduction: Italian Futurism

Can you imagine being so enthusiastic about technology that you name your daughter Propeller? Today we take most technological advances for granted, but at the turn of thelast century, innovations like electricity, x-rays, radio waves, automobiles and airplanes were extremely exciting. Italy lagged Britain, France, Germany, and the United States in the pace of its industrial development. Culturally speaking, the country's artistic reputation was grounded in Ancient, Renaissance and Baroque art and culture. Simply put, Italy represented the past.

In the early 1900s, a group of young and rebellious Italian writers and artists emerged determined to celebrate industrialization. They were frustrated by Italy's declining status and believed that the "Machine Age" would result in an entirely new world order and even a renewed consciousness.

Essay by Emily Casden[1]



Figure 6.1.1: Umberto Boccioni, Unique Forms of Continuity in Space, 1913 (cast 1931), bronze, 43 7/8 x 34 7/8 x 15 3/4″ (MoMA)

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the ringleader of this group, called the movement Futurism. Its members sought to capture the idea of modernity, the sensations and aesthetics of speed, movement, and industrial development.

A manifesto

Marinetti launched Futurism in 1909 with the publication his "Futurist manifesto" on the front page of the French newspaper *Le Figaro.* The manifesto set a fiery tone. In it Marinetti lashed out against cultural tradition (passatismo, in Italian) and called for the destruction of museums, libraries, and feminism. Futurism quickly grew into an international movement and its participants issued additional manifestos for nearly every type of art: painting, sculpture, architecture, music, photography, cinema—even clothing.

The Futurist painters—Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Gino Severini, and Giacomo Balla—signed their first manifesto in 1910 (the last named his daughter Elica—Propeller!). Futurist painting had first looked to the color and the optical experiments of the late 19th century, but in the fall of 1911, Marinetti and the Futurist painters visited the Salon d'Automne in Paris and saw Cubism in person for the first time. Cubism had an immediate impact that can be seen in Boccioni's *Materia* of 1912 for example. Nevertheless, the Futurists declared their work to be completely original.



Figure 6.1.2: Umberto Boccioni, Materia, 1912 (reworked 1913), oil on canvas, 226 x 150 cm (Mattioli Collection loaned to Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice)

Dynamism of Bodies in Motion

The Futurists were particularly excited by the works of late 19th-century scientist and photographer Étienne-Jules Marey, whose chronophotographic (time-based) studies depicted the mechanics of animal and human movement.

["Étienne Jules Marey – L' Homme Machine"]

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A precursor to cinema, Marey's innovative experiments with time-lapse photography were especially influential for Balla. In his painting *Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash*, the artist playfully renders the dog's (and dog walker's) feet as continuous movements through space over time.



Figure 6.1.3: Giacomo Balla, Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash, 1912, oil on canvas, 35 1/2 x 43 1/4 " (Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo)

Entranced by the idea of the "dynamic," the Futurists sought to represent an object's sensations, rhythms and movements in their images, poems and manifestos. Such characteristics are beautifully expressed in Boccioni's most iconic masterpiece, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (see above).



Figure 6.1.4: Nike (Winged Victory) of Samothrace, c. 190 B.C.E. 3.28m high, Hellenistic Period, marge, (Musée du Louvre, Paris)

The choice of shiny bronze lends a mechanized quality to Boccioni's sculpture, so here is the Futurists' ideal combination of human and machine. The figure's pose is at once graceful and forceful, and despite their adamant rejection of classical arts, it is also very similar to the *Nike of Samothrace*.

Politics & War

Futurism was one of the most politicized art movements of the twentieth century. It merged artistic and political agendas in order to propel change in Italy and across Europe. The Futurists would hold what they called serate futuriste, or Futurist evenings, where they would recite poems and display art, while also shouting politically charged rhetoric at the audience in the hope of inciting riot. They believed that agitation and destruction would end the status quo and allow for the regeneration of a stronger, energized Italy.

These positions led the Futurists to support the coming war, and like most of the group's members, leading painter Boccioni enlisted in the army during World War I. He was trampled to death after falling from a horse during training. After the war, the members' intense nationalism led to an alliance with Benito Mussolini and his National Fascist Party. Although Futurism continued to develop new areas of focus (aeropittura, for example) and attracted new members—the so-called "second generation" of Futurist artists—the movement's strong ties to Fascism has complicated the study of this historically significant art.

Neue Sachlichkeit

Source[2]

Neue Sachlichkeit (or The New Objectivity) was an artistic attitude that arose in Germany in the 1920s in reaction to Expressionism.

Public Life in Weimar Germany

The New Objectivity (in German: Neue Sachlichkeit) is a term used to characterize the attitude of public life in Weimar Germany, as well as the art, literature, music, and architecture created to adapt to it. Rather than some goal of philosophical objectivity, it was meant to imply a turn towards practical engagement with the world—an all-business attitude, understood by Germans as intrinsically American" (Dennis Crockett, *German Post-Expressionism: The Art of the Great Disorder, 1918-1984).*

The term was originally the title of an art exhibition staged by Gustav Friedrich Hartlaub, the director of the Kunsthalle in Mannheim, to showcase artists who were working in a post-expressionist spirit, but it took a life of its own, going beyond Hartlaub's intentions. As these artists rejected the self-involvement and romantic longings of the expressionists, Weimar intellectuals in general made a call to arms for public collaboration, engagement, and rejection of romantic idealism. The movement essentially ended in 1933 with the fall of the Weimar Republic and the rise of the Nazis to power.

Before the First world War

Leading up to World War I, much of the art world was under the influence of Futurism and Expressionism, both of which abandoned any sense of order or commitment to objectivity or tradition. Expressionism was in particular the dominant form of art in Germany, and it was represented in many different facets of public life—in theater, in painting, in architecture, in poetry, and in literature.

Expressionists abandoned nature and sought to express emotional experience, often centering their art around inner turmoil (angst), whether in reaction to the modern world, to alienation from society, or in the creation of personal identity. In concert with this evocation of angst and unease with bourgeois life, expressionists also echoed some of the same feelings of revolution as did Futurists. The New Objectivity was a reaction against this.

The External World: Verists and Classicists

The New Objectivity comprised two tendencies, characterized in terms of a left and right wing: on the left were the verists, who "tear the objective form of the world of contemporary facts and represent current experience in its tempo and fevered temperature;" and on the right the classicists, who "search more for the object of timeless ability to embody the external laws of existence in the artistic sphere. "

The verists' vehement form of realism emphasized the ugly and sordid. Their art was raw, provocative, and harshly satirical. George Grosz and Otto Dix are considered the most important of the verists. The verists developed Dada's abandonment of any pictoral rules or artistic language into a "satirical hyperrealism," as termed by Raoul Hausmann, and of which the best known examples are the graphical works and photo-montages of John Heartfield. Use of collage in these works became a compositional principle to blend reality and art, as if to suggest that to record the facts of reality was to go beyond the most simple appearances of things. This later developed into portraits and scenes by artists such as Grosz, Dix, and Rudolf Schlichter. Portraits would give emphasis to particular features or objects that were seen as distinctive aspects of the person depicted. Satirical scenes often depicted a madness behind what was happening, depicting the participants as cartoon-like.



Figure 6.1.5: The Eclipse of the Sun by George Grosz, 1926. George Grosz exemplified the verist style of New Objectivity.

Other verists, like Christian Schad, depicted reality with a clinical precision, which suggested both an empirical detachment and intimate knowledge of the subject. Schad's paintings are characterized "an artistic perception so sharp that it seems to cut beneath the skin", according to the art critic Wieland Schmied. Often, psychological elements were introduced in his work, which suggested an underlying unconscious reality.

Max Beckmann, who is sometimes called an expressionist although he never considered himself part of any movement, was considered to be a verist and the most important artist of Neue Sachlichkeit.

Compared to the verists, the classicists more clearly exemplify the "return to order" that arose in the arts throughout Europe. The classicists included Georg Schrimpf, Alexander Kanoldt, Carlo Mense, Heinrich Maria Davringhausen, and Wilhelm Heise. The sources of their art include 19th-century art, the Italian metaphysical painters, the artists of Novecento Italiano, and Henri Rousseau.

Dada

Source[3]

Dada was a multi-disciplinary art movement rejecting prevailing artistic standards by producing “anti-art” cultural works. In addition to being anti-war, Dada was also anti-bourgeois and had political affinities with the radical left.

In terms of artistic medium, dadaists worked in collage, creating compositions by pasting together transportation tickets, maps, plastic wrappers and other artifacts of daily life. Dada artists also worked in photomontage, a variation on collage which utilized actual or reproductions of photographs printed in the press. In Cologne, Max Ernst used photographs taken from the front during World War I to comment on the war. Another variation on collage used by Dadaists was assemblage, the assembly of everyday objects to produce meaningful or meaningless pieces of work, including war objects and trash.

Dada began in Zurich in 1916 Key figures in the Dada movement included Hugo Ball, Emmy Hennings, Hans Arp and Raoul Hausmann, among others. The movement influenced later styles like avant-garde, and movements including surrealism, Nouveau réalisme, pop art and Fluxus.



Figure 6.1.6: Plaque commemorating birth of Dada movement. This plaque is from the Cabaret Voltaire, the first venue where Dada artists showcased their work in 1916.

Dada was an informal international movement with participants in Europe and North America. The beginnings of Dada correspond to the outbreak of World War I. For many participants, the movement was a protest against the bourgeois nationalist and colonialist interests that many Dadaists believed were the root cause of the war. The movement also spoke against cultural and intellectual conformity in art and society. According to Hans Richter, Dada was not art, it was “anti-art. ”

When World War I ended in 1918, most of the Zurich Dadaists returned to their home countries, while some began Dada activities in other cities.



Figure 6.1.7: Dada poster from 1923. This poster for a Dada soiree references the medium of collage.

Like Zurich, New York City was a refuge for writers and artists from World War I. Frenchmen Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia met American artist Man Ray in New York City in 1915. The trio soon became the center of radical anti-art activities in the United States.

During this time, Duchamp began exhibiting “readymades” (everyday objects found or purchased and declared art) and was active in the Society of Independent Artists. In 1917, he submitted the now famous Fountain to the Society of Independent Artists exhibition.

Initially an object of scorn within the arts community, the Fountain has since become almost canonized by some as one of the most recognizable modernist works of sculpture. The committee presiding over Britain’s prestigious Turner Prize in 2004, for example, called it “the most influential work of modern art”.



Figure 6.1.8: Marcel Duchamp, Fountain. Duchamp’s appropriation of a urinal as a piece of art challenged the prevailing definition of sculpture.

By 1921, most of the original Dadists moved to Paris, where Dada experienced its last major incarnation. Inspired by Tristan Tzara, Paris Dada soon issued manifestos, organized demonstrations, staged performances and a number of journals.

While broad, the Dada movement was unstable. By 1924, artists had gone on to other ideas and movements including surrealism and social realism. Some theorists argue that Dada was the beginning of postmodern art.

Marcel Duchamp

Read: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/duch/hd_duch.htm

Käthe Kollwitz "In Memoriam Karl Liebknecht"

Essay by Shawn Roggenkamp[4]

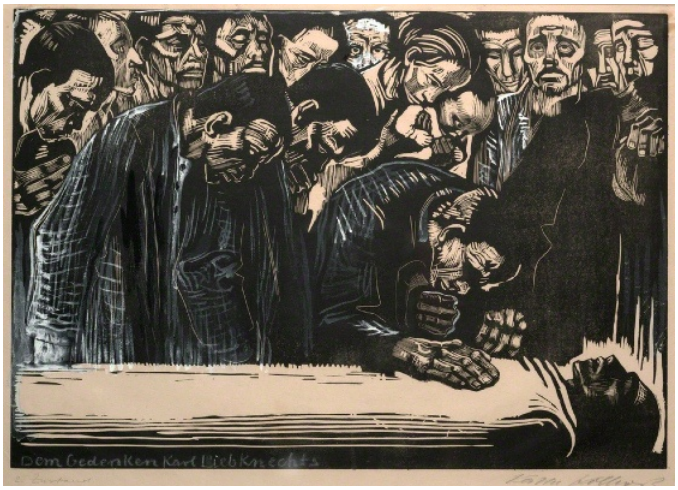


Figure 6.1.9: Käthe Kollwitz, Memorial Sheet of Karl Liebknecht (Gedenkblatt für Karl Liebknecht), 1919-1920, Woodcut heightened with white and black ink, 37.1 × 51.9 cm (Art Institute of Chicago)

Printmaking

In the political turmoil after the First World War, many artists turned to making prints instead of paintings. The ability to produce multiple copies of the same image made printmaking an ideal medium for spreading political statements. German artist Käthe Kollwitz worked almost exclusively in this medium and became known for her prints that celebrated the plight of the working-class.

The artist rarely depicted real people, though she frequently used her talents in support of causes she believed in. This work, *In Memoriam Karl Liebknecht* was created in 1920 in response to the assassination of Communist leader Karl Liebknecht during an uprising of 1919. This work is unique among her prints, and though it memorializes the man, it does so without advocating for his ideology.

History and politics

From the end of the First World War in late 1918 to the founding of the Weimar Republic (the representative democracy that was the German government between the two World Wars) in August 1919, Germany went through a period of social and political upheaval. During this time, Germany was led by a coalition of left-wing forces with Marxist sympathies, the largest of which was the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD). Other, more radical groups were grappling for control of Germany at the same time, including the newly founded German Communist Party (KPD).

The Socialists and Communists both wanted to eliminate Capitalism and establish communal control over the means of production, but while the Socialists believed that the best way to achieve that goal was to work step by step from within the Capitalist structure, the Communists called for an immediate and total social revolution that would put governmental power in the hands of the workers. In this spirit, the KPD staged an uprising in Berlin in January 1919. Military units called in by the SPD suppressed the uprising and captured two of the leaders, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered while in custody on January 15, 1919. Their deaths struck a chord across the left-wing landscape and they were widely celebrated as martyrs to the Communist cause.

Kollwitz was not a Communist, and even acknowledged that the SPD (generally more cautious and pacifist than the KPD), would have been better leaders. But she had heard Liebknecht speak and admired his charisma, so when the family asked her to create a work to memorialize him she agreed.

A Lamentation

Memorial Sheet of Karl Liebknecht is in the style of a lamentation, a traditional motif in Christian art depicting the followers of Christ mourning over his dead body, casting Liebknecht as the Christ figure. The iconography would have been easily recognizable by the masses who were the artist's intended audience.



Figure 6.1.10: Max Beckmann, "The Martyrdom," plate 4 from Hell, 1919, lithograph, 54.7 x 75.2 cm (The Museum of Modern Art, NY)

Other memorial works

Several artists at the time created memorial works for Liebknecht and Luxemburg. The most well known (along with Kollwitz's work) are Max Beckmann's "The Martyrdom" from his portfolio *Hell* of 1919 (above), and Conrad Felixmüller's *People Above the World* from that same year. In contrast to those works, Kollwitz's *In Memoriam Karl Liebknecht* focuses not on the man himself, but on the workers who had put their faith in him,. The focus on those broadly affected, rather than those in the spotlight is a constant theme in the artist's work, reflected in her most famous works from the *War* cycle, which depict not the soldiers or the fighting, but the suffering of the women and children left behind and starving.

The composition

The composition divides the sheet into three horizontal sections. The top section is densely packed with figures. Their faces are well modeled and have interesting depth in themselves, but the sense of space is very compressed – the heads push to the foreground and are packed into every available corner of space. It gives the impression of multitudes coming to pay their respects, without compromising the individuality of the subjects.

The middle strata contains comparatively fewer details, further emphasizing the crowding at the top of the printing plate. This section draws attention to the specific action of the bending mourner. His hand on Liebknecht's chest connects this section to the the bottommost level of the composition, the body of the martyred revolutionary.



Figure 6.1.12: Mourning woman holding a child (detail), Käthe Kollwitz, Memorial Sheet of Karl Liebknecht (Gedenkblatt für Karl Liebknecht), 1919-1920, Woodcut heightened with white and black ink, 37.1 × 51.9 cm (Art Institute of Chicago)

Above the bending mourner, a woman holds her baby up to see over the heads of those in front of them. Women and children were a central concern of Kollwitz's work, making her a unique voice in a creative environment dominated by young men (in fact, Kollwitz was the first woman to be admitted into the Prussian Academy).

Woodblock prints

Woodblock printing is a technique in which a design is carved into a slab of wood which is then covered with ink and printed onto paper. Ink coats the original surface of the wood block, which prints as black, while the cut away areas stay the color of the paper. This is different from printmaking methods such as engraving in which the ink is caught in the recesses carved into the metal plate by the stylus and therefore the lines print black and the untouched areas of the plate come out white in the print.

The German Expressionist artists, in particular Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and the Brücke group, used woodcuts as early as 1904 to capture the rough, vital energy that they perceived in the work of so-called "primitive" societies without a fine art tradition.

Kollwitz's career overlapped with the German Expressionists but she was not an Expressionist herself and was about a generation older than most of them. Her use of such a trendy technique was uncharacteristic, and in fact, she only worked in woodblocks for a few years after the First World War. Kollwitz created some of her most powerful and affecting work in this style, including the War print cycle of 1924. She embraced the raw effect of woodblock printing to create pieces works that have cast off the subtlety and finesse of her earlier work in etching and lithography. Kollwitz' felt that her protest against the horrors of war was best communicated in the rough edges and stark black and white that woodblock prints afforded.

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1. Smarthistory CC-BY-NC-SA 3.0] ↵
2. Boundless Art History July 21 2015, CC-BY-SA 4.0↵
3. "Dada." *Boundless Art History*. 21 July 2015. CC-BY-SA 4.0↵
4. Smarthistory CC-BY-NC-SA 3.0) ↵

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6.2: de Stijl and Surrealism

Piet Mondrian “Composition No. 11 with Red & Blue”

[Smarthistory Video > Expressionism to Pop Art > Art between the wars: the avant-garde & the rise of totalitarianism > the International avant-garde > Mondrian, *Composition No. 11, with Red and Blue*] *Speakers: Dr. Beth Harris, Dr. Steven Zucker*

Oil on canvas, 1929 (original date partly obliterated; mistakenly repainted 1925 by Mondrian). 15 7/8 x 12 5/8″ (40.3 x 32.1 cm) (The Museum of Modern Art)

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Surrealism

Source[1][1]

The cultural movement of Surrealism began in the 1920s, and features the element of surprise, unexpected juxtapositions, and non sequiturs.

Surrealism is a cultural movement that began in the early 1920s, and is best known for writing and visual art. Surrealist works feature the element of surprise, along with unexpected juxtapositions and non sequiturs. First and foremost, Surrealist artists and writers regard their work as an expression of the philosophical movement, with the artwork being an artifact. Leader André Breton was explicit in his assertion that Surrealism was above all a revolutionary movement. Surrealism developed out of the Dada activities during World War I and the most important center of the movement was Paris. From the 1920s onward, the movement spread around the globe, eventually affecting the visual arts, literature, film, and music of many countries and languages, as well as political thought and practice, philosophy, and social theory.

Surrealist Inspiration

World War I scattered the writers and artists who had been based in Paris, and in the interim many became involved with Dada, believing that excessive rational thought and bourgeois values had brought the conflict of the war upon the world. The Dadaists protested with anti-art gatherings, performances, writings, and artworks. After the war, when they returned to Paris, the Dada activities continued.

During the war, André Breton, who had trained in medicine and psychiatry, served in a neurological hospital where he used Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic methods with soldiers suffering from shell shock. Meeting the young writer Jacques Vaché, Breton felt that Vaché was the spiritual son of writer and metaphysical thinker Alfred Jarry. He admired the young writer’s antisocial attitude and disdain for established artistic tradition. Later Breton wrote, “In literature, I was successively taken with Rimbaud, with Jarry, with Apollinaire, with Nouveau, with Lautréamont, but it is Jacques Vaché to whom I owe the most. ”

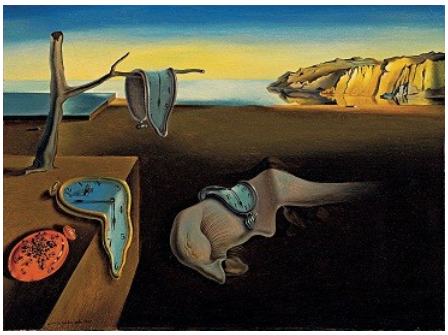
Back in Paris, Breton joined in Dada activities and started the literary journal Littérature along with Louis Aragon and Philippe Soupault. They began experimenting with automatic writing—spontaneously writing without censoring their thoughts—and published the writings, as well as accounts of dreams, in the literary journal. Breton and Soupault delved deeper into automatism and wrote *The Magnetic Fields* (1920).

The Development of the Surrealist Movement

Continuing to write, attracting more artists and writers, Breton and Soupault came to believe that automatism was a better tactic for societal change than Dadaist attacks on prevailing values. The group grew to include Salvador Dalí, Man Ray, Joan Miró, Marcel Duchamp, among other notable artistic figures. As the Surrealists developed their philosophy, they believed that Surrealism would advocate the idea that ordinary and representative expression was vital and important, but that expression must be fully open to the imagination. Freud’s work with free association, dream analysis, and the unconscious was of utmost importance to the Surrealists as they developed methods to liberate their imaginations. They embraced idiosyncrasy, while rejecting the idea of an underlying madness. Later, Salvador Dalí explained it as: “There is only one difference between a madman and me. I am not mad.”

Along with dream analysis, the Surrealists emphasized that “one could combine inside the same frame, elements not normally found together to produce illogical and startling effects” . Breton included the idea of the startling juxtapositions in his 1924 manifesto, taking it in turn from a 1918 essay by poet Pierre Reverdy, which said: “a juxtaposition of two more or less distant

realities. The more the relationship between the two juxtaposed realities is distant and true, the stronger the image will be — the greater its emotional power and poetic reality” .



Salvador Dalí, The Persistence of Memory (1931)



René Magritte’s La Trahison des Images (“The Treachery of Images”) (1928-9) or Ceci n’est pas une pipe (“This is not a pipe”). Magritte’s work frequently displays a collection of ordinary objects in an unusual context, giving new meanings to familiar things.

The group aimed to revolutionize human experience, in terms of the personal, cultural, social, and political aspects. They wanted to free people from false rationality, and also from restrictive customs and structures. Breton proclaimed that the true aim of Surrealism was “long live the social revolution, and it alone! ” To this goal, at various times Surrealists aligned with communism and anarchism. In 1924 they declared their philosophy in the first “Surrealist Manifesto. ” That same year they established the Bureau of Surrealist Research, and began publishing the journal *La Révolution Surréaliste*.

Frida Khalo “The Two Fridas”

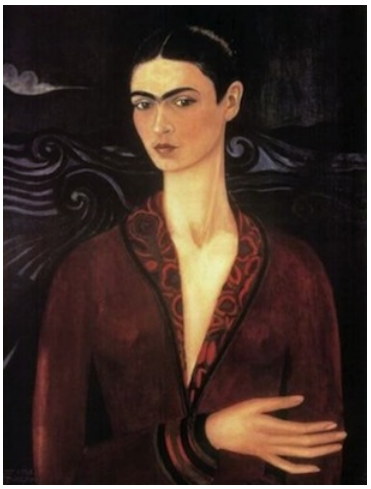
By Doris Maria-Reina Bravo[2][2]

16 inches (Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City)

Frida Kahlo, The Two Fridas (Las dos Fridas), 1939, oil on canvas, 67-11/16 x 67-11/16 inches (Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City)

Indelible marks

Facial hair indelibly marks the self-portraits of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. In an era when women still wore elaborate hairstyles, hosiery, and attire, Kahlo was a rebellious loner, often dressed in indigenous clothing. Moreover, she lived as an artist during a period when many middle-class women sacrificed their ambitions to live entirely in the domestic sphere. Kahlo flouted both conventions of beauty and social expectations in her self-portraits. These powerful and unflinching self-images explore complex and difficult topics including her culturally mixed heritage, the harsh reality of her medical conditions, and the repression of women.



Frida Kahlo, Self-portrait in a Velvet Dress, 1926, oil on canvas (private collection)

The double self-portrait *The Two Fridas*, 1939 (above) features two seated figures holding hands and sharing a bench in front of a stormy sky. The Fridas are identical twins except in their attire, a poignant issue for Kahlo at this moment. The year she painted this canvas she was divorced from Diego Rivera, the acclaimed Mexican muralist. Before she married Rivera in 1929, she wore the modern European dress of the era, evident in her first self-portrait (left) where she dons a red velvet dress with gold embroidery. With Rivera's encouragement, Kahlo embraced attire rooted in Mexican customs.

Dress



Frida Kahlo, Self-portrait (Time Flies), 1929 (private collection)

In her second self-portrait (left) her accessories reference distinct periods in Mexican history (her necklace is a reference to the pre-Columbian Jadite of the Aztecs and the earrings are Colonial in style) while her simple white blouse is a nod to peasant women.

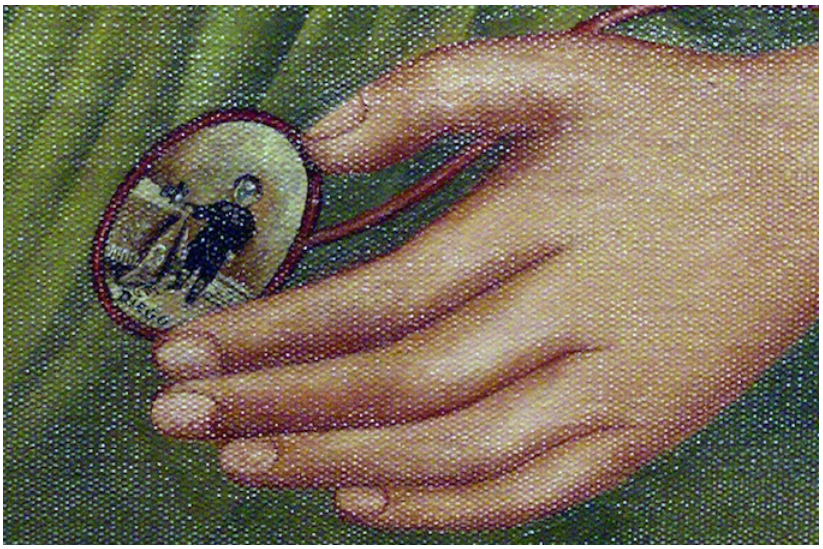
The portraits from the 1930s reflect Kahlo's growing penchant for indigenous attire and hair-styling, as is evident in *Frieda and Diego Rivera*, 1931 (below) and *The Two Fridas*. Yet Kahlo never abandoned dressing her subjects and herself in mainstream, European dress; her female relatives wear non-indigenous clothing in *My Grandparents, My Parents, and I (Family Tree)*, 1936 (below). In this painting, the bridal dress Kahlo's mother wears is reminiscent of the white, stiff-collared dress the artist wears in*The Two Fridas*. Indeed, the grotesque view into each woman's insides is heightened by the virginal whiteness of both dresses.

8 x 31 inches (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art)

Frida Kahlo, Frieda and Diego Rivera, 1931, oil on canvas, 39-3/8 x 31 inches (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art)

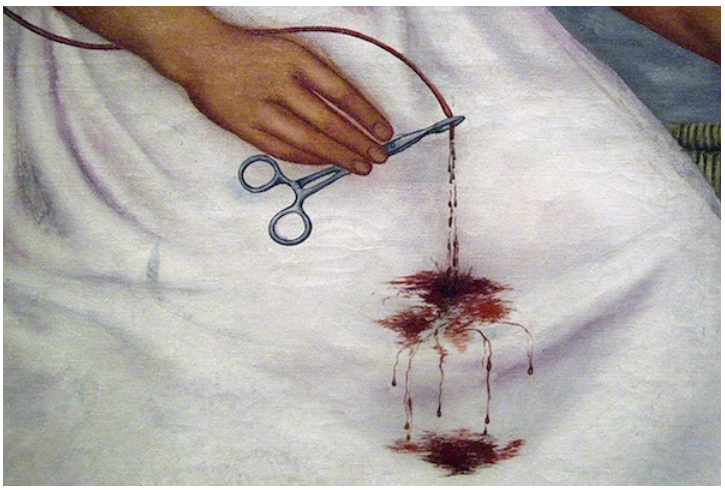
In her brief lifetime, Kahlo painted about two hundred works of art, many of which are self-portraits. With the exception of a few family trees, the double-portrait with Rivera and*The Two Fridas* represents a departure in her oeuvre. If a self-portrait by definition is a painting of one's self, why would Kahlo paint herself twice? One way to answer this question is to examine *The Two Fridas* as a bookend to the 1931 portrait, *Frieda and Diego Rivera*. Though this painting was meant to celebrate the birth of their union, their tentative grasp seems to reflect Kahlo's misgivings about her husband's fidelity. By contrast, the double self-portrait, though laden with suffering, exhibits resilience.

Anatomy of Two Fridas



Detail of The Two Fridas, with hand holding a portrait of young Diego (photo: Dave Cooksey, CC: BY-NC-SA 2.0)

The two Fridas clasp hands tightly. This bond is echoed by the vein that unites them. Where one is weakened by an exposed heart, the other is strong; where one still pines for her lost love (as underscored by the vein feeding Rivera's miniature portrait), the other clamps down on that figurative and literal tie with a hemostat.



Detail with Hemostat (photo: Dave Cooksey, CC: BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Human anatomy is often graphiclty exposed in Kahlo's work, a topic she knew well after a childhood bout with polio deformed her right leg and a bus accident when she was eighteen years old left her disabled and unable to bear children. She would endure 32 operations as a result. Detail with Hemostat (photo: Dave Cooksey, CC: BY-NC-SA 2.0)Kahlo utilized blood as a visceral metaphor of union, as in the 1936 family portrait (below) where she honors her lineage through these bloody ties. She

returns to this metaphor in The Two Fridas though with the added impact of two hearts, both vulnerable and laid bare to the viewer as a testament to her emotional suffering.


8" (The Museum of Modern Art)

Frida Kahlo, My Grandparents, My Parents, and I (Family Tree), 1936, oil and tempera on zinc, 12 1/8 x 13 5/8″ (The Museum of Modern Art)

“I am the person I know best”

Photographs by artists within her milieu, like Manuel Alvarez Bravo and Imogen Cunningham, confirm that Kahlo’s self-portraits were largely accurate and that she avoided embellishng her features. The solitude produced by frequent bed rest—stemming from polio, her near-fatal bus accident, and a lifetime of operations—was one of the cruel constants in Kahlo’s life. Indeed, numerous photographs feature Kahlo in bed, often painting despite restraints. Beginning in her youth, in order to cope with these long periods of recovery, Kahlo became a painter. Nevertheless, the isolation caused by her health problems was always present. She reflected, “I paint self-portraits because I am so often alone, because I am the person I know best.”

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1. Boundless. “Surrealism.” Boundless Art History. Boundless, 21 Jul. 2015. CC-BY-SA 4.0↵
2. CC-BY-NC-SA 3.0 ↵

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6.3: The Great Depression and World War II

Sculpture & Photography

Source[1][1]

During the 1930s and 40s, photography and sculpture expanded into new realms of artistic expression that were influenced by the times.

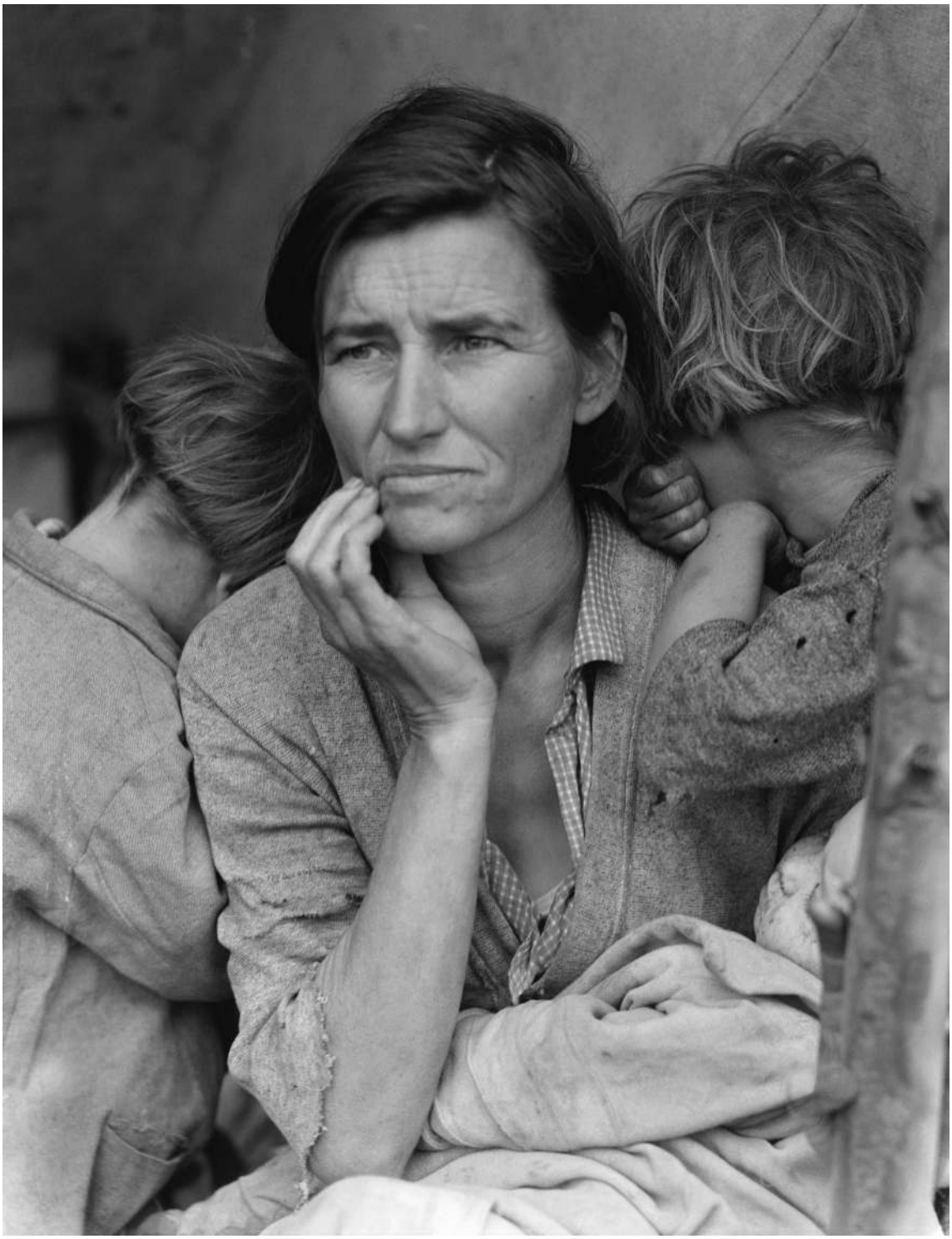
The period from 1930-1945 in American history is marked by the Great Depression and outbreak of the second World War. During this time, both photography and sculpture expanded into new realms of artistic expression, heavily influenced by the society and times.

Photography

Photographic technology continued to expand throughout the 20th century. Kodachrome, the first modern “integral tripack” (or “monopack”) color film, was introduced by Kodak in 1935, and Agfa’s similarly structured Agfacolor Neu was introduced in 1936. These new technologies allowed for the proliferation of color photography for the first time, and currently available color films still employ a multilayer emulsion and the same principles, most closely resembling Agfa’s product.

Social Realism

Social realism, also known as socio-realism, became an important art movement during the Great Depression in the 1930s. Social realism depicted social and racial injustice, and economic hardship through unvarnished pictures of life’s struggles, often depicting working-class activities as heroic. The movement was largely a style of painting that typically conveyed a message of social or political protest edged with satire; however it also extended to the art of photography. Prominent photographers at the time included Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange , Margaret Bourke-White, Lewis Hine, Edward Steichen, Gordon Parks, Arthur Rothstein, Marion Post Wolcott, Doris Ulmann, Berenice Abbott, Aaron Siskind, and Russell Lee,among several others. Each of these artists sought to depict the world–and often the poverty–they saw around them with the realistic portrayal that only photography could provide. In the 1930s, the Farm Security Administration employed several photographers to document the effects of the Great Depression on the population of America. Many of the photographs can also be seen as propaganda images to support the U.S. government’s policy distributing support to the worst affected, poorer areas of the country.



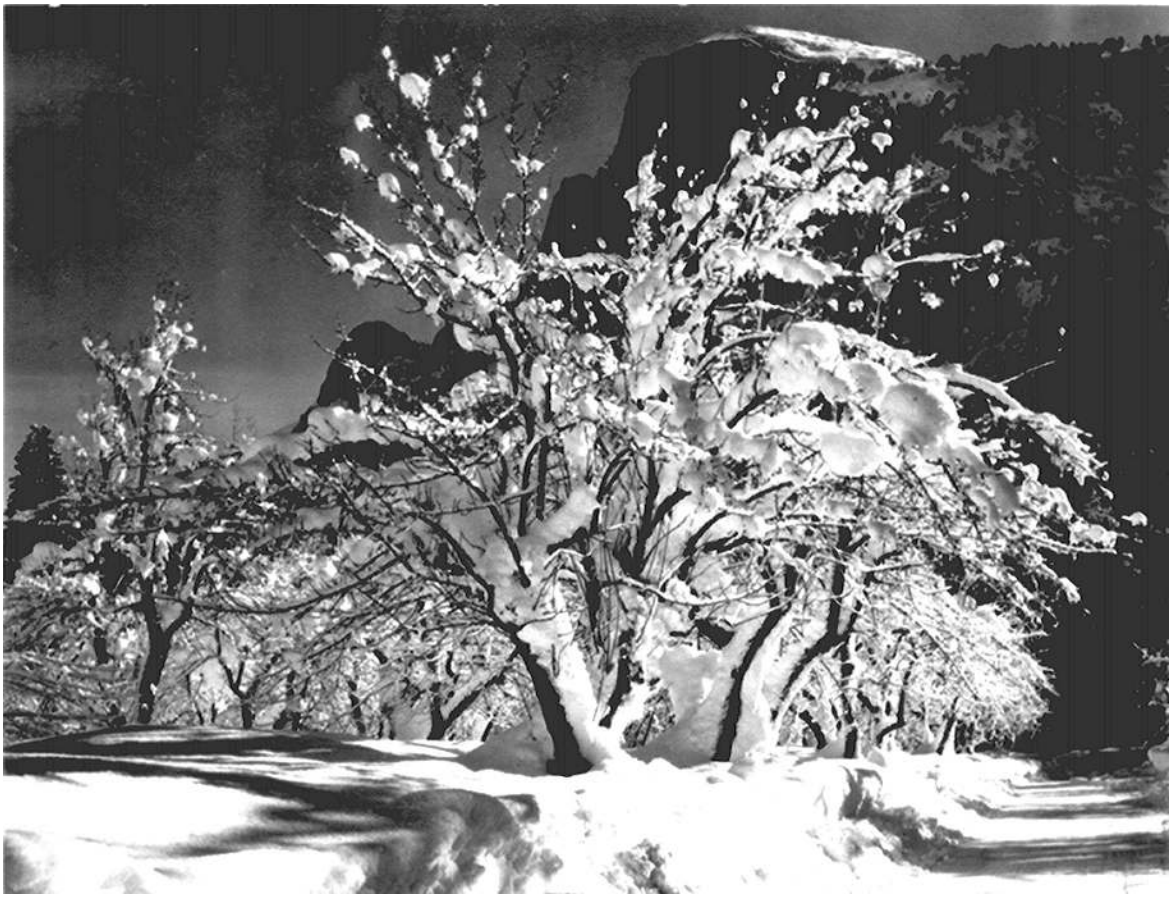
Dorothea Lange, Migrant Mother, 1936. A portrait of Florence Owens Thompson (1903-1983).

The caption of the original image reads: “Destitute pea pickers in California. Mother of seven children. Age thirty-two. Nipomo, California. ” Lange’s image of a supposed migrant pea picker, Florence Owens Thompson, and her family has become an icon of resilience in the face of adversity.

Group F/64

Alongside social realism, another approach to photography referred to as “straight photography” was also gaining momentum. Group f/64 is perhaps the most well known example of this art movement. Group f/64 was a group of seven 20th century San

Francisco photographers who shared a common photographic style characterized by sharp-focused and carefully framed images seen through a particularly Western viewpoint. In part, they formed in opposition to the pictorialism movement in photography that had dominated much of the early 20th century, but moreover they wanted to promote a new modernist [2]aesthetic that was based on precisely exposed images of natural forms and found objects. Photographers involved in the group included Ansel Adams , Imogen Cunningham, John Paul Edwards, Sonya Noskowiak, Henry Swift, Willard Van Dyke, and Edward Weston.



Ansel Adams: Half Dome, Apple Orchard, Yosemite trees with snow on branches, April 1933.

Ansel Adams was one of the co-founders of Group f/64, a group of photographers known who shared a common style characterized by sharp-focused and carefully framed images.

Sculpture

As the century began, many young European sculptors migrated to the free, booming economy across the Atlantic. Thus, European trained sculptors such as Elie Nadelman, Albin Polasek, Gaston Lachaise and Carl Milles account for much of the great work created before 1950.

Modern Classicisim and American Expressionism

Several notable American sculptors joined in the revitalization of the classical tradition at this time, most notably Paul Manship, who “discovered” archaic Greek sculpture while studying on a scholarship in Rome. C. Paul Jennewein and Edward McCartan were also leaders in this direction who fit easily with the art-deco tastes of the 1920s. In the 1930s and 1940s, the ideologies seen throughout European politics were also reflected in the associations of American sculptors: on the right were artists who were mostly native-born and old-school classical, modeling from clay; the left was often immigrant and expressionistic, with an emphasis on more current themes and direct carving in wood or stone. An example of a left-leaning leader would be Anna Hyatt Huntington, heiress and sculptor who founded and led the National Sculpture Society,and who endowed the sculpture park, Brookgreen Gardens in South Carolina. Representing the right of the political divide was the New York-based Sculptors Guild, whose most famous member was William Zorach.

African-American Sculptors

With the Harlem renaissance, an African-American sculpture genre emerged. Richmond Barthé was an outstanding example, establishing a widely successful reputation for his many public works . Augusta Savagewas a sculptor and teacher. Other contemporary sculptors include Elizabeth Catlett, Martin Puryear, Jerry Harris, Thaddeus Mosley, and Richard Hunt.



Richmond Barthe (1901 -1989)"Boxer", 1942, Art Institute of Chicago

Richmond Barthe is an outstanding example of American sculpture in the 1930's and 1940's, and was influential in the Harlem Renaissance.

Jacob Lawrence "The Migration Series"

[Smarthistory > Expressionism to Pop Art > Art between the wars; the avant-garde & the rise of totalitarianism > American art to World War II > Jacob Lawrence, *The Migration Series* (short version)]

60 panels, tempera on hardboard (even numbers at The Museum of Modern Art, odd numbers at the Phillips Collection)

Speakers: Dr. Steven Zucker and Dr. Beth Harris

An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/art1/?p=45

Hopper "Nighthawks"

By Christine Zappella[2][3]

8 x 60 inches (Art Institute of Chicago).

Edward Hopper, Nighthawks, 1942, oil on canvas, 84.1 x 152.4 cm / 33-1/8 x 60 inches (Art Institute of Chicago).

Near Misses

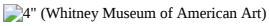
In place of meaningful interactions, the four characters inside the diner of Edward Hopper's Nighthawks are involved in a series of near misses. The man and woman might be touching hands, but they aren't. The waiter and smoking-man might be conversing, but they're not. The couple might strike up a conversation with the man facing them, but somehow, we know they won't. And then we realize that Hopper has placed us, the viewer, on the city street, with no door to enter the diner, and yet in a position to evaluate

each of the people inside. We see the row of empty counter stools nearest us. We notice that no one is making eye contact with any one else. Up close, the waiter's face appears to have an expression of horror or pain. And then there is a chilling revelation: each of us is completely alone in the world.

The slickness of the paint, which makes the canvas read almost like an advertisement, and immediate accessibility of the subject matter draws the viewer into Hopper's painting. But he does not tell us a story. Rather than a narrative about men and women out for a festive night on the town, we are invited to ask questions about the characters' ambiguous lives. Are the man and woman a couple? Where are they coming from? Where are they going? Who is the man with his back to us? How did he end up in the diner? What is the waiter's life like? What is causing his distress?

The light

By setting the scene on one of New York City's oblique corners and surrounding the diner with glass, Hopper was able to exploit stark pictorial devices. First, the fluorescent light flooding the diner is the only light that illuminates the painting; in the absence of a streetlamp, it spills into the night through both windows onto both sides of the street corner. It throws a series of cast shadows onto the sidewalk and apartment buildings, but ultimately draws our attention back to the men and woman inside the diner. The angle also allows him to show the people in a mix of frontal and profile views, heightening the sense that no figure is really communicating with another.


4" (Whitney Museum of American Art)

Edward Hopper, Early Sunday Morning, 1930, oil on canvas, 35 3/16 x 60 1/4″ (Whitney Museum of American Art)

This feeling can be understood by comparing Nighthawks to Hopper's earlier painting Early Sunday Morning. Both paintings are set in front of the red brick apartments of New York's Greenwich Village and show us an hour of the day when people are typically not awake. Like Nighthawks, which was created at the beginning of America's involvement in World War II, Early Sunday Morning was also painted at a historically important moment, the beginning of the Great Depression. But despite their similarities, Early Sunday Morning produces a sense of ease in the viewer, not anxiety.

Detail: Edward Hopper, Nighthawks, 1942

Partially, this is because of the flooding light of dawn. But Early Sunday Morning, with its frilly awnings, brightly colored barber's pole, squat fire hydrant, and windows opening to meet the morning sun, presents a world that is about to bustle with life. Nighthawks shows the opposite. The windows of the shops and apartments are empty and dark. The only remnants of human activity outside the diner are a cash register in a shop window and a cigar advertisement above the glass pane. There is no clock in the restaurant, but the empty coffee tureens on the back counter betray the indecent hour of night. This is a world shut down. Because our characters are awake, they are alienated—not only from each other, but also from civilization itself.

A timeless feel

Nighthawks is one of Hopper's New York City paintings, and the artist said that it was based on a real café. Many people have tried to find the exact setting of the painting, but have failed. In his wife's diaries, she wrote that she and Hopper himself both served as models for the people in the painting. Despite these real-life details, the empty composition and flat, abstracting planes of color give the canvas a timeless feel, making it an object onto which one can project one's own reality. Perhaps this is why it has lent itself to so well to many parodies, even appearing as a motif on an episode of The Simpsons.

When it was completed the canvas was bought almost immediately by the Art Institute of Chicago where it remains, and has been wildly popular ever since. The painting's modern-day appeal can also be understood because of its ability to evoke a sense of nostalgia for an America of a time gone-by. Despite its inherent universality, the dress of the four people—the woman evoking a pin-up doll, the men in their well-tailored suits and hats, the worker in his soda jerk costume—as well as the "Phillies" advertisement, firmly plant the painting in a simpler past, making it a piece of Americana.

A subtle critique

But perhaps Nighthawks' enduring popularity can be explained because of its subtle critique of the modern world, the world in which we all live. Despite its surface beauty, this world is one measured in cups of coffee, imbued with an overwhelming sense of loneliness, and a deep desire, but ultimate inability, to connect with those around us.

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1. Boundless Art History 21 July 2015 CC-BY-SA 4.0↵
2. Hopper "Nighthawks" CC-BY-NC-SA 3.0↵

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7: Art History - Modern to Postmodern

Learning Objectives

- Differentiate between the categories of late Modernism and post Modernism in art.

Key Points

- The predominant term for art produced since the 1950s is Contemporary Art. The terminology often points to similarities between late Modernism and Postmodernism, although there are differences.
- Modern art, radical movements in Modernism, and radical trends regarded as influential and potentially as precursors to late Modernism and Postmodernism emerged around World War I and particularly in its aftermath.
- The discourse that encompasses the two terms Late Modernism and Postmodern art is used to denote what may be considered as the ultimate phase of modern art, as art at the end of Modernism or as certain tendencies of contemporary art.
- Late Modernism describes movements which arise from and react against trends in Modernism and rejects some aspect of Modernism, while fully developing the conceptual potentiality of the modernist enterprise.

Key Points

- **precursors**: That which precedes; a forerunner; a predecessor; an indicator of approaching events.

Background

The predominant term for art produced since the 1950s is Contemporary Art, although more specifically it might be used to refer to art created within a decade of the current moment. Not all art labeled ‘contemporary’ is modern or postmodern, and the term contemporary encompasses both artists who continue to work in modernist or late modernist traditions, as well as artists who reject Modernism for Postmodernism or other reasons. Arthur Danto argues explicitly in *After the End of Art* that contemporaneity is the broader term, and that postmodern objects represent a sub-sector of the contemporary movement which replaced modernity and Modernism.

Radical movements in modern art

Modern art, radical movements in Modernism, and radical trends regarded as influential and potential precursors to late Modernism and Postmodernism emerged around World War I and particularly in its aftermath. With the introduction of the use of industrial artifacts in art came movements such as Cubism, Dada, and Surrealism as well as techniques such as collage and art forms such as cinema and the rise of reproduction as a means of creating artworks. Pablo Picasso, Marcel Duchamp, and many others created important and influential works from found objects. There was about Modernism also a kind of implicit idea of the forward and inevitable movement of human culture. WWI and especially WWII disrupted this idea and made the Modern moment more problematic.

Late Modernism vs. Postmodernism

The discourse surrounding the terms Late Modernism and Postmodern art is fraught with many differing opinions. There are those who argue against any division into Modern and Post-Modern periods. Some don’t believe that the period called Modernism is over or even near the end, and there certainly is no agreement that all art after Modernism is Post-Modern, nor that Post- Modern art is universally separated from Modernism; many critics see it as merely another phase in Modern art or another form of late Modernism. There is, however, a consensus that a profound change in the perception of works of art, and works of art themselves, has occurred and that a new era has been emerging on the world stage since at least the 1960s.

Late Modernism describes movements which arose from and react against trends in Modernism, rejecting some aspect of Modernism, while fully developing the conceptual potentiality of the modernist enterprise. In some descriptions Postmodernism as a period in art history is completed, whereas in others it is a continuing movement in Contemporary art. In art, the specific traits of Modernism which are cited generally consist of: formal purity, medium specificity, art for art’s sake, the possibility of authenticity in art, the importance or even possibility of universal truth in art, and the importance of an avant-garde and originality. This last point is one of particular controversy in art, where many institutions argue that being visionary, forward-looking, cutting edge, and progressive are crucial to the mission of art in the present, and that postmodern art therefore represents a contradiction of the value of art of our times.

One compact definition of Postmodernism is that it rejects Modernism’s grand narratives of artistic direction, eradicates the boundaries between high and low forms of art, disrupts the genre and its conventions with collision, collage, pastiche, and

fragmentation. Postmodern art comes from the viewpoint that all stances are unstable and insincere, and therefore irony, parody, and humor are the only positions which cannot be overturned by critique or later events.

Rauschenberg and Johns

Both men fought in WWII and used the Post-War G.I. Bill to study art. They met at the Black Mountain art school in North Carolina being run at that time by Josef and Annie Albers.

Eventually they became a couple and moved to New York City into two lofts in the same downtown building. Rauschenberg was already creating avant-garde art like his “all whites”, or canvases painted in that single color. Many elements of the art might be seen in contrast to the preeminent movement of the day, Abstract Expressionism. The Combines of Rauschenberg which combined paint with found objects and other materials took Duchamp’s Readymades one step further.



Robert Rauschenberg, Monogram, 1955-59. Combine: oil, paper, fabric, printed paper, printed reproductions, metal, wood, rubber shoe heel, and tennis ball on canvas with oil and rubber tire on Angora goat on wood platform mounted on four casters 42 x 63 1/4 x 64 1/2 inches Moderna Museet, Stockholm. RRF # 59.024 © 2019 Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. All right reserved. CC BY-NC 4.0

Johns used encaustic paint (pigment in hot wax), often over newsprint to mimic the brushwork of the Abstract Expressionists without the actual hand of the artist being involved. This ironic remove suggests the issues addressed by Post-Modern artists in the decades to come.



Jasper Johns, Target with Four Faces, 1955. Encaustic on newspaper and cloth over canvas surmounted by four tinted-plaster faces in wood box with hinged front; dimensions overall, with box open, 33 5/8 x 26 x 3″, box (closed) 3 3/4 x 26 x 3 1/2″, MoMA. © 2019 Jasper Johns / Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY, Fair Use

While their partnership was relatively short-lived, Rauschenberg and Johns inspired each other in a conversation that took Modern art in America to a new and unique place.

Happenings

Alan Kaprow was the major innovator behind the performances called Happenings in the 1950's and 60's. He studied at Columbia University with Meyer Shapiro, but also at the New School with John Cage whose experiments in "chance operations" and other ideas coming rom Cage's interest in Zen Buddhism were influential. Happenings were often a kind of street theater, although not all took place in the street, and involved a sometimes invited, sometimes ad hoc audience who would interact with whatever was going on. These often highly scripted events would become part of the environment that would become true Conceptual art. Both Happenings and Pop Art began to remove art from the rarified elite world of museums and galleries and insist on work that engaged with the contemporary world as it was. This disruptive and revolutionary mind-set was also part of the zeitgeist in America following the country's entrance into the Vietnam conflict. Revolution was in the air and artists were making work that was very much of the time.

Pop Art

Possibly the most popular form of American art is art that takes its name from that word – popular. Popular culture became the subject matter of much of the work made in the 50s and 60s. As we have seen, after WWII, American culture was in the ascendant and in England American G.I.'s brought magazines, records, and other elements of everyday life with them. Richard Hamilton was in art school at that time and found the images from America with its suggestion of consumer abundance fascinating.



Richard Hamilton, Just What is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?, 1956. Collage, 10 ¼ x 9 ¾", Tübingen Museum

In American, Andy Warhol was making paintings of subjects like water heaters taken from newspaper ads. He disliked the technique of painting which he has said was too personal. When he was introduced to silkscreen printing he began to make art using that technique with all of its deletion of the hand of the artist and incorporation of chance operations – registration could create large differences between canvases.



Andy Warhol, Marilyn Diptych, 1962. Silkscreen (acrylic paint) on canvas, 80.88 in × 114.00", Tate. Fair Use

Conceptual Art

Conceptual art is defined by concepts or ideas taking precedence over traditional aesthetic and material concerns.

Key Points

- Conceptual art emerged as a movement during the 1960s. In part, it was a reaction against formalism articulated by the influential New York art critic Clement Greenberg.
- Some have argued that conceptual art continued this dematerialization of art by removing the need for objects altogether, while others, including many of the artists themselves, saw conceptual art as a radical break with Greenberg's formalist Modernism.
- French artist Marcel Duchamp paved the way for the conceptualists, providing examples of prototypically conceptual works such as his ready-mades.
- Conceptual artists began a far more radical interrogation of art than was previously possible. One of the first and most important things they questioned was the common assumption that the role of the artist was to create special kinds of material objects.
- The notion that art should examine its own nature was already a potent aspect of the influential art critic Clement Greenberg's vision of modern art during the 1950s.

Key Terms

- **conceptualist**: An artist involved in the conceptualism movement.
- **dematerialization**: The act or process of dematerializing.

Formalism, Dematerialization and the Commodification of Art

Conceptual art is defined by the concepts of a work taking precedence over the traditional aesthetic and material concerns. It began to emerge as a movement during the 1960s, in part as a reaction against formalism as then articulated by the influential New York art critic Clement Greenberg. According to Greenberg, modern art followed a process of progressive reduction and refinement toward the goal of defining the essential, formal nature of each medium. The task of painting, for example, was to define precisely what kind of object a painting truly is: what makes it a painting and nothing else. For example, if the nature of paintings is as flat canvas objects onto which colored pigment is applied, elements such as figuration, 3-D perspective illusion, and references to external subject matter were extraneous to the essence of painting and should thus be removed.

Some have argued that conceptual art continued this dematerialization of art by removing the need for objects altogether while others, including many of the artists themselves, saw conceptual art as a radical break with Greenberg's formalist Modernism. Later artists continued to share a preference for art to be self-critical and a distaste for illusion. However, by the end of the 1960s it was clear that Greenberg's stipulations for art to continue within the confines of each medium and exclude external subject matter no longer held traction. Lucy Lippard, an internationally known writer, art critic, activist and curator from the United States, was among the first writers to recognize the dematerialization at work in conceptual art and was an early champion of feminist art. Her book *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* remains a seminal text on the subject.

Conceptual art also reacted against the commodification of art, attempting subversion of the gallery or museum as the location and determiner of art and the art market as the owner and distributor of art. Many conceptual artists' work can therefore only be known through documentation such as photographs, written texts, or displayed objects, which some might argue are not in themselves the art. Conceptual art is sometimes reduced to a set of written instructions describing a work without actually making it, emphasizing the notion of the idea as more important than the artifact.

Precursors

French artist Marcel Duchamp paved the way for the conceptualists, providing examples of prototypically conceptual works such as the ready-mades. The most famous of Duchamp's ready-mades was *Fountain* (1917), a standard urinal basin signed by the artist with the pseudonym "R.Mutt" and submitted for inclusion in the annual, unjuried exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists in New York. (It was rejected.) In traditional terms, a commonplace object such as a urinal cannot be art because it is not made by an artist or with any intention of being art, nor is it unique or handcrafted. Duchamp's relevance and theoretical influence for future "conceptualists" was later acknowledged by US artist Joseph Kosuth in his 1969 essay, "Art After Philosophy," when he wrote, "All art (after Duchamp) is conceptual (in nature) because art only exists conceptually."



Marcel Duchamp, Fountain, 1917, photographed by Alfred Stieglitz at the 291 (Art Gallery) following the 1917 Society of Independent Artists exhibit, with entry tag visible. Duchamp's appropriation of a urinal as a piece of art challenged the prevailing definition of sculpture. PD

Historical Examples

In 1953, artist Robert Rauschenberg created *Erased De Kooning Drawing*, which was literally a drawing by Willem de Kooning that Rauschenberg erased. It raised many questions about the fundamental nature of art, challenging the viewer to consider whether erasing another artist's work could be a creative act, as well as whether the work was only "art" because the famous Rauschenberg had done it.

In 1960, Yves Klein carried out an action called *A Leap IntoThe Void*, in which he attempted to fly by leaping out of a window. As with much of conceptual art, the performance is largely presented through its documentation. In 1961, Robert Rauschenberg sent a telegram to the Galerie Iris Clert which said: "This is a portrait of Iris Clert if I say so" as his contribution to an exhibition of portraits. In 1969, Vito Acconci created *Following Piece*, in which he followed random members of the public until they disappeared into a private space. The piece is presented as photographs.

Contemporary Influence

The first wave of the conceptual art movement extended from approximately 1967 to 1978. Early concept artists like Henry Flynt, Robert Morris, and Ray Johnson influenced the later movement of conceptual art. Conceptual artists like Dan Graham, Hans Haacke, and Lawrence Weiner have proven influential on subsequent artists, and well-known contemporary artists such as Mike Kelley and Tracey Emin are sometimes labeled second- or third-generation conceptualists or post-conceptual artists.

Contemporary artists have addressed many of the concerns of the conceptual art movement. While they may or may not term themselves conceptual artists, ideas such as anti- commodification, social and/or political critique, and ideas/information as medium continue to be aspects of contemporary art, especially among artists working with installation art, performance art, net art, and electronic/digital art.

Minimalism

The term minimalism is used to describe a trend in design and architecture in which the subject is reduced to its necessary elements.

Key Points

- Minimalist design has been highly influenced by Japanese traditional design and architecture. In addition, the work of De Stijl artists is a major source of reference for this style.
- The term minimalism dates to the early 19th century and gradually became an important movement in response to the ornate design of the previous period. Minimalist architecture became popular in the late 1980s in London and New York.
- The concept of minimalist architecture is to strip everything down to its essential qualities to achieve simplicity.

- Zen concepts of simplicity transmit the ideas of freedom and essence of living. Simplicity is not only an aesthetic value, it has a moral perception that looks into the nature of truth and reveals the inner qualities of materials and objects.

Key Terms

- **Zen**: A philosophy of calm reminiscent of that of the Buddhist denomination.
- **aesthetic**: Concerned with beauty, artistic impact, or appearance.

The term minimalism can be used to describe a trend in design and architecture in which the subject is reduced to only its necessary elements. Minimalist design in the west has been highly influenced by Japanese traditional design and architecture. In addition, the work of De Stijl artists is a major source of reference for this style. De Stijl expanded the ideas that could be expressed by using basic elements such as lines and planes organized in very particular manners.



Mies van der Rohe, Barcelona Pavilion: The reconstruction of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's German Pavilion in Barcelona is minimalist in its use of space and pared down architectural elements

Architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe adopted the motto "less is more" to describe his aesthetic of arranging the numerous necessary components of a building to create an impression of extreme simplicity. By enlisting every element and detail to serve multiple visual and functional purposes, such as designing a floor to also serve as the radiator or a massive fireplace to also house the bathroom, spaces become visually pared down and highly functional.

Minimalist architecture became popular in the late 1980s in London and New York, a few decades after the movement's prevalence in other art forms. White elements, cold lighting, large open spaces with minimal objects and furniture, and a simplified living space revealed the essential quality of buildings and attitudes toward life. While ornamentation is spare, it's not totally absent. Instead this style maintains the idea that all parts, details, and joinery have been reduced such that nothing could be further removed to improve the design.

Minimalist design and architecture accounts for light, form, material, space and location. In minimalist architecture, design elements convey the message of simplicity. The basic geometric forms, elements without decoration, simple materials and repetitions of structures represent a sense of order and essential quality. The movement of natural light in buildings reveals simple and clean spaces. In late 19th century, as the arts and crafts movement became popularized in Britain, people valued the attitude of "truth to materials." Minimalist architects humbly listen to figure, seeking essence and simplicity by rediscovering the valuable qualities in simple common materials.

The idea of simplicity appears in many cultures, especially the Japanese traditional culture of Zen Philosophy. Zen concepts of simplicity transmit the ideas of freedom and essence of living. Simplicity is not only an aesthetic value, but has a moral perception that considers the nature of truth and reveals the inner qualities of materials and objects for their essence. For example, the dry rock garden in Ryoan-ji temple demonstrates the concepts of simplicity from the considered setting of a few stones and a huge empty space.



Ryoan-Ji Temple: Ryoan-Ji Temple is a Zen temple that exemplifies the minimalism and simplicity that is typical in Japanese design

Minimalism in Art

Minimalism as a movement in art is primarily identified in the late 1960s and 1970s with artists like Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Dan Flavin, and Robert Morris. The objects of Donald Judd were often manufactured by others and installed by the artist. Sculpture was reductive and geometric, often rectangular metal boxes. Agnes Martin made paintings and drawings within the minimalist aesthetic by using primarily thin lines in repetitive patterns on a pale background. Stressing the basic materiality of either sculpture or painting stripped away what might have been seen as decorative or pretentious in Abstract Expressionism, for example.

Process Art or Post-Minimalism

Process-based art focuses on the creative journey instead of the end product.

Learning Objectives

- Contrast the focus of process art with that of product-focused artists.

Key Points

- The processes involved in creating art are any actions used to make a work of art.
- The process art movement began in the U.S. and Europe in the mid-1960s. It has roots in performance art and Dadaism.
- In process art, the ephemeral nature and insubstantiality of materials are often showcased and highlighted.
- Process art and environmental art are directly related. Process artists engage the primacy of organic systems, using perishable, insubstantial, and transitory materials.

Key Terms

- **ephemeral**: Something which lasts for a short period of time, fleeting.

Background

Process art is an artistic movement and creative sentiment in which end product is not the primary focus. The processes referred to are those of creating art: the gathering, sorting, collating, associating, patterning, and the initiation of actions that must be in place. Process art is concerned with actual creation and how actions can be defined as art, seeing the expression of the artistic process as more significant than the product created by the process. Process art often focuses on motivation, intent, the rationale, with art viewed as a creative journey that doesn't necessarily lead to a traditional fine art object destination.

Process Art Movement

The process art movement began in the U.S. and Europe in the mid-1960s. It has roots in performance art, the Dada movement and, more traditionally, the drip paintings of Jackson Pollock. Change, transience, and embracing serendipity are themes in this movement. In 1968, the Guggenheim Museum hosted a groundbreaking exhibition and essay defining the movement by Robert Morris, noting: "Process artists were involved in issues attendant to the body, random occurrences, improvisation, and the liberating qualities of nontraditional materials such as wax, felt, and latex. Using these, they created eccentric forms in erratic or

irregular arrangements produced by actions such as cutting, hanging, and dropping, or organic processes such as growth, condensation, freezing, or decomposition."



Bruce Nauman, Human Need/Desire/Hope/Dream, 1983. Like the live immediacy of performance art, process art is focused on the creative journey instead of a traditional fine art destination.

In process art, the ephemeral nature and insubstantiality of materials are often showcased and highlighted. Process art and environmental art are directly related: process artists engage the primacy of organic systems, using perishable, insubstantial, and transitory materials such as dead rabbits, steam, fat, ice, cereal, sawdust, and grass. The materials are often left exposed to natural forces like gravity, time, weather, or temperature in order to celebrate natural processes. The emphasis on material put these artists in contrast to the minimalists and so are sometimes also called Post-Minimal.

Eva Hesse came to America with her parents, observant Jews, to escape Nazi Germany in 1939. She studied at a number of institutions but completed a BA from Yale. Her work recalls the human body in abstract ways; shapes made of fiberglass and latex suggest interiors, like those of the body. She died at 34 of a brain tumor, but left behind a body of work over one decade that remains influential.

Process Art Precedents

Inspiring precedents for process art that are fundamentally related include indigenous rites, shamanic and religious rituals, and cultural forms such as sandpainting, sun dance, and tea ceremonies. For example, the construction process of a Vajrayana Buddhist sand mandala by monks from Namgyal Monastery in Ithaca, New York was recorded and exhibited online by the Ackland's Yager Gallery of Asian Art. The monks' creation of a Medicine Buddha mandala began February 26, 2001 and concluded March 21, 2001, and the dissolution of the mandala was on June 8, 2001, demonstrating that the process of creating the art was more important than preserving the finished product.

The Influence of Feminism

Feminist and intersectional sentiments in art have always existed in opposition to the white, patriarchal foundations and current realities of western art markets and art history.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the origin, evolution, and influence of the feminist art movement during the late 20th century.

Key Points

- Feminism in art has always sought to change the reception of contemporary art and bring visibility to women within art history and practice.
- In line with the development of western civilization, art in the west has been built upon white, patriarchal, capitalist values, and while women artists have always existed they have largely been omitted from history.
- The women-in-arts movement corresponded with general developments in feminism in the 1960s and 1970s.
- One of the first self-proclaimed feminist art classes in the United States was started in the fall of 1970 at Fresno State University by visiting artist Judy Chicago. The students who formed the program included Susan Boud, Dori Atlantis, Gail Escola, Vanalyne Green, Suzanne Lacy, and Cay Lang.
- The strength of the feminist movement allowed for the emergence and visibility of many new types of work by women.
- From 1980 onward, art historian Griselda Pollock challenged the dominant museum models of art and history so excluding of women's artistic contributions. She helped articulate the complex relations between femininity, modernity, psychoanalysis, and representation.

Key Terms

- **feminism**: A social theory or political movement supporting the equality of both sexes in all aspects of public and private life; specifically, a theory or movement that argues that legal and social restrictions on females must be removed in order to bring about such equality.

Origins

Feminism in art has always sought to change the reception of contemporary art and bring visibility to women within art history and practice. In line with the development of western civilization, art in the west has been built upon white, patriarchal, capitalist values, and while women artists have always existed they have largely been omitted from history. Feminism has always existed and generally prioritizes the creation of an opposition to this system. Corresponding with general developments within feminism, the so-called "second wave" of the movement gained some prominence in the 1960s and flourished throughout the 1970s.

The Feminist Art Program

One of the first self-proclaimed feminist art classes in the United States, the Feminist Art Program, was started in the fall of 1970 at Fresno State University by visiting artist Judy Chicago. Chicago (born 1939) is an American feminist artist and writer known for her large collaborative art installation pieces which examine the role of women in history and culture. Chicago's work incorporates artistic skills stereotypically placed upon women, such as needlework, contrasted with stereotypical male skills such as welding and pyrotechnics. Chicago's masterpiece work is a mixed-media piece known as *The Dinner Party*, which is in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum.



Judy Chicago's installation "The Dinner Party" at the Brooklyn Museum of Art: The Dinner Party is an installation artwork by feminist artist Judy Chicago depicting place settings for 39 mythical and historical famous women

The students who formed the Feminist Art Program along with Judy Chicago included Susan Boud, Dori Atlantis, Gail Escola, Vanalyne Green, Suzanne Lacy, and Cay Lang. The group refurbished an off-campus studio space in downtown Fresno for artists to create and discuss their work "without male interference". Participants lived and worked in the studio, leading reading groups and collaborating on art. In 1971, the class became a full-time program at the university.

The program was different than a standard art class. Instead of the typical teaching of techniques and art history, students focused on raising their feminist consciousness. Students would share personal experiences about specific topics like money and relationships. It was believed that by sharing these experiences, students were able to insert more emotion into their artwork. Furthermore, instead of supporting the typical idea of artists being secluded and working as independent "geniuses," the class emphasized collaboration, a radical departure for the time period.

Feminist Art Movements: U.S and Europe

During the heyday of second wave feminism, women artists in New York began to come together for meetings and exhibitions. Collective galleries like A.I.R. Gallery were formed to provide visibility for art by feminist artists. The strength of the feminist movement allowed for emergence and visibility of many new types of work by women. Women Artists in Revolution (WAR) formed in 1969 to protest the lack of exposure for women artists. The Ad Hoc Women Artists' Committee (AWC) formed in 1971 to address the Whitney Museum's exclusion of women artists.

There are thousands of examples of women associated with the feminist art movement. Artists and writers credited with making the movement visible in culture include:

- Judy Chicago, founder of the first known Feminist Art Program

- Miriam Schapiro, co-founder of the Feminist Art Program at Cal Arts
- Sheila Levrant de Bretteville and Arlene Raven, co-founders of the Woman's Building

Both Suzanne Lacy and Faith Wilding were participants in all the early arts' programs. Other important names include Martha Rosler, Mary Kelly, Kate Millett, Nancy Spero, Faith Ringgold, June Wayne, Lucy Lippard, Griselda Pollock, and art-world agitators The Guerrilla Girls.

The Women's Interart Center in New York, meanwhile, is still in operation, while the Women's Video Festival was held in New York City for a number of years during the early 1970s. Many women artists continue to organize working groups, collectives, and nonprofit galleries in various locales around the world.

From 1980 onward, art historian Griselda Pollock challenged the dominant museum models of art and history so excluding of women's artistic contributions. She helped articulate the complex relations between femininity, modernity, psychoanalysis, and representation. While many argued with the initial feminist movement's focus and use of women's bodies as subject matter suggesting that it was still subjecting women to the patriarchal gaze, artists at the time considered it a reassertion of agency – by taking back the images of women's bodies from the historical use they found it empowering and fundamentally transgressive.

Current Climate

Things are beginning to shift in terms of a more gender-balanced art world as postmodern thought and gender politics become more important to the general public. Postmodern feminism is an approach to feminist theory that incorporates postmodern and post-structuralist theory, and thus sees itself as moving beyond the modernist polarities of liberal feminism and radical feminism towards a more intersectional concept of reality.

Land Art or Earth Art

Site-specific art refers to art that has been created for a specific environment or space.

Key Points

- Site-specific art is artwork created to exist in a certain place. Typically, the artist takes the location into account while planning and creating the artwork.
- The actual term was promoted and refined by Californian artist Robert Irwin, but it was actually first used in the mid-1970s by young sculptors such as Patricia Johanson, Dennis Oppenheim, and Athena Tacha.
- Outdoor site-specific artworks often include landscaping combined with permanently sculptural elements. Site-specific art can be linked with environmental art, Earth art, or land art.
- Robert Smithson and Christo and Jeanne Claude are land/Earth artists who created site-specific work.

Key Terms

- **topographies**: Detailed graphic representations of the surface features of a place or object.

Site-specific art is artwork created to exist in a certain place. Typically, the artist takes the location into account while planning and creating the artwork. The actual term was promoted and refined by Californian artist Robert Irwin, but it was actually first used in the mid-1970s by young sculptors, such as Patricia Johanson, Dennis Oppenheim, and Athena Tacha, who executed public commissions for large urban sites. Architectural critic Catherine Howett and art critic Lucy Lippard were among the first to describe site-specific environmental art as a movement.



Site-specific installation by Dan Flavin, 1996, Menil Collection.: This site-specific installation by Dan Flavin uses colored lights to illuminate this interior gallery space

Background

Site-specific art emerged as a reaction to the proliferation of modernist art objects as transportable, nomadic, museum-oriented, objects of commodification, with the desire to draw attention to the site and the context of the art. Site-specific work can refer to any form of art as long as it has been created for a specific environment or space. Closely related to land art and environmental art movements, site-specific art is the broadest of the three as it is not medium-specific.

Land Art and Earth Art

Land art, earthworks (coined by Robert Smithson), or Earth art is an art movement in which landscape and of art are inextricably linked, so in this way it is site-specific. It is also an art form created in nature, using organic materials such as soil, rock (bed rock, boulders, stones), organic media (logs, branches, leaves), and water with introduced materials such as concrete, metal, asphalt, or mineral pigments. Sculptures are not placed in the landscape; rather, the landscape is the means of their creation. Earth-moving equipment is often involved. The works frequently exist in the open, located well away from civilization, left to change and erode under natural conditions. Many of the first works of this kind, created in the deserts of Nevada, New Mexico, Utah or Arizona, were ephemeral in nature and now only exist as video recordings or photographic documents.

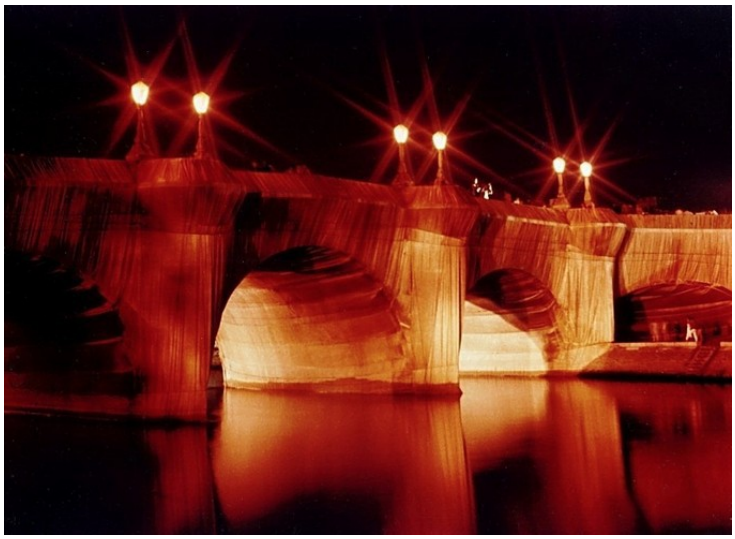
Robert Smithson (January 2, 1938 – July 20, 1973) was an American land artist. His most famous work is *Spiral Jetty* (1970), a 1,500-foot long spiral-shaped jetty extending into the Great Salt Lake in Utah constructed from rocks, earth, and salt. It was entirely submerged by rising lake waters for several years, but has since re-emerged.



Robert Smithson, Spiral Jetty: Spiral Jetty is a site-specific piece of Land Art or Earth Art created by Robert Smithson in the Great Salt Lake, Utah. Using rocks and earth, Smithson built a spiral-shaped relief in the lake bed. Best viewed from above, the piece is altered by the shifting waters over time and in this way is forever linked to the environment it was intended for

Christo Vladimirov Javacheff and Jeanne-Claude, known as Christo and Jeanne-Claude, are a married couple who created site-specific environmental works of art. Their works nearly always entail wrapping a large area of space or piece of architecture in a textile, and include the wrapping of the Reichstag in Berlin and the Pont-Neuf bridge in Paris, the 24-mile (39 km)-long artwork

called *Running Fence* in Sonoma and Marin counties in California, and *The Gates* in New York City's Central Park. The purpose of their art, they contend, is simply to create works of art for joy and beauty and to create new ways of seeing familiar landscapes.



Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Pont Neuf, 1985: The artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude are known for their site-specific works that make use of large-scale wrapping techniques. In this piece, they wrapped an entire stone bridge built over a river in Paris to mesmerizing effect

Postmodernism

Post-Modern Architecture

The ideas of Postmodernism based on the ideas of French philosophers like Jacques Derrida (deconstruction) arguably first appeared in architecture of the 1980's. Buildings like the Beaubourg Center in Paris by Renzo Piano, Richard Rogers and Gianfranco Franchini was completed in 1977. It's inside-out structure with most of the internal mechanical and functional systems exposed on the exterior seemed to coincide with the deconstructionist ideas of Derrida. It houses much of Frances contemporary art.



The Pompidou Center or The Beaubourg in Paris. CC BY-SA 3.0 Leland

Race and Ethnicity in Postmodernism

Postmodernism had a profound influence on the concepts of race and ethnicity in the United States in the mid-20th century.

Key Points

- Postmodernism relies on concrete experience over abstract principles, arguing that the outcome of one's own experience will necessarily be fallible and relative rather than certain or universal.
- A great deal of art during this era sought to deconstruct race through a postmodern lens, arguing that race is not based in any biological reality but is instead a socially constructed category.

- Primarily through a postmodern perspective, the author bell hooks has addressed the intersection of race, class, and gender in education, art, history, sexuality, mass media, and feminism.
- The Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s led artists to express the ideals of the times. Galleries and community art centers were developed for the purpose of displaying African-American art, and collegiate teaching positions were created by and for African- American artists.
- By the 1980s and 1990s, hip-hop graffiti became predominate in urban communities. Most major cities developed museums devoted to African American artists. The National Endowment for the Arts provided increasing support for these artists.
- Post-black art is a phrase that refers to a category of contemporary African-American art. It is a paradoxical genre in which race and racism are intertwined in a way that rejects their interaction.

Key Terms

- **bell hooks**: Born Gloria Jean Watkins (1952 –); an American author, feminist, and social activist; known for her focus on the interconnectivity of race, capitalism, and gender and their ability to perpetuate systems of oppression.
- **deconstruction**: A philosophical theory of textual criticism; a form of critical analysis.
- **post-structuralism**: A doctrine that rejects structuralism's claims to objectivity and emphasizes the plurality of meaning.

Background

Postmodernism (also known as post-structuralism) is skeptical of explanations that claim to be valid for all groups, cultures, traditions, or races, and instead focuses on the relative truths of each person (i.e. Postmodernism = relativism). In the postmodern understanding, interpretation is everything; reality only exists through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually. Postmodernism relies on concrete experience over abstract principles, arguing that the outcome of one's own experience will necessarily be fallible and relative rather than certain or universal.

Postmodernism frequently serves as an ambiguous, overarching term for skeptical interpretations of culture, literature, art, philosophy, economics, architecture, fiction, and literary criticism. It is often associated with deconstruction and post-structuralism because its usage gained significant popularity at the same time as 20th-century post-structural thought.

Postmodernism postulates that many, if not all, apparent realities are only social constructs and therefore subject to change. It claims that there is no absolute truth and that the way people perceive the world is subjective and emphasizes the role of language, power relations, and motivations in the formation of ideas and beliefs. In particular, it attacks the use of binary classifications such as male versus female, straight versus gay, white versus black, and imperial versus colonial; it holds realities to be plural, relative, and dependent on who the interested parties are and the nature of these interests. Postmodernist approaches consider that the ways in which social dynamics, such as power and hierarchy, affect human conceptualizations of the world have important effects on the way knowledge is constructed and used. Postmodernist thought often emphasizes constructivism, idealism, pluralism, relativism, and skepticism in its approaches to knowledge and understanding.

Postmodernism and Race

Postmodernism had a profound influence on the concepts of race and ethnicity in the United States in the mid-20th century. Many people began to reconceptualize the term "race" as a social construct – meaning that it has no inherent biological reality, but is a classification system that's been constructed or invented for societal purposes. Following the Second World War, evolutionary and social scientists were acutely aware of how beliefs about race were used to justify discrimination, apartheid, slavery, and genocide. This questioning gained momentum in the 1960s during the U.S. civil rights movement and the emergence of numerous anti-colonial movements worldwide.

A great deal of art during this era sought to deconstruct race through a postmodern lens. The author bell hooks is widely known for her writing focused on the connection of race, capitalism, and gender and what she describes as their ability to produce and perpetuate systems of oppression and class domination. She has published more than 30 books and numerous scholarly and mainstream articles, appeared in several documentary films, and participated in various public lectures. Primarily through a postmodern perspective, hooks has addressed race, class, and gender in education, art, history, sexuality, mass media, and feminism.



bell hooks: The author bell hooks is widely known for her postmodern writing focused on the connection of race, capitalism, and gender

Some African-American artists began taking a global approach after World War II. Artists such as Barbara Chase-Riboud, Edward Clark, Harvey Cropper, and Beauford Delaney worked and exhibited abroad in Paris, Copenhagen, and Stockholm. Other African-American artists made it into important New York galleries by the 1950s and 1960s: Horace Pippin and Romare Bearden were among the few who were successfully received in a gallery setting. The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s led artists to capture and express the times and changes. Galleries and community art centers were developed for the purpose of displaying African- American art, and collegiate teaching positions were created by and for African-American artists.



Eugene J. Martin, Midnight Golfer, 1990. Mixed media collage on rag paper

Post-black art arose during this time as a category of contemporary African-American art. It is a paradoxical genre of art where race and racism are intertwined in a way that rejects their interaction. By the 1980s and 1990s, hip-hop graffiti became predominate in urban communities. Most major cities had developed museums devoted to African American artists. The National Endowment for the Arts provided increasing support for these artists.

Postmodernist Sculpture

The characteristics of Postmodernism, such as collage, pastiche, appropriation, and the destruction of barriers between fine art and popular culture, can be applied to sculptural works.

Key Points

- While inherently difficult to define by nature, Postmodernism began with pop art and continued within many following movements including conceptual art, neo- expressionism, feminist art, and the young British artists of the 1990s.
- Intermedia, installation art, conceptual art, video, light art, and sound art are often regarded as postmodern mediums.
- In the 1960s and 1970s artists like Eduardo Paolozzi, Chryssa, Claes Oldenburg, George Segal, Edward Kienholz, Nam June Paik, Wolf Vostell, Duane Hanson, and John DeAndrea explored abstraction, imagery, and figure by using video art, environment, light sculpture, and installation art in new ways.
- Jeff Koons is a good example of a postmodern sculptor; his works elevate the mundane, contain a heavy dose of kitsch, and project an element of ambiguous cynicism often seen in postmodern works.

Key Terms

- **postminimalist**: One who works in the style of postminimalism.
- **kinetic**: Of or relating to motion.

Background

The characteristics of Postmodernism, include bricolage, collage, appropriation, the recycling of past styles and themes in a modern-day context, and destruction of the barriers between fine arts, craft and popular culture, can be applied to sculpture. While inherently difficult to define by nature, Postmodernism began with pop art and continued within many following movements including conceptual art, neo-expressionism, feminist art, and the young British artists of the 1990s. The plurality of idea and form that defines Postmodernism essentially allow any medium to be considered postmodern. In terms of sculpture, characteristics like mixed media, installation art, conceptual art, video light art, and sound art are often regarded as postmodern.



Claes Oldenburg, Typewriter Eraser, 1999. Claes Oldenburg is known for memorializing everyday objects in his works, challenging the idea that public monuments must commemorate historical figures or events

Jeff Koons

Jeffrey “Jeff” Koons (born January 21, 1955) is an American artist known for working with popular culture subjects and reproducing banal objects, such as balloon animals produced in stainless steel with mirror-finish surfaces. His works have sold for substantial sums, including at least one world record auction price for a work by a living artist.

Koons gained recognition in the 1980s and subsequently set up a factory-like studio in a SoHo loft on the corner of Houston Street and Broadway in New York. It was staffed with over 30 assistants, each assigned to a different aspect of producing his work, in a similar mode as Andy Warhol’s Factory (notable because all of his work is produced using a method known as art fabrication). Today, he has a 16,000-square-foot factory near the old Hudson rail yards in Chelsea, working with 90 to 120 regular assistants. Koons developed a color-by-numbers system so that each of his assistants could execute his canvases and sculptures as if they had been done “by a single hand”.



Jeff Koons, Balloon Dog (Magenta), 1994–2000. One of five unique versions (Blue, Magenta, Orange, Red, Yellow). Made from mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating, the Orange version was sold in 2013 for a record price for a living sculptor.

Koons is a good example of a postmodern sculptor because his works elevate the mundane, contain a heavy dose of kitsch, and project an element of ambiguous cynicism often seen in Postmodern works.



The “Puppy” topiary sculpture by Jeff Koons, on the outdoor terrace at Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Spain.: Koons’ “Puppy” presents a large scale puppy on the terrace of the Guggenheim, Bilbao

Neo-Expressionism

Neo-expressionists sought to portray recognizable subjects in rough and violently emotional ways using vivid color schemes.

Key Points

- Related to American lyrical abstraction, the Bay Area Figurative School, the continuation of abstract expressionism, new image painting, and pop art, neo-expressionism developed as a reaction against the conceptual art and minimal art of the 1970s.
- Critics questioned neo-expressionism’s relation to marketability, the rapidly expanding art market, celebrity, the backlash against feminism, anti-intellectualism, and a return to mythic subjects and individualist methods that some deemed outmoded.
- Women were marginalized by the movement, with painters such as Elizabeth Murray and Maria Lassnig omitted from many key exhibitions.
- The return to traditional painting in the late 1970s and early 1980s seen in neo- expressionist artists such as Georg Baselitz and Julian Schnabel is described as having had postmodern tendencies.
- Neo-expressionism’s strong links to the commercial art market has raised questions about its status as a postmodern movement and about the definition of Postmodernism itself.

Key Terms

- **outmoded**: Something that is considered unfashionable.
- **neo-expressionism**: A style of modern painting and sculpture that emerged in the late 1970s and dominated the art market until the mid-1980s; characterized by portraying recognizable objects like the human body in rough and violently emotional ways

using vivid color schemes.

- **bay**: An opening in a wall, especially between two columns; the distance between two supports in a vault or building with a pitched roof.

Background

Neo-expressionism is a style of modern painting and sculpture that emerged in the late 1970s and dominated the art market until the mid-1980s. Related to American lyrical abstraction of the 60s and 70s, the Bay Area Figurative School of the 50s and 60s, the continuation of abstract expressionism, new image painting, and pop art, neo-expressionism developed as a reaction against the conceptual and minimalist art of the 1970s. Neo-expressionists returned to portraying recognizable objects such as the human body (though sometimes an abstracted version), in rough and violently emotional ways using vivid colors and color harmonies.

Overtly inspired by so-called German expressionist painters such as Emil Nolde, Max Beckmann, George Grosz, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, and other expressionist artists such as James Ensor and Edvard Munch, neo-expressionists were sometimes called Neue Wilden ("the new wild ones'"). The style emerged internationally and was viewed by critics as a revival of traditional themes of self-expression in European art after decades of American dominance. The social and economic value of the movement was hotly debated. Critics questioned neo-expressionism's relation to marketability, the rapidly expanding art market, celebrity, the backlash against feminism, anti-intellectualism, and a return to mythic subjects and individualist methods that some deemed outmoded. Women were marginalized in the movement, with painters such as Elizabeth Murray and Maria Lassnig omitted from many of its key exhibitions, most notoriously from the 1981 "New Spirit in Painting" exhibition in London that included 38 male painters and no female painters.



Elizabeth Murray, Wiggle Manhattan, lithograph, 1992. Elizabeth Murray is an example of a Neo-Expressionist painter who was marginalized in the movement due to her gender

Neo-Expressionism Around the World

Georg Baselitz, born January 1938, is a German painter who studied in the former East Germany before moving to West Germany. Baselitz's style is interpreted as neo-expressionist, but from a European perspective it is seen as postmodern. His career was amplified in the 1960s after the police took action against one of his paintings because of its provocative and offensive sexual nature.



Georg Baselitz by Lothar Wolleh (Mülheim, 1971): Georg Baselitz's paintings are representative of neo-expressionism

Neo-Expressionism As Postmodern Art?

The return to traditional painting in the late 1970s and early 1980s seen in neo-expressionist artists such as Georg Baselitz and Julian Schnabel has been described as one of the first coherent postmodern movements. Its strong link to the commercial art market has raised questions about its status as a postmodern movement and about the definition of Postmodernism itself. Hal Foster stated that Neo-Expressionism was complicit with the conservative cultural politics of the Reagan-Bush era in the U.S. Félix Guattari disregarded the "large promotional operations dubbed 'Neo-Expressionism' in Germany" as an example of a "fad that maintains itself by means of publicity…Postmodernism is nothing but the last gasp of Modernism."

These critiques of Neo-Expressionism reveal that money and public relations strained the credibility of the contemporary art world in America during the same period that conceptual artists and women artists including painters and feminist theorists like Griselda Pollock were systematically reevaluating modern art. Brian Massumi claims that Deleuze and Guattari opened the horizon for new definitions of beauty in postmodern art. For Jean-François Lyotard, paintings by Valerio Adami, Daniel Buren, Marcel Duchamp, Bracha Ettinger, and Barnett Newman, and the painting of Paul Cézanne and Wassily Kandinsky, were the vehicles for new ideas of the sublime in contemporary art.

Political Art

Political art in the nineties was a form of protest for queer and feminist movements against the patriarchy.

Key Points

- The 90s saw a continuation of political art whereby stigmatized communities such as racial minorities, women, and LGBT individuals created what is termed political art in opposition to the patriarchy.
- The Guerrilla Girls are an anonymous group of feminist, female artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism within the art world.
- The LGBT community responded to the AIDS crisis by organizing, engaging in direct actions, staging protests, and creating political art.
- Street art can be a powerful platform for reaching the public and a potent form of political expression for the oppressed.

Key Terms

- **feminism**: A social theory or political movement supporting the equality of both sexes in all aspects of public and private life; specifically, a theory or movement that argues that legal and social restrictions on females must be removed in order to bring about such equality.

Background

A strong relationship between the arts and politics has existed across cultural boundaries and throughout history. Artistic responses to contemporaneous events take on political and social dimensions, becoming a focus of controversy and even a force of political and social change. The 1990s saw a continuation of political art around the world. Stigmatized communities such as racial minorities, women, and the LGBT individuals created political art in opposition to the patriarchy.

The notion that personal revelation through art can be a political tool guided activist art in its study of public dimensions and private experience. The strategies deployed by feminist artists paralleled those of other activist artists, including "collaboration, dialogue, a constant questioning of aesthetic and social assumptions, and a new respect for audience." These were used to articulate and negotiate issues of self-representation, empowerment, and community identity.

The Guerrilla Girls

The Guerrilla Girls are an anonymous group of feminist, female artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism within the art world. The group formed in New York City in 1985 with the mission of bringing gender and racial inequality in the fine arts into focus within the greater community. Members are known for the gorilla masks they wear to remain anonymous.

Throughout their existence, the Guerrilla Girls have utilized protest art to express their ideals, opinions, and concerns, as well as to fundraise for the group. Their posters, which now are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and others they once protested against, are known for their bold statements such as, "When racism and sexism are no longer fashionable, what will your art collection be worth?" In the early days, posters were brainstormed, designed, critiqued and posted around New York. Small handbills based on their designs were also passed out at events by the thousands.



In 1990, the group designed a billboard featuring Mona Lisa that was placed along the West Side Highway, supported by the New York City public art fund. For one day, New York's MTA Bus Company also displayed bus advertisements asking, "Do women have to get naked to get into the Met Museum?" Stickers also became popular calling cards representative of the group. In the mid-1980s members infiltrated the Guggenheim Museum bathrooms and placed stickers about female inequality on the walls.

Since 2002, Guerrilla Girls, Inc. has designed and installed billboards in Los Angeles during the Oscars to expose white male dominance in the film industry, such as: "Anatomically Correct Oscars," "Even the Senate is More Progressive than Hollywood," and "The Birth of Feminism, Unchain the Women Directors. " Guerrilla Girls have also published books that include their statistical data, information about protest arts, and goals regarding inequality in the art world. Their first book, *Confessions of the Guerrilla Girls*.



Guerrilla Girls Billboard: Guerrilla Girls billboard in Los Angeles protests white male dominance at the Oscars in 2009

LGBT Rights and the AIDS Crisis

The AIDS crisis of the 1980s led to increasing stigma against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community, who in turn protested with political art and activism.

The LGBT community responded to the AIDS crisis by organizing, engaging in direct actions, staging protests, and creating political art. Some of the earliest attempts to bring attention to the new disease were staged by the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, a protest and street performance organization that uses drag and religious imagery to call attention to sexual intolerance and satirize issues of gender and morality. At the group's inception in 1979, a small group of gay men in San Francisco began wearing the attire of nuns in visible situations, using high camp to draw attention to social conflicts and problems in the Castro District.

One of their most enduring projects of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence is the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, in which members who have died (referred to as "Nuns of the Above") are immortalized. Created in the early 1990s, the quilt has frequently been flown around the United States for local displays.



The AIDS Memorial Quilt: The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, often abbreviated to AIDS Memorial Quilt, is an enormous quilt made as a memorial to celebrate the lives of people who have died of AIDS-related causes. Weighing an estimated 54 tons, it is the largest piece of community folk art in the world as of 2016

A number of young artists who themselves were victims of AIDS made art that brought attention to the issue. Keith Haring, David Wojnarowicz and Robert Mapplethorpe were artists who succumbed to the disease but created lasting work that brought attention to an issue that was for too long ignored by the politicians given the populations most affected by it at that time, and also especially in the case of Mapplethorpe – creating a Foundation for the arts and ongoing research into the disease.

Street Art or Graffiti

Street art is an umbrella term defining forms of visual art created in public locations, usually unsanctioned artwork executed outside of the context of traditional art venues. The term gained popularity during the graffiti art boom of the early 1980s. The terms “urban art”, “guerrilla art”, “post-graffiti” and “neo-graffiti” are also sometimes used when referring to artwork created in these contexts.

There is a strong current of activism and subversion in urban art, as it can be a powerful platform for reaching the public and a potent form of political expression for the oppressed. Some street artists use “smart vandalism” as a way to raise awareness of social and political issues, especially around issues of race and racism. Street artists sometimes present socially relevant content infused with aesthetic value to attract attention to a cause or as a form of “art provocation.” Street art is a controversial issue: some people consider it a crime, others consider it a form of art. Graffiti art proved to be one of the most lucrative kinds of work for the small galleries on the cutting edge on the Lower East Side in the 80s and 90s. It continues to be popular today as witnessed by the recent sale of a Banksy which he engineered to self-destruct in a gesture against the commodification of what had been a purely rhetorical and political art form.

Performance and Body Art

Performance emerged alongside conceptual art to challenge notions of institutional visual art.

Key Points

- Conceptual art emerged as a movement during the 1960s. In part, it was a reaction against formalism as articulated by the influential New York art critic Clement Greenberg.
- Some have argued that conceptual art continued this dematerialization of art by removing the need for objects altogether, while others, including many of the artists themselves, saw conceptual art as a radical break with Greenberg’s kind of formalist Modernism.
- Performance art is traditionally an interdisciplinary performance presented to an audience. It may be scripted or unscripted, random or carefully orchestrated, spontaneous or planned, and occur with or without audience participation. It generally involves the body of the artist herself.

Key Terms

- **conceptual**: Of, or relating to concepts or mental conception; existing in the imagination.

Background

Performance art is a traditionally interdisciplinary performance presented to an audience. It may be scripted or unscripted, random or carefully orchestrated, spontaneous or otherwise planned, and occur with or without audience participation. The performance can be live or distributed via media; the performer can be present or absent. Any situation that involves the four basic elements of time, space, the performer’s body or presence in a medium, and a relationship between the performer and the audience can be considered performance art. It can happen anywhere, in any venue or setting, and for any length of time.



Marina Abramovic Performance Artist: Marina Abramovic – Guggenheim – Seven Easy Pieces – 1st Night

Contemporary Influence In Conceptual and Performance Art

The first wave of the conceptual art movement extended from approximately 1967 to 1978, influenced by early concept artists like Henry Flynt, Robert Morris, and Ray Johnson. Conceptual artists like Dan Graham, Hans Haacke, and Lawrence Weiner have

proven very influential on subsequent artists, and well-known contemporary artists such as Mike Kelley or Tracey Emin are sometimes labeled “second- or third-generation” conceptualists, or post-conceptual artists.

Contemporary artists have adopted many of the concerns of the conceptual art movement. While these artists may or may not identify themselves as conceptual artists, ideas such as anti- commodification, social and political critique, and ideas/information as medium continue to have a place in contemporary art, especially among artists working with installation art, performance art, net art, and digital art.

Visual Arts, Performing Arts, and Art Performance

Performance art is an essentially contested concept: any single definition implies the recognition of rival uses. Like concepts such as ”democracy” or “art,” it implies productive disagreement with itself.

The narrower meaning of the term refers to postmodernist traditions in Western culture. From about the mid-1960s into the 1970s, performance art often derived from concepts of visual art, with respect to Antonin Artaud, Dada, the Situationists, Fluxus, installation art, and conceptual Art. It was often defined as the antithesis to theatre, challenging orthodox art forms and cultural norms. The ideal was an ephemeral and authentic experience for the performer and audience in an event that could not be repeated, captured, or purchased.

Performance artists often challenge the audience to think in new and unconventional ways, break conventions of traditional arts, and break down conventional ideas about “what art is.” As long as the performer does not become a player who repeats a role, performance art can include satirical elements (compare Blue Man Group); utilize robots and machines as performers, as in pieces of the Survival Research Laboratories; or borrow elements of any performing arts such as dance, music, and circus.

Video Art

Video art relies on moving pictures and is comprised of video and/or audio data.

Key Points

- Video art came into existence during the late 1960s and early 1970s as new technology became available outside corporate broadcasting.
- This form can consist of recordings that are broadcast, viewed in galleries, or distributed as video tapes or DVD discs; sculptural installations incorporating one or more television sets or video monitors; and performances in which video representations are included.
- Many artists found video more appealing than film, particularly when the medium ‘s greater accessibility was coupled with technologies able to edit or modify the video image.
- Installation works involve either an environment, distinct pieces of video presented separately, or any combination of video with traditional media like sculpture.

Key Terms

- **choreography**: The art of creating, arranging, and recording dance movements.
- **video art**: A type of art relying on moving pictures and comprising of video and/or audio data. Video art came into existence during the late 1960s and early 1970s as the new technology became available outside corporate broadcasting.

Video art came into existence during the late 1960s and early 1970s as new technology became available outside corporate broadcasting for the production of moving image work. The medium of video being used to create the work, which can then be broadcast, viewed in galleries, distributed as video tapes or DVD discs, or presented as sculptural installations incorporating one or more television sets or video monitors.

History of Video Art

Prior to the introduction of this new technology, moving image production was only available to the consumer through 8 or 16 millimeter film. Many artists found video more appealing than film, particularly when the medium’s greater accessibility was coupled with technologies able to edit or modify the video image. The relative affordability of video also led to its popularity as a medium.



The Art of Video Games Exhibition Crowd, March 16, 2012 – September 30, 2012: Exhibit at the Smithsonian American Art Museum that showcased video games as moving image art works

The first multi-channel video art was Wipe Cycle by Ira Schneider and Frank Gillette. An installation of nine television screens, Wipe Cycle combined live images of gallery visitors, found footage from commercial television, and shots from pre-recorded tapes. The material was alternated from one monitor to the next in an elaborate choreography.

Prominent Video Artists

The first video cameras made available to the public in ca. 1963-65 were given for promotion to Nam June Paik, a Korean-American artist for whom video became his primary medium, and Andy Warhol. Paik and other early video artists explored the medium in much the way early photographers had that technology – screens were manipulated to create colors and shapes as if they were canvases. Today video artists use the medium in many ways; some, like Matthew Barney, create cinematic productions the equal of any narrative film. Many early prominent video artists were involved with concurrent movements in conceptual art, performance, and experimental film. These include Americans Vito Acconci, John Baldessari, and Peter Campus, among others. Some, like Steina and Woody Vasulka, employed video synthesizers to create abstract works.

Much video art in the medium's heyday experimented formally with the limitations of the format. For example, American artist Peter Campus' *Double Vision* combined the video signals from two Sony Portapaks through an electronic mixer, resulting in a distorted and radically dissonant image. Another representative piece, Joan Jonas' *Vertical Roll*, involved recording previously-recorded material of Jonas dancing while playing the videos back on a television, resulting in a layered and complex representation of mediation.



Joan Jonas, Vertical Roll, 1972: A still from Vertical Roll by Joan Jonas, a video that experiments with the formal limitations of video as a medium

Video Art Today

Currently, video art is represented by two varieties: single-channel and installation. Single- channel works are much closer to the conventional idea of television in that a video is screened, projected, or shown as a single image. Installation works, meanwhile, involve either an environment, distinct pieces of video presented separately, or any combination of video coupled with traditional media like sculpture. Installation video is the most common form of video art today. Sometimes it is combined with other media and is often subsumed by the greater whole of an installation. Contemporary contributions are being produced at the crossroads of such disciplines as installation, architecture, design, sculpture, and electronic art.

Digital Art

Digital art describes artistic works and practices that use digital technology as a part of the creative process.

Key Points

- Since the 1970s, digital art has been described with terms like computer art and multimedia art. This modality falls under the umbrella of new media art.
- The impact of digital technology has transformed activities such as painting, drawing, sculpture, and music, while new forms, such as net art, digital installation art, and virtual reality, have become recognized as art.
- The techniques of digital art are used extensively by the mainstream media in advertisements and by filmmakers to produce special effects.
- Digital art can be purely computer-generated or taken from other sources, such as a scanned photograph or an image drawn using graphics software.

Key Terms

- **imagery**: Visible representations of objects.
- **stylus**: A sharp stick used in ancient times for writing in clay tablets; a sharp tool for engraving.

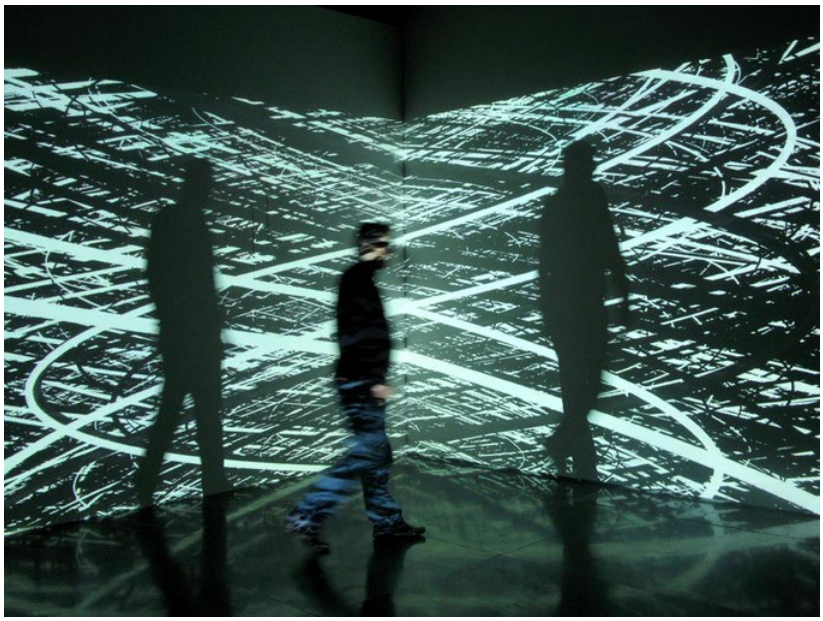
Digital art is a general term for any art that uses digital technology as an essential part of the creative process. Since the 1970s, various names have been used to describe such artwork, including computer art and multimedia art, and digital art itself is placed under the larger umbrella term of new media art.

The impact of digital technology has transformed activities such as painting, drawing, sculpture, and music, while new forms (such as net art, digital installation art, and virtual reality) have become recognized as art. More generally, the term digital artist describes one who creates art using digital technologies. The term digital art is also applied to contemporary art that uses the methods of mass production or digital media.

Digital Production Techniques in Visual Media

Techniques of digital art are used extensively by the mainstream media in advertisements and by filmmakers to produce special effects. Both digital and traditional artists use many sources of electronic information and programs to create their work. Given the parallels between visual art and music, it seems likely that acceptance of the value of digital art parallel the progression to acceptance of electronic music over the last four decades.

Digital art can be purely computer-generated or taken from other sources, such as scanned photographs or images drawn using graphics software. The term may technically be applied to art done using other media or processes and merely scanned into a digital format, but digital art usually describes art that has been significantly modified by a computer program. Digitized text, raw audio, and video recordings are usually not considered digital art alone, but can be part of larger digital art projects. Digital painting is created in a similar fashion to non-digital painting uses software to create and distribute the work.

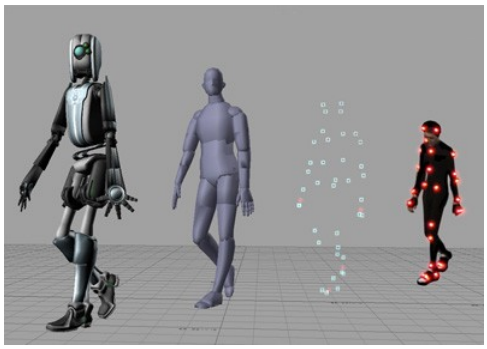


Irrational Geometrics, Pascal Dombis (2008): Irrational Geometrics is a digital art installation

Computer-Generated Visual Media

Digital visual art consists of two-dimensional (2D) information displayed on a monitor as well as information mathematically translated into three-dimensional (3D) images and viewed through perspective projection on a monitor. The simplest form is 2D computer graphics, which reflect drawings made using a pencil and paper. In this case, however, the image is on the computer screen and the instrument used to draw might be a stylus or mouse. The creation might appear to be drawn with a pencil, pen, or paintbrush.

Another kind of digital video art is 3D computer graphics, where the screen becomes a window into a virtual environment of arranged objects that are “photographed” by the computer. Many software programs enable collaboration, lending such artwork to sharing and augmentation so users can collaborate on an artistic creation. Computer-generated animations are created with a computer from digital models. The term is usually applied to works created entirely with a computer. Movies make heavy use of computer-generated graphics, which are called computer- generated imagery (CGI) in the film industry.



Computer-generated animation: This example of computer-generated animation, produced using the “motion capture” technique, is another form of digital art

Digital installation art constitutes a broad field of activity and incorporates many forms. Some resemble video installations, particularly large-scale works involving projections and live video capture. By using projection techniques that enhance an audience’s impression of sensory development, many digital installations attempt to create immersive environments.



Jeff Wall, A Sudden Gust of Wind (after Hokusai), 1993: The well-known photographer Jeff Wall often uses digital photography to create his works, thereby classifying them as a form of digital art that exemplifies the exceptionally wide-reaching nature of the term itself

The Globalization of Art

We have seen that developments in art over the centuries have often followed developments in technology. Today the art world is no longer contained by geographical boundaries – it is truly global. Any contemporary art fair will have work from around the world. Recently art from Asia, Africa, India, and the Middle East among many others have become the major players in a world that saw first Italy, then France, then in the 20th century, America, become the center of the art world. Today artists like Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, Palestinian artist Emily Jacir, and Indian artist Shilpa Gupta (see https://youtu.be/WYQ-ysDGZUo) are all making the most avant garde and significant art to be seen and experienced. Curators and critics are also being recruited from far-flung places – the recently deceased Okwui Enwezor must be mentioned – and the Venice Biennale and other important art shows are no longer the purview of the establishment figures of the past. The canon begins to change.

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7.1: Pop Art

Name	Native Country
Andy Warhol	United States
Edward Ruscha	United States
Robert Rauschenberg	United States
Yayoi Kusama	Japan
Jasper Johns	United States
Roy Lichtenstein	United States

Pop art emerged from the popular culture during the mid-1950s in England and the United States, presenting a challenge by artists to the fine art movements in the first half of the 20th century. The art is flat without perspective, yet colorful and repetitive. Pop art is a response to mass culture, advertising, comic books, and any mundane object. The artist would use something from mass culture and remove it from its current context. The style focused on hard edges with pure colors, as seen in Lichtenstein's images. Pop art and minimalism are the precursors to post-modern art.



Campbell's Soup Cans (14.1) by **Andy Warhol** (1928-1987), is an example of the everyday objects he painted larger than life-size. Warhol also created pop art from $100-dollar bills, Coke bottles, and celebrities like Marylyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor, Marlon Brando and Mao Zedong (14.2)



14.1 Campbell Soup I

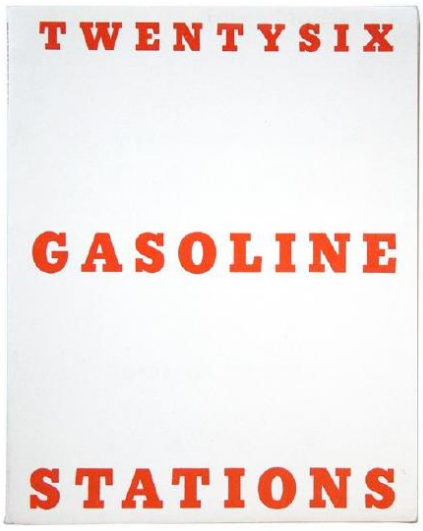


14.2 Portrait of Mao Zedong

Warhol was an American artist leading the visual art movement with his illustrations and printmaking techniques. A graduate of Carnegie Institute for Technology, he moved to New York City and landed a job at Glamour magazine. Moving from illustrator to commercial artist in 1964, Warhol opened his studio, setting his career on a path to stardom. His work, a critique of the popular culture, was widely accepted and sought after, inflating the cost of his work. The highest price ever paid for a Warhol was $105 million for a 1963 painting. His work is extremely valuable and highly collected.



Edward Ruscha (born 1937) is an American artist and contributor to the pop art movement. Early in his life, he worked in a typography company and became interested in words and how they are shaped, then focused using letters in his artwork. As a graduate from the California Institute of the Arts, Ruscha created word paintings with typography. *Twenty-six Gasoline Stations* (14.3) is red text on a white background, and he invented a type of font called Boy Scout Utility Modern. *Pay Nothing* (14.4) imprints the simple lettering on top of a contrasting scene. Ruscha still paints today and exhibits in several museums around the world.



14.3 *Twenty-six Gasoline Stations*



14.4 *Pay Nothing*



Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008) was one of the most influential artists in America and provided the pivotal transition from pop art to Abstract Expressionism. Rauschenberg combined traditional with non-traditional materials in innovative ways. He studied art at Black Mountain College, where Josef Albers, one of the founders of the Bauhaus, was an instructor.

> *The artist's job is to be a witness to his time in history" – Rauschenberg*

Rauschenberg often traveled through Europe and Northern Africa, extending the influence of his art and ideas about popular culture. *Riding Bikes* (14.5) is a sculpture in Berlin, Germany. The piece is made of used bicycle pieces and neon lighting to emphasize the shapes, especially at night, because the sculpture resides in a reflecting pool of water. It is constructed from ready-made items that should move but are now forever frozen in time.

Bed (14.6) was one of his first artworks he described as combines, a method of combining multiple found objects on a canvas. For this image, he used an old pillow and sheet attached to a quilt, then splashed paint and scribbled with a pencil to achieve his ensemble look. He decided to use the quilt as a canvas because it was summer, and he did not need a heavy quilt.



14.5 *Riding Bikes*



14.6 *Bed.*



Jasper Johns (born 1930) is an American painter and printmaker who is known for his patriotic pop art. Using single items like *Three Flags* (14.7) in a repetitious manner, Johns creates consistency in his art. *Map* (14.8) is a chaotic use of paint for a map of the United States, with bold colors and a geometric grid for the borders of the states. The names of the states are stenciled (14.9), yet the states are an approximant placement, not a realistic map.



14.7 Three Flags





14.8 Map

14.9 Map Closeup

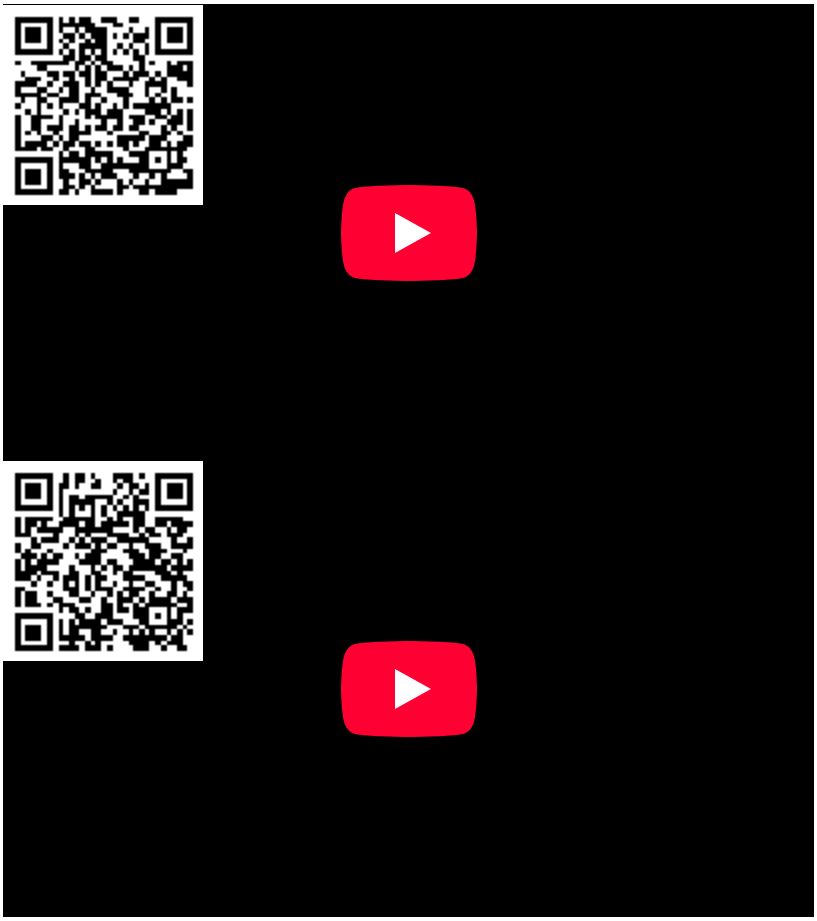


Roy Lichtenstein (1923-1997) was an American Pop artist who used comic strips as his main inspiration. When comic strips are printed, the color is made of little dots against white paper, and the eye connects the colors to make a solid color. Lichtenstein created his art in this same manner, using colored dots on white paper. His art is so unusual that it became very recognizable. The *Girl with Hair Ribbon* (14.10) is one of his most well-known paintings from the time he focused on the faces of women. As the girl looks out at the viewer, she brings forth multiple expressions, leaving the viewer to wonder what she is thinking.

El Cap de Barcelona (14.11) was Lichtenstein's first sculpture for the Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, following the tradition of colorful and unusual buildings and mosaics in the region. He created and abstract view of a woman's head covered in the dots he used in his paintings. The mosaic tiles covered the concrete form in the tradition of Antoni Gaudi, whose work is found throughout Barcelona. Once called the "worst artist in the U.S." by Life Magazine in 1964, Lichtenstein art sells for over $43 million for one painting. His art is broad and depicts the popular culture in drawings and paintings and was famous in his lifetime. Lichtenstein had a humorous overtone to his work and always made the viewer smile.


14.10 *Girl with Hair Ribbon*


14.11 *El Cap de Barcelona*



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7.1.1: Pop Art (1950s-1960s)

Introduction

Pop Art was a movement developed in England and the United States during the 1950s, challenging traditional art concepts, using ordinary objects including comic books, and advertising used in mass culture. After the war, a period of experimentation, along with amplified consumerism, artists were inspired by the new world around them. The growth of mass media expanded consumer goods, and the popular appeal of ordinary culture inspired artists to create art based on prevalent culture, an art known as Pop Art. The turbulent political climate and increased consumerism influenced artists, a mirror of the times. They focused on bright primary colors, frequently unmixed, and used techniques of printing and painting reflecting realism, unlike the Abstract Expressionists. The artists linked their work with the mass media of film, television, cartoons, or everyday mass-produced imageries. Because Pop Art focused on identifiable and mundane images, the style became one of the most recognized movements, blurring the lines of high-class art and low-class culture. The artists interconnected art with the media world surrounding ordinary people and developed art as a commodity. Many of the artists started their careers in the world of commercial art as magazine illustrators, graphic designers, and even sign painters.

In the United Kingdom, a group of artists began to examine the elements of movies, comics, technology, and even advertising, at first creating collages made of materials from the mass-produced world. Artists like David Hockney and others were interested in American media culture to expand their ideas of 'popular cultural art' while being distanced from American advertising. Simultaneously, in New York, the concepts of art based on widely seen cultural images created by Jasper Johns or Roy Lichtenstein continued to grow. American artists were surrounded by a sophisticated, bold, and complex mass-produced world. Although the artists were conscious of other movements and styles, they wanted to connect with the mass media of advertising, television, or film surrounding them. The challenge of merging methods and mass-produced materials led them to create art with new meanings.

Andy Warhol

The parents of Andy Warhol (1928-1987) migrated to the United States from Austria-Hungary (now Slovakia) after World War I and lived in Pennsylvania, where Warhol was born. In elementary school, he was diagnosed with Sydenham's chorea, a disease of the nervous system. Because he was confined to his bed, Warhol spent his time drawing and collecting images of movie stars. After high school, he went to Carnegie Mellon University, studied commercial art, and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Art in 1949. His early career was based on advertising art, at first drawing shoes for magazine advertisements. In the 1950s, he started using silk screen printing and then embellished it when the ink was still wet by blotting the image. He could repeat one image multiple times with innumerable variations. By the 1960s, he used his methods to create well-known iconic people or objects. He was eclectic in his choice of subjects, ranging from mushroom clouds or Coca-Cola bottles to Marilyn Monroe or Mao Tse Tung. His work was famous although frequently controversial; some believed he was too commercialized; others thought the images were inappropriate, and some questioned the concept of his work as art. By the 1970s, he became more devoted to making money and sought those with commissions for portraits. A typical quote by Warhol was, "Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art. Making money is art and working is an art and good business is the best art."[1] In 1987, Warhol had surgery for his gall bladder and died from an irregular heartbeat after the operation.

One of Warhol's early works was the infamous Marilyn Monroe painting. At the time, he had painted it and used drips similar to the Abstract Expressionists. As he expanded to other celebrities, he changed from hand painting to silk screening, tracing the image from slide projectors. He continued to develop and use different methods of printing, including; over-printing - adding one color to the top of a different color, registration – aligning different colors on an image, and experimenting with multiple combinations of day-color metallic colors. One of his earliest successful works was based on soup cans. He used mesh screens to apply the ink; the area was stenciled out to block the ink, repeating until the canvas was saturated.

In searching for new imagery instead of the abstraction of other artists, the gallery owner, Muriel Latow, suggested Warhol paint ordinary everyday objects like soup cans. From that point on, he used easily recognizable subjects, glorifying consumption habits, and supporting the rising economy. When he first exhibited the soup cans (6.6.1), he hung 32 different canvases, side by side, corresponding to the 32 flavors of Campbell's Soup at the time. The canvases were hand-painted with synthetic polymer paint, a hand-stamped fleur de lys pattern at the bottom. He varied the front of each can with the name of the soup flavor. After Warhol finished the soup cans, he started using a more commercially viable photo-silkscreen procedure to mass-produce his images. He believed art should be for the masses, not the select few. Warhol produced multiple life-sized images of Elvis Presley, a 1950s singer and sex symbol made famous by the supposedly scandalous hip-shaking moves Presley made while singing.



Figure 7.1.1.1: Campbell's Soup Cans (1962, synthetic polymer on canvas, 50.8 x 40.6 cm) One of 32 cans hung together, by profzucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

In *Double Elvis* (6.6.2), the overlapping images of Elvis were based on a western movie he was making. Warhol first created a silver background on a long and continuous canvas, then layered multiple silkscreen images. When the canvas was dry, he cut each set of images into several paintings. The images appear to be moving back and forth, similar to a strip of film.



Figure 7.1.1.2: Double Elvis (1963, silkscreen ink on synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 210.8 x 134.6 cm) by wallyg, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Marilyn Monroe (6.6.3) was Warhol's first celebrity series. He used five screens, one with the original photograph and four to represent the colors. Some of the prints are not in sync with the register marks, slightly offset. He made multiple images, each with different colors, to represent her effervescent personality. Warhol highlighted her trademark blond hair with various yellows in many of the prints and enhanced her iconic lips with bold reds. Although Monroe died five years before Warhol created the images,

he defined and enshrined her unusual celebrity prominence. He understood the interest in celebrities by the public and frequently focused on female celebrities, none as famous as Marilyn Monroe.



Figure 7.1.1.3: Marilyn (1967, screenprint on paper, 91.5 x 91.5 cm) by oddsock, CC BY 2.0

Mao Zedong was the leader of China, responsible for turning China into a communist country. Warhol used an official Chinese portrait for his print of *Mao Tse Tung* (6.6.4). As with the paintings of other celebrities, Warhol made multiple prints, varying the palette of colors to create a playful image of a serious world leader. Sometimes the garish colors gave Mao a theatrical, comic look, and other colors brought a more sinister appearance. In 1972, Richard Nixon went to China, opening up relationships between the two countries. With Warhol's painting, Mao became a popular icon.



Figure 7.1.1.4: Mao Tse Tung (1972, screenprint on paper, 91.4 x 91.4 cm) by andydoro, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Roy Lichtenstein

Born in New York, Roy Lichtenstein (1923-1997) was a child of upper-middle-class parents. In school, he was interested in music and art, frequently attending jazz concerts and sketching portraits of the musicians. Lichtenstein studied at Ohio State University until the Army drafted him during World War II. In the Army, he was trained in languages until the program was cut. Subsequently, he was sent to engineering school, and that program was eliminated, so he trained as a pilot until the program was also discontinued. Lichtenstein finally became a draftsman and was sent to Europe, where he studied the art of the masters until the end of the war when he went home. Lichtenstein returned to Ohio State, completing his bachelor's and master's degrees, teaching at the university for ten years. In 1957, Lichtenstein, his wife, and two sons moved back to upstate New York to teach at the university and work on his own Abstract Expressionism art. By 1960, he taught at Rutgers University and found an environment of pop imagery.

Lichtenstein created his first works based on comics and commercial advertising, even painting mundane items like tennis shoes and golf balls. The works were created by mirroring the crude printing methods used by newspapers. His success grew, and he painted some of his most famous and successful works, including *Drowning Girl* and *Whaam*. Much of his work was based on

styles found in comic books and commercial art, initially not considered worthy of the standards found in fine art. Lichtenstein took the trivial and created art. His first break with the abstract world occurred when he inserted comic book characters into his abstracted backgrounds. Lichtenstein wanted to illustrate the comic world more closely. He started using Ben-Day dots (6.6.5), a tiny mechanical pattern generally found in engraving to represent texture and progressions of color. He created the dots by using perforated dot patterns in which his paintbrush would skim across the top and drop paint into the stencil circles. The dots were generally cyan, yellow, magenta, and black, their spacing and combinations used to produce different colors and shading. (The same concept used by modern computer printers.) His use of dots became a trademark. Lichtenstein copied a foundation image by hand, altering parts of the image, then tracing the drawing onto the canvas. He stated, "As directly as possible…From a cartoon, photograph, or whatever, I draw a small picture—the size that will fit into my opaque projector…I don't draw a picture to reproduce it—I do it in order to recompose it…I project the drawing onto the canvas and pencil it in and then I play around with the drawing until it satisfies me."[2] He manually applied the dots by hand, frequently using templates for different color patterns based on primary colors outlined with heavy black lines. Lichtenstein's subject matter and the use of dots brought the mechanical appearance of the commercial and comic world into the arena of fine art.

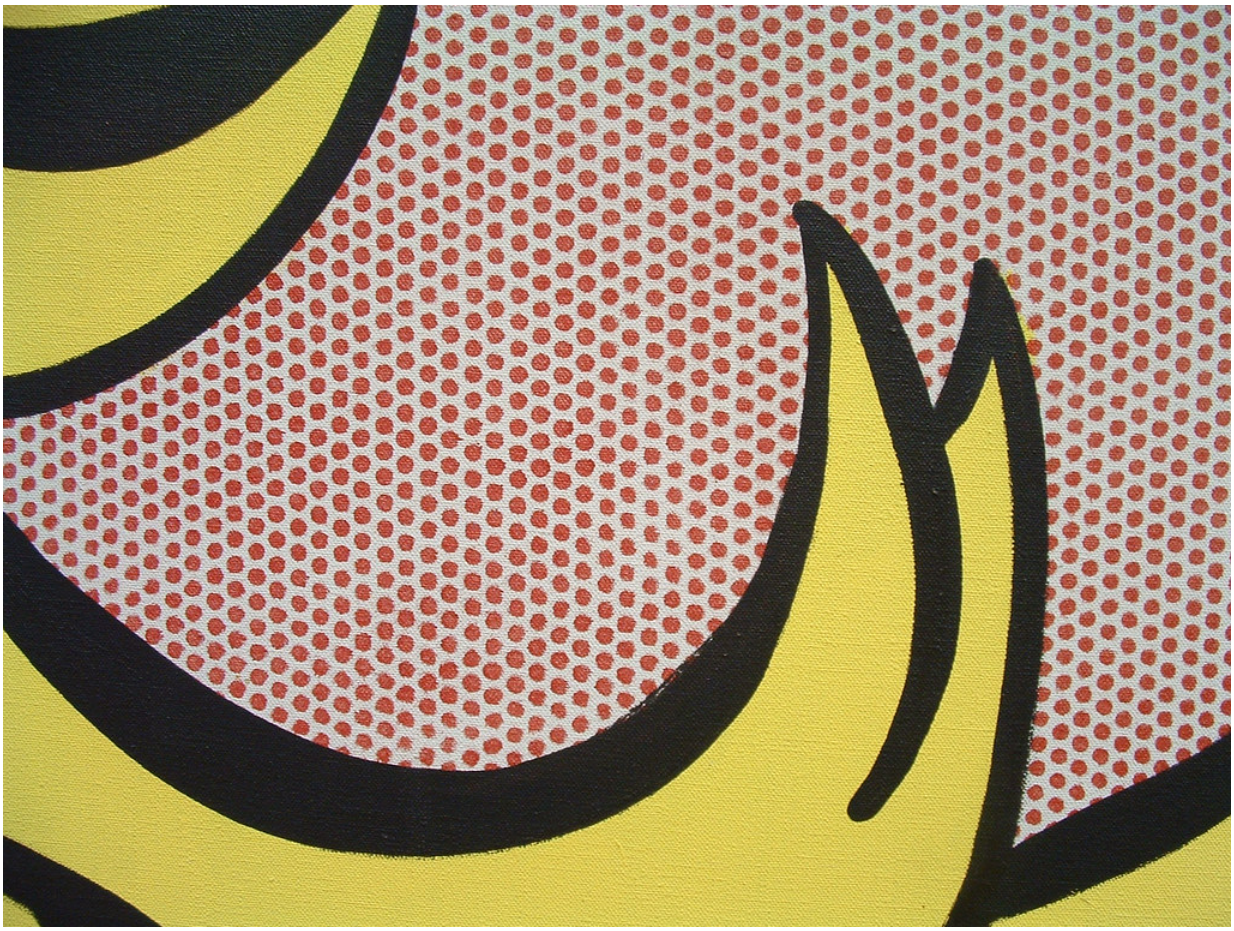


Figure 7.1.1.5: Close up of painting technique, by Max Braun, CC BY-SA 2.0

In *Girl with Tear III* (6.6.6), Lichtenstein used his dot process in a Surrealist setting. In one series, the incomplete face is focused on the eye, the origination of the tear, a parody of Dali or Picasso. He used red dots for the face against the slanted dark stripes in the background. The column mimics the stripes, except wider and vertical. The swoop of blond hair brings the different elements together. The single eye and tear focused outward in the center.



Figure 7.1.1.6: Girl with Tear III (1973, oil and magna on canvas, 289.4 x 336.4 cm) by Bob Ramsak, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The *Drowning Girl* (6.6.7) was based on an original image by DC Comics, an image Lichtenstein altered significantly by altering the picture he created using Ben-Day dots. The girl's boyfriend was in the original as he clung to a boat. Lichtenstein cropped the image, so only the girl was visible, waves threatening to engulf her as she fights for survival. She appears to be emotionally distressed as tears flow from her eyes. Lichtenstein also changed the caption and the boy's name in the text bubble to amplify the girl's distress alone in the water. He used a cool palette and dark colors to represent the potential dangers of the waves and water.



Figure 7.1.1.7: Drowning Girl (1963, oil and polymer on canvas, 171.6 x 169.5 cm) by Gandalf's Gallery, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Like Monet's set of paintings of the Rouen Cathedral, Lichtenstein also created a series based on photographs he viewed of Monet's work. Instead of painting the cathedrals in different lights and times of day, Lichtenstein's cathedrals (6.6.8) were divided into binary colors of dots. He wanted to use the concepts of Pop Art and its repetition with an iconic image, an image; "cheapened by overexposure, and reinvesting it with renewed, ironic vigor and relevance."[3] Lichtenstein used two colors in each painting; the red and yellow dots are interlocked to develop a clear image of the daylit cathedral (6.6.9, 6.6.10). The center painting is an illusion of a hazy morning, while the dark painting demonstrates the darkness of night. The Ben-Day dots reproduction dots, looking like the proofs from a printing press, create the symbolism of different light developed in mass reproduction. Monet investigated the various permutations of light on a single source, while Lichtenstein explored the reproductive values of the mass media.



Figure 7.1.1.8: Rouen Cathedral (1969, oil and magna on canvas, 161.6 x 360.3 cm) by wallyg, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



Figure 7.1.1.9: Rouen Cathedral close up, by profzucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

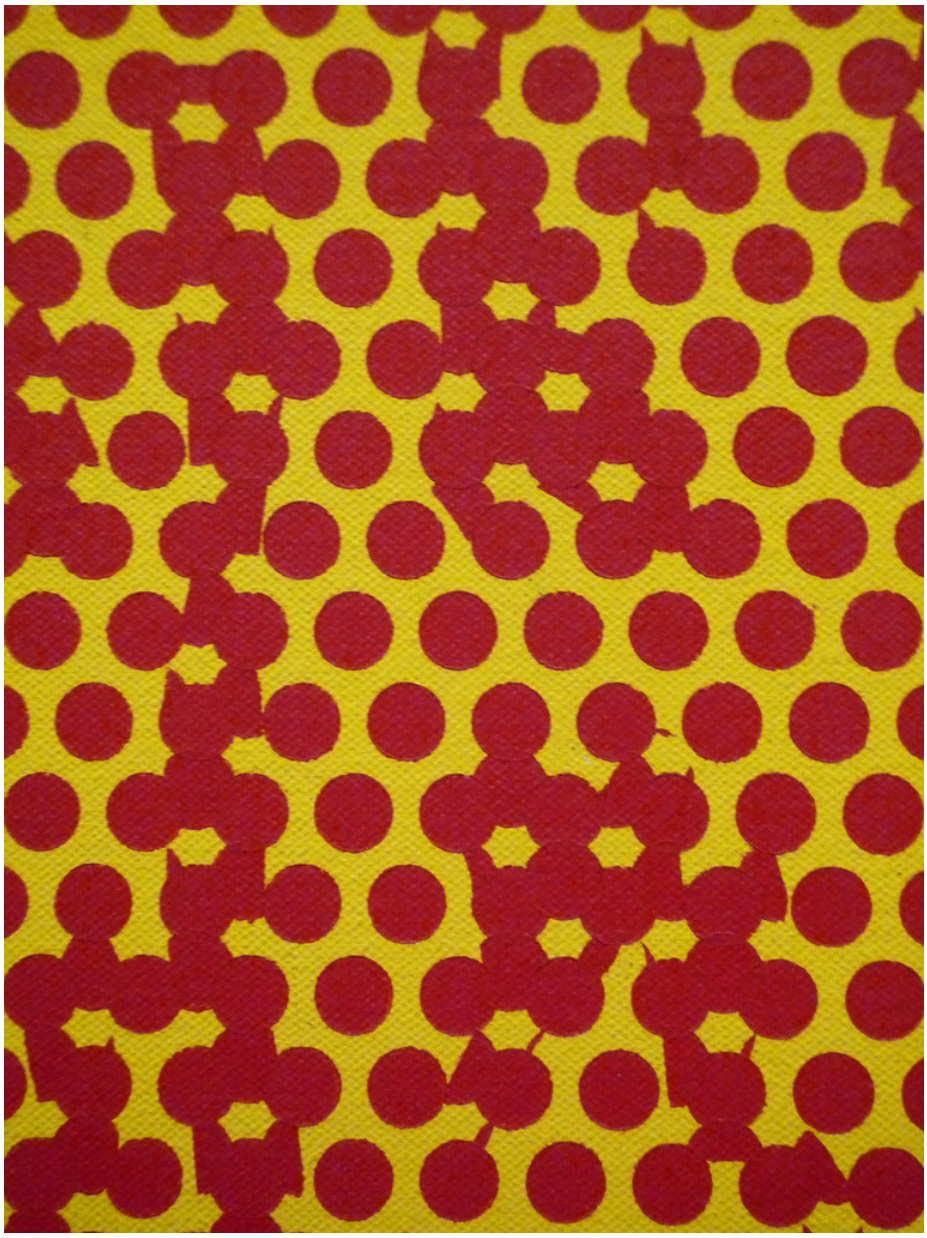


Figure 7.1.1.10: Rouen Cathedral Ben-Day dots, by profzucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

David Hockney

Born in England, David Hockney (1937-) was one of five children and educated at the Bradford College of Art and London's Royal College of Art. As part of an exhibition of Young Contemporaries, along with Peter Blake, the exhibit was considered the beginning of British Pop art. Hockney's reputation began to grow. However, the college did not issue him a diploma because he did not complete the assignment and write an essay about his painting. Hockney protested, saying his work should be centered on the art, not an essay about the art. Based on his ability and growing reputation, the college modified its rules and awarded Hockney his diploma. In 1964, he moved to Los Angeles, a city of swimming pools and an inspiration for his series on pools and the attendant vibrant colors. The atmosphere in his paintings reflected the excesses of life in the bohemian lifestyles of California, parties, and naked bathers. However, he stated, "I was never much of a party boy, I am a worker. An artist can approve of hedonism, but he can't be a hedonist himself."[4] Portraits were one of Hockney's significant inspirations, and he painted multiple images of friends and relatives, including himself. His early paintings were based on a grid format with vertical and horizontal lines to form structures, landscapes, or backgrounds. He was also known for his prints, and as a stage designer and photographer, Hockney divided his time between homes in London and Los Angeles, his works influenced by events and scenery in both locations.

Hockney was inspired to move to Los Angeles after he saw a magazine of homoerotic photography and believed he could find sexy, nude men posing beside houses. However, when he flew over Los Angeles, he noticed all the blue swimming pools by most homes, a luxury in England, common in Los Angeles because of the weather. Swimming pools became a significant representation in many of his paintings, helping establish the concepts of life in Southern California. His pool painting captured his ideals of gay freedom in a utopian place, a beautiful, carefree life. Hockney soon became interested in how to paint water, what color, and how to interpret the feel of water. Sometimes he used lines or variegated the color to indicate movement. In *A Bigger Splash* (6.6.11), one of three of the series, Hockney used flat vertical planes, focusing on the results of the swimmer's dive. He painted the blue of the water with a roller, using multiple brushes to portray the explosive splash of water caused by the diver. The splash is the only movement in an otherwise still painting.



Figure 7.1.1.11: A Bigger Splash (1967, acrylic paint on canvas, 242.5 x 243.9 cm) by oddsock, CC BY 2.0

During the 1960s, Hockney extended his stay in Los Angeles, where he designed stage sets and became acquainted with theater and movie industry people. He started painting a series of canvases, each a massive 213.3 x 304.8 cm known as the 'Double Portraits.' In the series, each painting depicted two people sitting apart, seemingly uninterested in each other. Hockney knew Geldzahler from New York, where he was a curator for the Metropolitan Museum of Art. They developed a friendship traveling through Europe together. Hockney took his Polaroid camera to Geldzahler's apartment and started taking pictures. In the painting *Henry Geldzahler*

and Christopher Scott (6.6.12), Hockney positioned the oversized pink couch as the central focus adding part of the New York skyline in the background. He foreshortened the objects in the front leaving the two disconnected men to gaze at entirely different directions, the emotional link between the pair unknown.



Figure 7.1.1.12: Henry Geldzahler and Christopher Scott (1969, acrylic on canvas, 213.4 x 304.8 cm) by Renaud Camus, CC BY 2.0

One of the most iconic of Hockney's Double Paintings was *American Collectors (Fred and Marcia Weisman)* (6.6.13), the couple depicted standing apart, each stiffly positioned in a different direction. Her distorted mouth is seen in the mouth on the totem pole as he stands with tightly clenched fists. Their shadows create horizontal movement as the tree and totem bring verticality. The whole scene is geometrically painted as the bright sunlight flattens the panorama. Hockney did not paint a close-up portrait of the couple; instead, he presented the entire environment. The Weisman's did not like Hockney's portrayal of them and rejected the painting.



Figure 7.1.1.13: American Collectors (Fred and Marcia Weisman) (1968, Acrylic on canvas, 213.4 x 304.8 cm) by mark6mauno, CC BY-NC 2.0

Hockney began to change his perception of flattened geometric images after listening to the poem *The Man with the Blue Guitar* by Wallace Stevens. In this painting, *Self-Portrait with Blue Guitar* (6.6.14), he paints himself at the table, covering the painting with colored dots. Many of the elements in the work are at an angle instead of vertical or horizontal. The blue curtain on the side anchors the image as though just opened to reveal Hockney at work. The curtain is more realistic, not flattened but appearing to have folded dimensions. His jars of paint sit on the edge of the table, seemingly waiting to be used. Hockney said he wasn't sure what the poem was about but believed it to be based on imagination, and he thought it forced him to break away from his previous style.



Figure 7.1.1.14: Self-Portrait with Blue Guitar (1977, oil on canvas, 151.9 x 181.9 cm) by modern art - molecularshik, CC BY-NC 2.0

Jasper Johns

Jasper Johns (1930-) was born in Georgia, growing up in South Carolina, where he lived with his grandparents or aunt. He did not have any exposure to art or support as an artist. After graduation from high school, Johns attended the University of South Carolina for a few terms before moving to New York. He met Robert Rauschenberg, who became his long-term partner as they worked together on contemporary art concepts. Johns worked with multiple disciplines, including; painting, printing, and sculpting. He had aspects of Abstract Expressionism, Dada, and Pop Art, generally based on depictions of the American flag and other patriotic concepts. To create his multi-layered work, Johns started with flags, targets, numbers, alphabets, and other commonplace images. Johns used primary colors; his encaustic mixture gave the paintings an almost sculptural look.

Johns used the American flag as the mundane images defined Pop Art, using things already known to the mind and altering how the item was traditionally viewed. He painted the image of the *Flag* (6.6.15) a few years after leaving the US Army, the flag a common subject he frequently reused. Johns stated, "One night I dreamed that I painted a large American flag…and the next morning I got up, and I went out and bought the materials to begin it."[5] This painting of the flag was based on the period from 1912 to 1959, when there were 48 states. Johns sketched the outline of the flag or other objects and then dipped fabric or newsprint into the encaustic mixture.



Figure 7.1.1.15: Flag (1954-55, encaustic, oil, and collage on fabric mounted on plywood, 107.3 x 153.8 cm) by profzucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

In the close-up (6.6.16), the thick encaustic rough surface is visible, the type on the newsprint sometimes perceptible through the paint drips and brushstrokes. All of the white stars are slightly different in shape on top of the dark blue background. Wavy red and white stripes, made from a mixture of pigment mixed with melted wax, gave the appearance of wind blowing. Johns created over forty paintings based on the theme of America's flags.



Figure 7.1.1.16: Flag close-up, by profzucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

In the painting of *Three Flags* (6.6.17), Johns used his encaustic process of mixing pigment and melted beeswax together. Each flag reduced about twenty-five percent in scale as he stacked canvas flags, the largest one receding into the background. The congealed wax drippings gave the painting a dimensional sculptural appearance. The stripes grow smaller as the viewer's eye is forced to believe the flag is seemingly stacked boxes. The blue field and stars also grow smaller, adding to the illusion of three separate elements. The illusion allowed Johns to go beyond the representational image of a flag, offering the appearance of dissimilar canvas spaces.

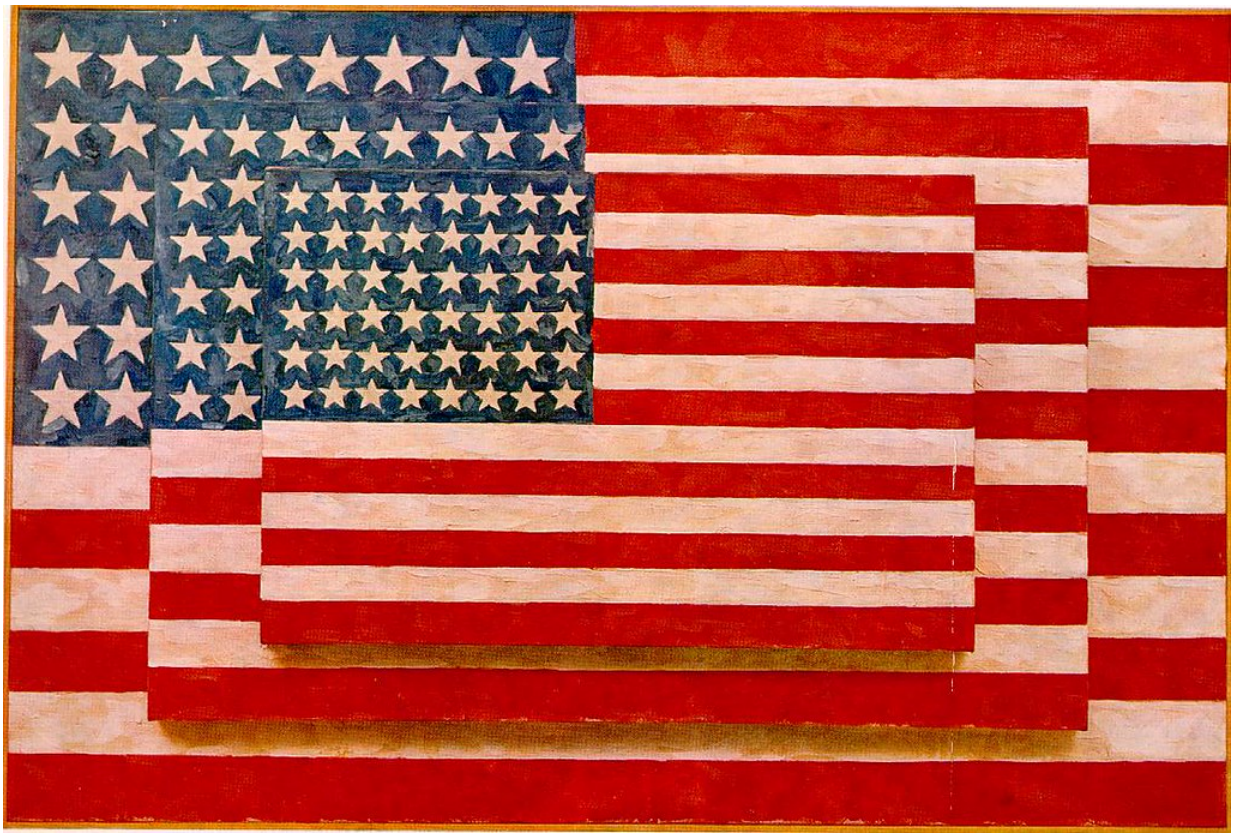


Figure 7.1.1.17: Three Flags (1958, encaustic on canvas, 77.8 x 115.6 x 11.7 cm) by Gandalf's Gallery, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

The *White Flag* (6.6.18) was another one of Johns flag series. He did not use the traditional red, white, and blue; instead, he created a ghostlike image of an old, faded, even bleached flag. He used the usual encaustic mixture of different light pigments mixed with wax and applied deep dripping brush strokes, defining the symbolic view of the stars and stripes. Even without color, this otherworldly-looking flag still presents an image of America.

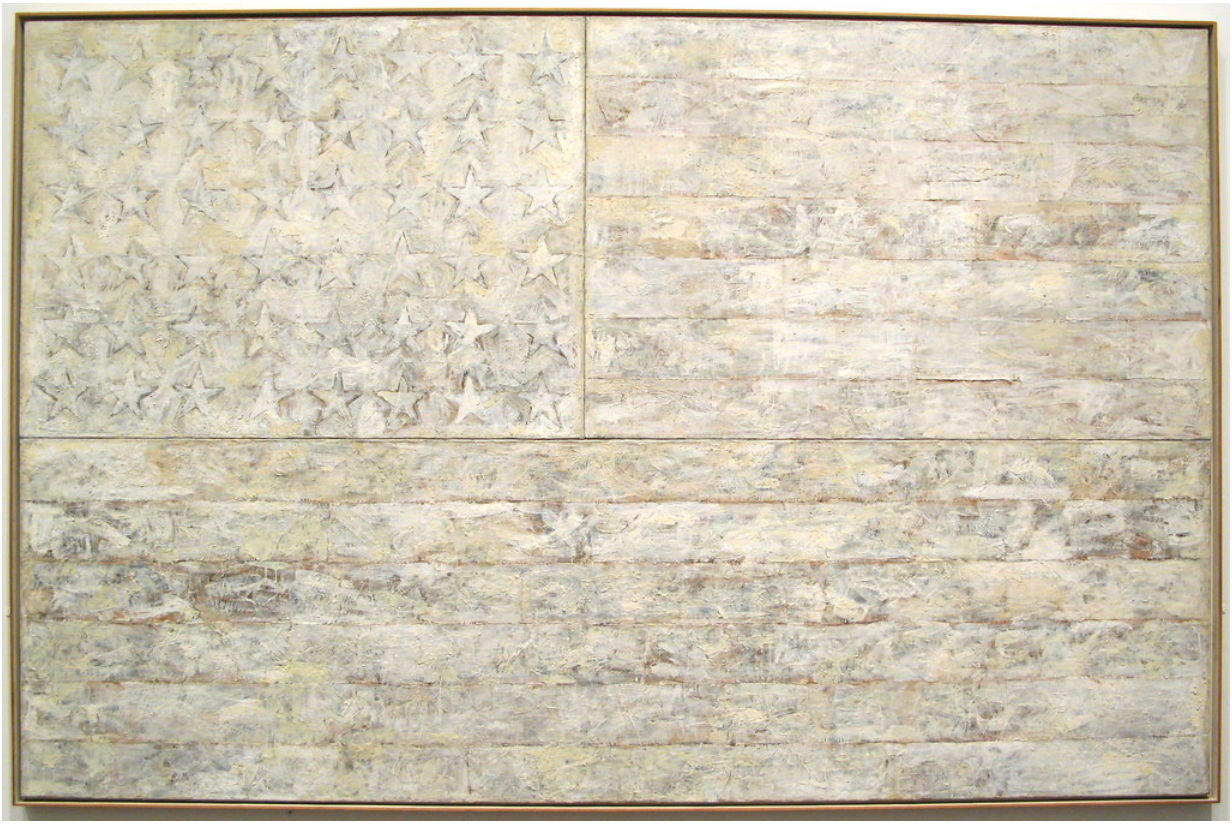


Figure 7.1.1.18: White Flag (1955, encaustic, oil, newsprint and charcoal on canvas, 198.9 x 306.7 cm) by PDR, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

In the 1970s, Johns moved to a new theme based on crosshatched markings usually found in graphics. The crosshatching still displayed the characteristics he favored; repetitiveness, an almost obsessive feeling with little meaning. In *Corpse and Mirror II* (6.6.19), Johns repeated the concepts with different primary colors giving depth and movement to the image while maintaining the illusion of flatness and neutrality. The lines were gradated, closer lines made deeper shadows, and scanter lines brought light shadows. The pattern was orderly, yet not particularly geometric or displaying any meaning. He created a series of crosshatched paintings, each with small lines running in diverse directions.

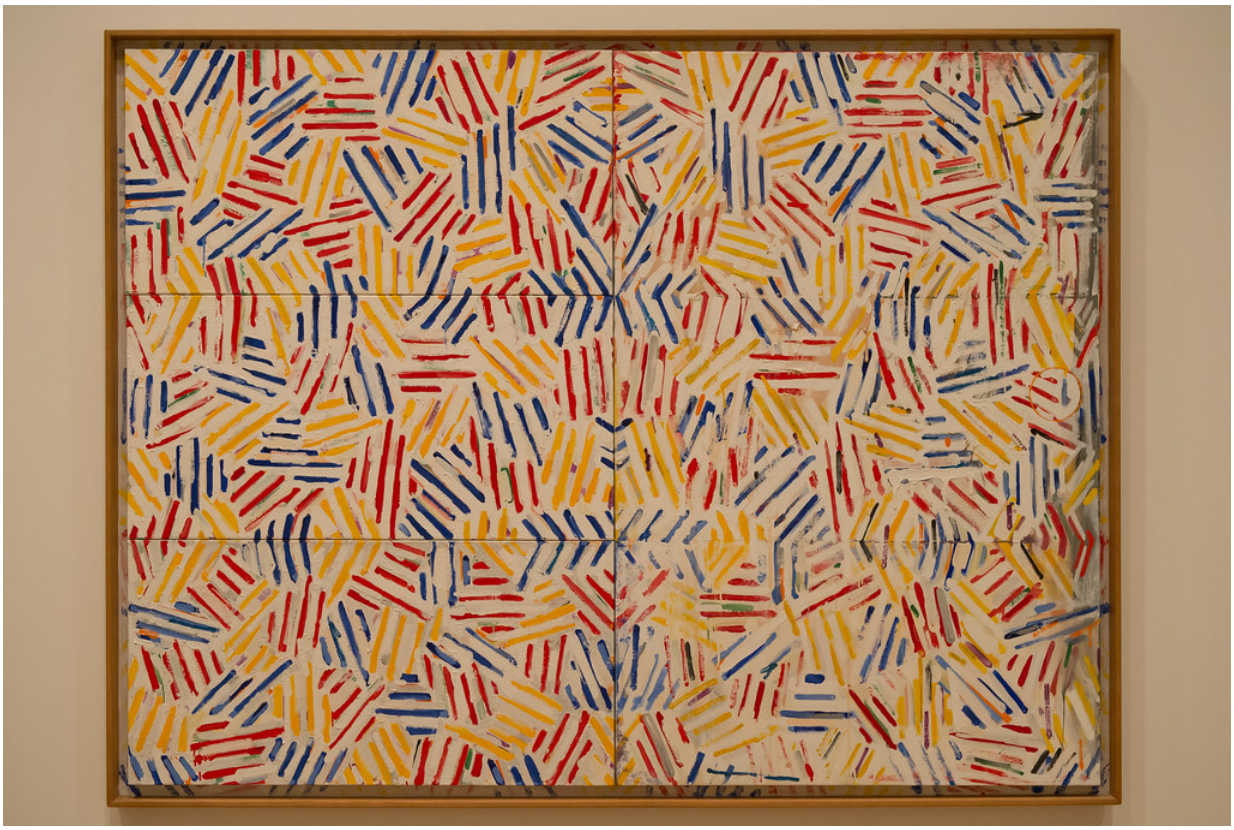


Figure 7.1.1.19: Corpse and Mirror II (1974, oil and sand on four joined canvases, 146.4 x 191.1 cm) by mark6mauno, CC BY-NC 2.0

Evelyne Axell

Evelyne Axell (1935-1972) was born in Belgium, her father was a silversmith and jeweler. Even as a small child Axell was defined as the local province's most beautiful baby. During World War II, her home was destroyed by bombs. However, she finished high school and studied pottery at a local art school before switching to drama school and becoming an actress. She married a film director, had a son, and worked as a television announcer. In 1964, she grew tired of acting and worked with René Magritte, learning to enhance her abilities in painting. As she was honing her skills, her husband filmed documentaries about Pop Art, an inspiration to Axell, who developed her pop style. She became one of Belgium's first pop artists, although still not accepted by galleries, and Axell began to use only her last name to overcome the perceptions of sexual discrimination. Her work was influenced by the political events of the 1960s, particularly women's liberation. Axell became known for her erotic works of nude females and multiple self-portraits.

She frequently used partial body parts, as demonstrated in *Portrait Fragment* (6.6.20). In this painting, she portrays her face, slightly shattered into linear waves. The bright red circle around the face and her red lips contrast against the blue-green background. Her blue eyes are surrounded by white and black, forcing the viewer's focus on her eyes. In this painting, she used traditional oil paint. During this period, she also switched from canvas to plastic sheets and Plexiglas, sometimes applying auto enamel. She explored multiple mediums, including synthetic resin to form body fragments or layered painted plastic sheets. Sadly, her life was ended early in a car accident in Belgium.



Figure 7.1.1.20: Portrait Fragment (1965, oil on canvas, 42 x 33 cm) by Médéric, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Corita Kent

Corita Kent (1918-1986) was born in Iowa as Frances Elizabeth Kent. In 1936, be became a nun in the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and changed her name to Sister Mary Corita. She completed her degree in art, a bachelor's degree from Immaculate Heart College, and a master's at the University of Southern California in 1951. She lived and worked as a num for thirty years, teaching art at Immaculate Heart College and known for her avant-garde teaching methods, attracting many prominent artists to her classes. During the 1960s, her work became more secular, supporting more humanitarian problems and protesting the Vietnam War. Her work was considered blasphemous by the Catholic church leaders, and she left her life as a nun to continue working for women's and civil rights and anti-war protests. She used silkscreen as her medium; her work at the time was not respected or treated as serious art. During the 1950s, most religious art demonstrated piety with white or blue flowing robes based on a pastel palette. Kent's art was primitive and abstracted, although dark at first. By the late 1950s, she began to illustrate text from popular writings. In the 1960s, she was widely exhibited, and her art was included in multiple magazines and newspapers; however, she still was not included in art history textbooks.

In the late 1960s, some of her work became more political and social and similar to Warhol. Kent used themes from pop culture for her inspiration, a mix of spiritual themes and American consumerism. She was a social activist and worked with current issues of

poverty or racism, or war. Kent took any type of signs, tore out pieces, crumpled images, and photographed them to use as the basis for her silkscreens, all depicted by bold graphics and emotional texts. To construct the layouts for the printmaker, she layered the pieces of lettering or image using multiple sheets of paper. Based on the rise of commercial consumerism, "…she used words like 'tomato,' 'burger,' and 'goodness' and made them into messages about how we live, and about humanitarianism and how we care for others."[6] The colorful words on her silkscreens appeared simple while carrying a complex social meaning. *We Care* (6.6.21) and *Enriched Bread* (6.6.22) were made from assembled words printed on nonwoven synthetic fabric. Kent frequently used a specific word highlighted in red to convey part of the message; HUMBLE in the first image and WONDER in the other image, layering different messages to support her pursuit of social justice.



Figure 7.1.1.21: We Care (1966, screenprint, 76.2 x 91.4 cm) by Thomas Hawk, CC BY-NC 2.0

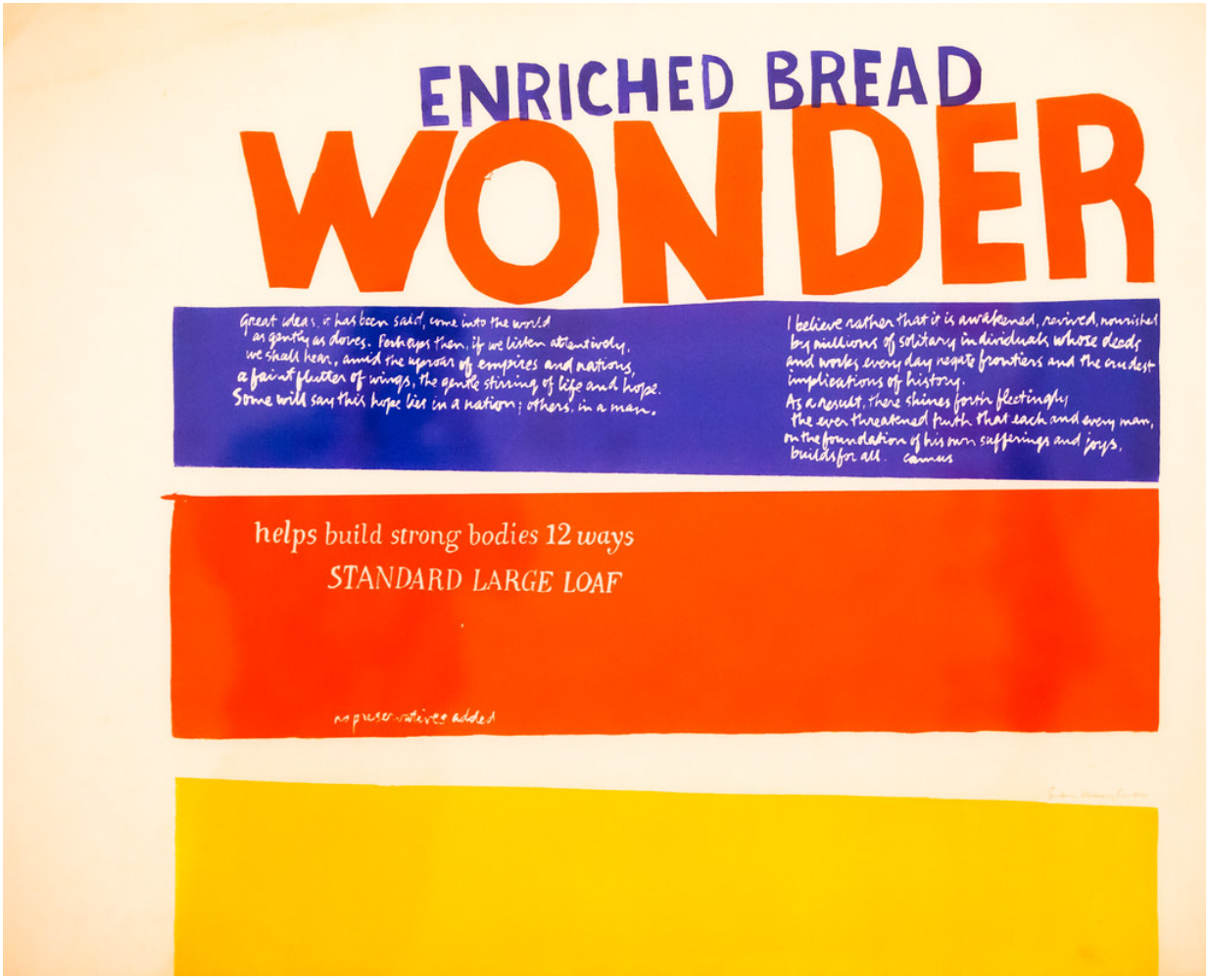


Figure 7.1.1.22: Enriched Bread (1965, silkscreen, 75.5 x 92.0 cm) by Thomas Hawk, CC BY-NC 2.0

Kent also used words by different prominent authors and civil rights leaders. *Enriched Bread* contained the words of the French philosopher Albert Camus in his *Flutter of Wings-Hope*. Kent applied the words in script format with white on a highly contrasting royal blue.

> *Great ideas, it has been said, come into the world*
>
> *as gently as doves. Perhaps then, is we listen attentively,*
>
> *we shall hear, amid the uproar of empires and nations,*
>
> *a faint flutter of wings, the gentle stirring of life and hope.*
>
> *Some will say this hope lies in a nation; others, in a man.*
>
> *I believe rather that it is awakened, revived, nourished*
>
> *by millions of solitary individuals whose deeds*
>
> *and works every day negate frontiers and the crudest*
>
> *implications of history.*
>
> *As a result, there shines forth fleetingly*

> *the ever-threatened truth that each and every man,*
>
> *on the foundation of his own sufferings and joys,*
>
> *builds for all.*

James Rosenquist

James Rosenquist (1933-2017) was born in North Dakota and raised in Minnesota, where he studied art at the University of Minnesota. His mother recognized his artistic talents when he was young and always encouraged him to study art. When he went to New York City, he studied for a while at the Art Students League. However, he was interested in painting murals and even joined the union of painters who created billboards. Rosenquist was successful in the endeavor until a friend died from a fall off the scaffolding, and he decided to develop his style of art. The graphic images he painted on billboards became the style he used as part of the Pop Art movement. Rosenquist wrote, "I painted billboards above every candy store in Brooklyn. I got so I could paint a Schenley whiskey bottle in my sleep."[7] Although Rosenquist was considered a leader in the Pop Art movement, he did not work with Andy Warhol or Roy Lichtenstein, only meeting them later in the 1960s. Rosenquist developed his images based on mass media, famous icons, or ordinary objects by dividing an image into parts and recombining them in a fragmented composition, a more mysterious concept than the other artists. He also focused on lines and shapes when combining segments of images, emphasizing his mastery of color. Because of his background in billboard painting, some of his works are colossal, covering an entire room. Rosenquist was excited by the different dimensions of painting versus advertising and wanted to use fragments of highly contrasted images sometimes opposed to each other. He liked to juxtapose people and objects along with symbols and text.

Rosenquist painted the movie icon *Marilyn Monroe I* (6.6.23) shortly after she committed suicide from a set of fragmented images. He positioned Monroe upside down, breaking apart her eyes, lips, and hands, reassembling the parts, and overlaid them with letters found in her name. He also included the 'Coca-Cola' trademark, representing popular cultural branding as Monroe was sexualized and sensationalized to become part of the mass media. Andy Warhol had made an image of Monroe as a sex symbol while Rosenquist created an image where she was hard to recognize, yet he still maintained her coquettishness as he randomly assembled the pieces. Rosenquist placed the red color in opposition to the two sides. Her blue eyes were enhanced by the blue lettering, while each of the different parts of Monroe was different colors.



Figure 7.1.1.23: Marilyn Monroe I (1962, oil and spray enamel on canvas, 236.2 x 183.3 cm) by wallyg, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

I Love You with My Ford (6.6.24) depicts the shiny chrome of a Ford muscle car, one of the important cultural status symbols of the 60s, a machismo icon. The second panel portrays a woman's face, an ear of her lover positioned near her mouth as he engages her, her eyes closed, lips partly open. Rosenquist adds pasta in tomato sauce in the bottom section, seemingly wriggling as the woman above might be with her passion. The squirming lines of the pasta oppose the unmoving lines of the car. The painting has three distinct layers or images, while he only used two major color palettes.



Figure 7.1.1.24: I Love You with My Ford (1961, oil on canvas, 210.2 x 237.5 cm) by weather, CC BY 2.0

Untitled (Joan Crawford Says…) (6.6.25) portrays Joan Crawford appearing as the pretty girl in an advertisement. She is advertising cigarettes, although the cigarette is barely visible in her hand. Her face is flattened, similar to Andy Warhol's image of Marilyn Monroe; much of her face appears with a plastic smoothness, almost bland and unemotional. Rosenquist used a limited palette, mainly contrasting reds and grays.



Figure 7.1.1.25: Untitled (Joan Crawford Says…) (1964, oil on canvas, 233.7 x 198.1 cm) by modern art - molecularshik, CC BY-NC 2.0

"The Pop artists did images that anybody walking down Broadway could recognize in a split second—comics, picnic tables, men's trousers, celebrities, shower curtains, refrigerators, Coke bottles—all the great modern things that the Abstract Expressionists tried so hard not to notice at all."[8] Pop artists blurred the line between accepted art and familiar cultural images. While Abstract Expressionists searched for suffering in the soul, the Pop artists found the interconnections of life in their environment. Even today, Pop art immerses us in television, video, advertising, and other commercial enterprises. The availability of art in print or online makes art a common cultural commodity. The Pop artists opened the door that now envelopes our world.

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[2] Lanchner, C. (2009). Roy Lichtenstein (MOMA Artist Series), The Museum of Modern Art, p. 5.

[3] Retrieved from https://www.lacma.org/art/exhibition/monetlichtenstein-rouen-cathedrals

[4] Retrieved fom https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/may/09/david-hockney-interview-cheeky-serious

[5] Retrieved from https://www.moma.org/collection/works/78805

[6] Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2018/apr/22/corita-kent-the-pop-art-nun

[7] https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/apr/01/james-rosenquist-pop-artist-f-111-dies-83

[8] Carrier, D. (2008). Proust/Warhol: Analytical Philosophy of Art, Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers, p. 47.

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7.2: Kinetic Art (1950s – 1960s)

Introduction

Op Art produced static images which gave the impression of movement. Kinetic art moved through mechanical methods and motors or viewer interaction, using natural air currents in space. The forerunner to kinetic art is found in the simplicity of Duchamp's bicycle in unplanned freewheeling motion. Kinetic art became well-known after World War II and an exhibition in 1955 in Paris entitled *Le Mouvement. Mobiles*, originated by Alexander Calder, was a typical style of kinetic art. They were suspended in the air and moved as air flowed. Mobiles were not solid structures; instead, they were made of pieces balanced by structural elements and brought a new perception of dimensional art beyond sculptures. Calder believed kinetic art strove to "lift the figures and scenery off the page and prove undeniably that art is not rigid."[1]

Kinetic art also examined the intersections between the mechanics of science and the beauty of art based on the ideas of three-dimensional sculptural movement. Most of the kinetic artists based their work on mechanized movements, using a machine to create motion. Jean Tinguely was one of the early artists who collected paraphernalia, which he attached into a whimsical object and set in motion with a motor. Artists used elements of Dadaism, reclaiming found objects to use in their sculptures and putting them in motion by mechanized means or air currents.

Alexander Calder

Alexander Calder (1898-1976) was born in Pennsylvania, his family well-known artists. His grandfather, Alexander Milne Calder, created the immense William Penn statue in Philadelphia, and his father, Alexander Stirling Calder, was a sculptor who produced multiple public sculptures. Calder's mother was a portrait artist. When his father was diagnosed with tuberculosis, the family moved to Arizona in 1905 and then to California. At the Calder home in Pasadena, the young Calder set up his first studio using wire to make doll jewelry for his sister. The family moved between New York and California, although Calder stayed in California to complete high school. Because his parents were opposed to him pursuing art, he majored in mechanical engineering at the Stevens Institute of Technology, and in 1919, he became a hydraulic engineer after graduation. After visiting his sister in Washington, he was inspired by the mountains and returned to New York and study art. To expand his knowledge, he went to Paris to study, became part of the intellectual scene, and made friends with other artists, including Joan Miró and Marcel Duchamp. Initially, he created abstract paintings, soon learning he preferred sculpture and the dimensions over flat painting. After he met his future wife, they married in 1931 and lived in Connecticut with their two children. In 1963, he moved back to France, always inspired by the French countryside. He generally gave his works French names, irrespective of where they were installed.

Calder is known for his uniquely engineered constructions, probably the result of his engineering background. His original sculptures were small, moveable, balanced wood and wire characters. In the late 1930s, Calder began to create larger, abstract sculptures, some of their stationery and others moveable, initially powered by machines before moving to power by air currents. The stationary sculptures on the ground were labeled "stabiles" and those hanging with movement named "mobiles." Calder explained the difference in the terms as; "The mobile has actual movement in itself, while the stabile is back at the old painting idea of implied movement. You have to walk around a stabile or through it – a mobile dances in front of you."[2] In the 1960s, he made standing mobiles named "animobiles." When he went anywhere, Calder usually carried some type of wire and pliers, using the wire to "sketch" a form he noticed, much like drawing in air. He made his final sculptures from metal and wire; however, he had to use wood during World War II because the government used all the metal in the war effort. When asked what his favorite color was, he generally replied, red. Black and white were used for differentiation, red the focus. When Calder constructed his works, he always designed a process the sculpture could be shipped and reassembled. He packaged the work in flat packs and included detailed assembly information based on numbers and color codes.

As seen in *Black Spray* (6.5.1), Calder's small, hanging mobiles were designed to engage the viewer's senses. The thin black metal and wire pieces create changing shadows on the background, altering each element and its shadow as the air currents arbitrarily moved the pieces. As the metal pieces move, their relationships modify, demonstrating the laws of variation found in life.



Figure 7.2.1: Black Spray (1956, hanging mobile with painted sheet metal and rods, 350.5 x 251.5 cm) by pedrosimoes7, CC BY 2.0

In contrast to the thin, delicately balanced mobile is the immense sculpture of *Flamingo* (6.5.2). The 45.3 metric ton steel sculpture was painted in the color known as "Calder red." Calder wanted to differentiate the sculpture from the background of black and steel buildings. The sculpture is also constructed with broad curves in the juxtaposition of the square and rectangular windows and buildings. The arched forms generated a natural feeling, the curvature of structures so large viewers can walk through and under the form, sensing the scale of the artwork.



Figure 7.2.2: Flamingo (1974, painted steel stabile, 1620 cm) by (vincent desjardins), CC BY 2.0

In the sculpture *Five Empties* (6.5.3), Calder named the work after the five voids found in the structure's base, anchored to the ground to form his two different structures; the mobile and the stabile. The two arms provide the pivot for movement as the petals or shapes catch the wind blowing against the colorful, thin, flat surfaces, rotating the arms and petals. When a viewer is standing in the empty spaces, the petals are not visible, seemingly separate pieces, while the petals are seen from afar. Calder made the construction visible in the sculpture with the bolts, rivets, and welding marks, adding texture and interest. The matte paint on the petals contrasts with the shiny arms and branches, compelling the viewer to look at each piece and appreciate its construction. Depending on the speed of the wind, the artwork can look like gentle flowers dancing in the breeze or frantic whirling forms.



Figure 7.2.3: Five Empties (1973, sheet metal, rod, bolts, and paint, 281 x 250 x 250 cm) by dietmut, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The *Four Elements* (6.5.4) is located in Stockholm and stands 9.1 meters high. Created in 1961 for an exhibition, the work was composed of four separate sculptures, each one containing a motor for movement. Made from metal sheets, the sculptures were painted in distinctive bright colors, defining the different shapes to represent air, water, earth, and fire. However, he did not specify which shape represents a specific element the viewer can choose. Each of the different structures rotates as they move, bringing the four different elements to life. The four parts have a dissimilar focus; the surface and light reflection result from the shapes and colors—the volume of an element changes as it moves through space, bringing the viewer different sides and angles.



Figure 7.2.4: The Four Elements (1961, sheet metal and paint, 914.4 cm) by Frankie Fouganthin, CC BY-SA 4.0

Jean Tinguely

Jean Tinguely (1925-1991) was born in Switzerland and lived in Basel as a child, his father a shopkeeper and his mother a maid. At first, he worked as an apprentice decorator where one of the other decorators encouraged him to attend the School of Arts and Crafts in Basel. He learned about Marcel Duchamp, Dadaism, and Constructivism as well as meeting his first wife. He worked as a decorator and started his early wire sculptures. In 1952, they moved to Paris, becoming part of the artist community pursuing unusual pioneering concepts. He was preoccupied with the movement, capabilities, and noises of machines. In 1955, he participated in the exhibition, *'Le Mouvement,'* the first significant demonstration of kinetic art and his sculptural machines defined

as 'Méta-Matic.' His concepts satirize automation and manufactured material goods. During the *Peinnale de Paris* at a museum in Paris, Tinguely displayed a machine, run by a gasoline engine as it moved about, created drawing, sprayed a lily-of-the-valley scent into the air, and inflated a balloon. The machine at the museum marked the sudden rise in his career. During the 1950s, he created multiple machines demonstrating the destructiveness of modern mass production. One machine buried the audience in the paper. Another kinetic work had parts and pieces of a machine spewing out loud, cacophonous noises, and a different display even self-destructed.

In the 1960s, Tinguely changed direction and began to create machines with an emphasis on movements. *Cyclograveur* (6.5.5) used a bicycle as the primary base and added parts from cars, other bicycles, baby carriages, and even a seat from a motorcycle. He connected the gears and wheels and installed the drawing board located beyond the pedals. A viewer mounted the bicycle seat and pushed the pedals to make the sculpture move, causing the rod to draw on the board. He also added mallets, a drum, and a cymbal to generate clunking, rickety noises, adding to the user's adventure. Tinguely created his works to criticize society's mechanization. A review in the newspaper Volkskrant stated, "the grotesque and utterly useless, but diligently moving constructions, which you bump into here, are trying to be a witty provocation—certainly a challenge to the mechanization of all that is human."[3] He frequently painted his sculptures black bringing a homogeny to the parts.

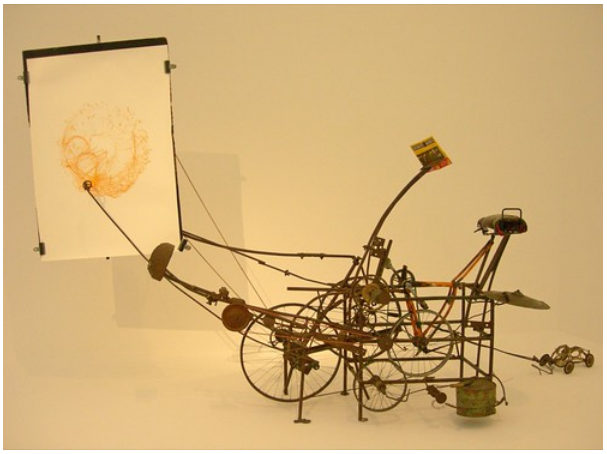


Figure 7.2.5: Cyclograveur (1961, Welded scrap metal, bicycle parts, sheet metal, drum, cymbal, and book, 225 x 410 x 110 cm) by neural.it, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Requiem pour une feuille morte (6.5.6) was composed of multiple components and pieces mounted on a frame along the wall. He carved each circle from wood and painted the wheels and metal parts black. Then he mounted them along eight different sections for easy assembly. The circular forms are interconnected with wires, and the motion is controlled by a tiny piece of metal painted white.



Figure 7.2.6: Requiem pour une feuille morte (1967, wood, metal, misc. parts) by Rog01, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Tinguely found a large number of wooden models assigned to be burned. He rescued the models to construct the immense structure *Méta-Harmonie IV* (6.5.7) using the wooden parts, other old wheels, multiple types of small objects he found, percussion instruments, and even a cowbell. He did not use any working drawings; he only constructed a base and added parts. Tinguely made the movements slower and the sounds more muted, punctuated by sharp, quick sounds. He also used the natural color of any of the

objects spreading the different colors throughout the structures. Tinguely said, "My contraptions do not make music, my contraptions use sounds and I play with those sounds. I sometimes build sound-mixing machines to mix sounds and then let the sounds go, give them their freedom."[4] Tinguely's large and small rattling machines were revolutionary, bringing not only people into his art but giving them a concert of creaks, thumps, bangs, and clangs. His active art amazed children and adults alike.



Figure 7.2.7: Méta-Harmonie IV (1985, metal, wood, motors, misc. parts, 420 x 1250 x 220 cm) by david roessli, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Jesús Rafael Soto

Jesús Rafael Soto (1923-2005) was born in Venezuela. As the eldest child, he had to help support his family by painting posters for cinemas, learning to draw portraits along the way. Soto gained the support of a local bishop who helped him obtain a scholarship to the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Artes Aplicadas. He was able to complete classes in art and art history. In 1950, Soto moved to Paris, experimenting with Cubism and Constructivists and Op Art. Eventually, he became part of the new three-dimensional movement, associating with Jean Tinguely and Victor Vasarely. As spectators moved in front of optical paintings to view movement, Soto wanted the viewer to participate in his work. He created artwork responsive to external changes and reactions in space. Soto started with geometric forms and linear constructions based on more industrial materials of steel, paint, nylon, or synthetics. He wanted to give the viewer an experience founded on the interactions of solid forms and the spaces surrounding the shapes, blurring the differences of certainty and illusion. *Circle with Red and Black* (6.5.8) is an illusion using thin black lines painted on the wooden background with red and black rods traversing the circle at multiple angles. As the rods disrupt the horizontal lines on the circle, the relationships and balance of the colors change and appear to move.

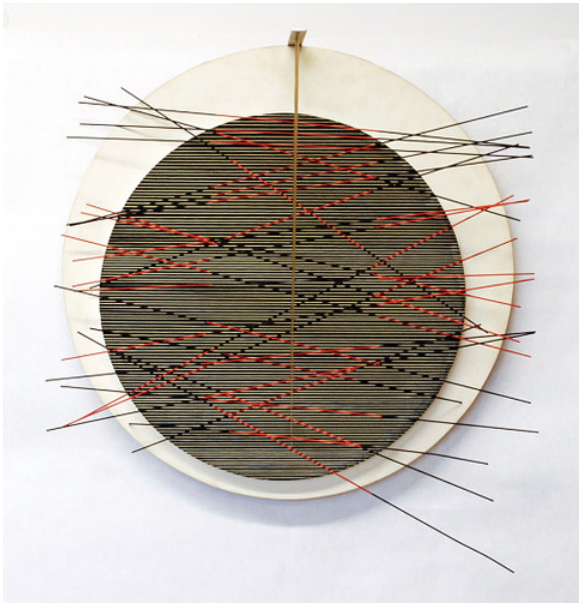


Figure 7.2.8: Circle with Red and Black (1969, painted wood, nylon cord, and metal rods, 54 x 50.2 x 39.4 cm) by dr vaxon, CC BY 2.0

La Esfera (6.5.9) was formed on a base of white metal to create a frame attached to the cement base. Soto used 1,800 slender, hollow aluminum poles suspended by stainless steel rods only a few millimeters thick. The orange color of the poles gave the sculpture the effect of a large sphere or sun suspended in air, shimmering and changing colors based on sunlight or wind. The sculpture is one of the famous sights in modern-day Caracas.



Figure 7.2.9: La Esfera (1994, aluminum rods and concrete base, 11.88 m high) CC BY-SA 3.0

The *Penetrable* (6.5.10) was one of Soto's signature series and defined as his most aspirational work. He did not want it to sit in a museum, seen by viewers passing by and untouched.



Figure 7.2.10: Penetrable (1966 + Nylon tubes and metal) CC BY-SA 3.0

Instead, he wanted people to touch and walk through the sculpture and physically become part of the artwork (6.5.11). Soto used thousands of yellow polyvinylchloride (PVC) tubes and hung them with wire from the white steel frame. As the viewers traverse through the sculptural tubes, they become part of the artwork. As Soto stated, "My concept of space is very different from that of the Renaissance, where man was in front of space, he was the viewer, the judge of that space...[With] the *Penetrable*, I reveal that man...is part of space. And this is the sensation of those who enter them, and the feeling of joy and elation that you witness is similar to getting in the water and being completely liberated from gravity."[5] The work appears as a geometric structure. However, it does not have a solid surface. The entire sculpture can be altered by natural elements of the wind and rain or by the viewers themselves. It is a continually changing artwork, inviting to the audience as part of the art.



Figure 7.2.11: *Penetrable* closeup, by steve goddard, CC BY-NC 2.0

Naum Gabo

Naum Gabo (1890-1977) was born in Russia, his father was an engineer. Gabo studied at Munich University as a medical and science student, where he discovered abstract art through classes in art history. Gabo moved to Paris to live with his brother, who was an artist. After World War I, he moved back to Moscow, making early constructions from cardboard and wood. He experimented with kinetic artwork based on geometric forms; unfortunately, most of his early work was destroyed. In 1928, in Germany, Gabo taught at the Bauhaus until he fled to London to escape the ascent of the Nazis. After the war, he, his wife, and his daughter emigrated to America and lived in Connecticut. Gabo's work was imaginative and creative based, using his scientific background to construct his innovative sculptures. The sculptures were constructed of multiple materials, including plastics, different metals, large rocks, plexiglass, even fishing lines, and motors to provide movement.

Originally, Gabo constructed a maquette he wanted to create into a full-scale fountain, *Revolving Torison* (6.5.12). A director from the Tate Gallery presented the concept to a benefactor who consented to fund the project. Gabo designed to fountain to be made from stainless steel. The outer diagonal edges included a series of jets spraying water as the sculpture rotated every ten minutes. The water jets change during the rotation from minimal to maximum spray. At first, Gabo constructed tiny models of monumental sculptures in motion he wanted to create. He also wanted to incorporate materials from the modern era and change the concept of space as spherical instead of angular. He used the idea of spheres and created multiple sculptures with different materials.



Figure 7.2.12: Revolving Torsion, Fountain (1972, stainless steel, 3.09 x 3.35 x 3.35 meters) by Denna Jones, CC BY 2.0

One *Spheric Theme* (6.5.13) was constructed of stainless steel, and the sculpture appears to be continuously curved lines. The sculpture was built with two circles attached with springs to develop depth and the concept of weightlessness.



Figure 7.2.13: Spheric Theme (1976, stainless steel), 2.37 x 1.98 meters) by louisemakesstuff, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Constructed Head No. 2 (6.5.14) was based on Gabo's concept of form in space instead of the usual sculptural idea of mass. He used different planes to create the same volume in space as it would in a solid mass, making multiple figures or heads in this way instead of solid mass. Although the forms were fragmented into different planes and parts, he still manipulated the space to create an expressive face. Gabo used galvanized iron, forming them into planes. The figure appears to be looking downwards, the head slouched forward with its hands clasped, almost prayerlike. Based on the light and movement of the viewer, the head changes its emotional perception.



Figure 7.2.14: Constructed Head No. 2 (1977, galvanized iron sheet, 177.8 x 137.7 x 121.9 cm) by Diorama Sky, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



Figure 7.2.15: Head closeup, by Diorama Sky, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Yaacov Agam

Yaacov Agam (1928-) was born in Rishon LeZion, now a city in Israel, then part of the Mandate Palestine. His father was an Orthodox rabbi, and Agam was educated in the mysticism of the Kabbala, concepts that remained with him throughout his lifetime and influenced his art. Agam was educated at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design and then moved to Switzerland. In 1951, he settled in France and lives still lives there, a place he married and had three children. Agam loved to experiment and is one of the pioneering artists of kinetic art. He believed all things in conventional art were visible, and he preferred to create the invisible, or experiences one has not yet understood. He stated, "I am not an abstract artist… Abstract art shows a situation on a canvas. I show a state of being which does not exist, the imperceptible absence of an image."[6] Agam's work ranged from immense installations to smaller individual works, all based on the concept of engaging the viewer in the aesthetic experience. The artwork changes depending on where the viewer stands, visual revelations of the three-dimensional installations or *agamographs* – a series of seemingly static images which transform at different angles. Agam used rainbow colors in their pure form, color establishing the complexity of his work. His work was kinetic, abstract, and frequently included colors, light, and sound, creating an unusual

sensory experience. He said of his work, "My intention was to create a work of art which would transcend the visible, which cannot be perceived except in stages, with the understanding that it is a partial revelation and not the perpetuation of the existing."[7]

Eighteen Levels (6.5.16) was constructed on the concept of repetition of a fundamental geometric form, or as Theo Van Doesburg termed it, 'elementarist' forms. In this structure, the straight-line stainless-steel poles rise in progression as the lines are modified on both their axis or an appearing off-center axis, shifting and changing. From one position, the poles appear static; however, the simplest movement by the viewer completely changes the positioning of the poles. Agam used an unpretentious geometric shape of a line to maximize the diversity of change and movement.



Figure 7.2.16: Eighteen Levels (1971, Inconel steel, 274.3 x 365.7 cm) Public Domain

The *Fire and Water* (6.5.17) fountain was one of his later sculptures representing unexpected movement by incorporating fire, water, color, and metal, all moving in different patterns. Agam used the colors of the rainbow based on the spiritual belief heaven was represented in the rainbow and was the covenant in God. The sculpture changed if the viewer stood in one position or moved around the fountain as water might be jetted to the left or right, spraying upright or tumbling down. At the same time, fire shot upwards in a huge burst or a soft glow as the layers of the structure moved in different directions, continually changing the colors. Agam believed he brought an added dimension to his work beyond the ordinary three dimensions based on the interrelationships of many movements and transformations occurring simultaneously.



Figure 7.2.17: Fire and Water fountain (1986, metal, mechanical parts) CC BY-SA 3.0

The room at the Elysée Palace in Paris (6.5.18) was commissioned from Agam as the elaborate ground floor of the presidential palace and later moved to the museum. The carpet in the room had 180 colors and a multitude of glass panels in the ceilings and walls. In the middle of the room stood the shiny chrome ball (6.5.19), reflecting the constantly changing colors and patterns of the room depending on the viewer's location. Three walls had lenticular painted slats, while one wall had multi-colored glass doors transporting the light. The viewer was inside the artwork, each viewer creating a different experience at every angle, an infinite number of possibilities. Agam brought his religious beliefs into much of his work, and he thought the room represented the infinity of God, and the elements in the room were abstracted into a unified space.

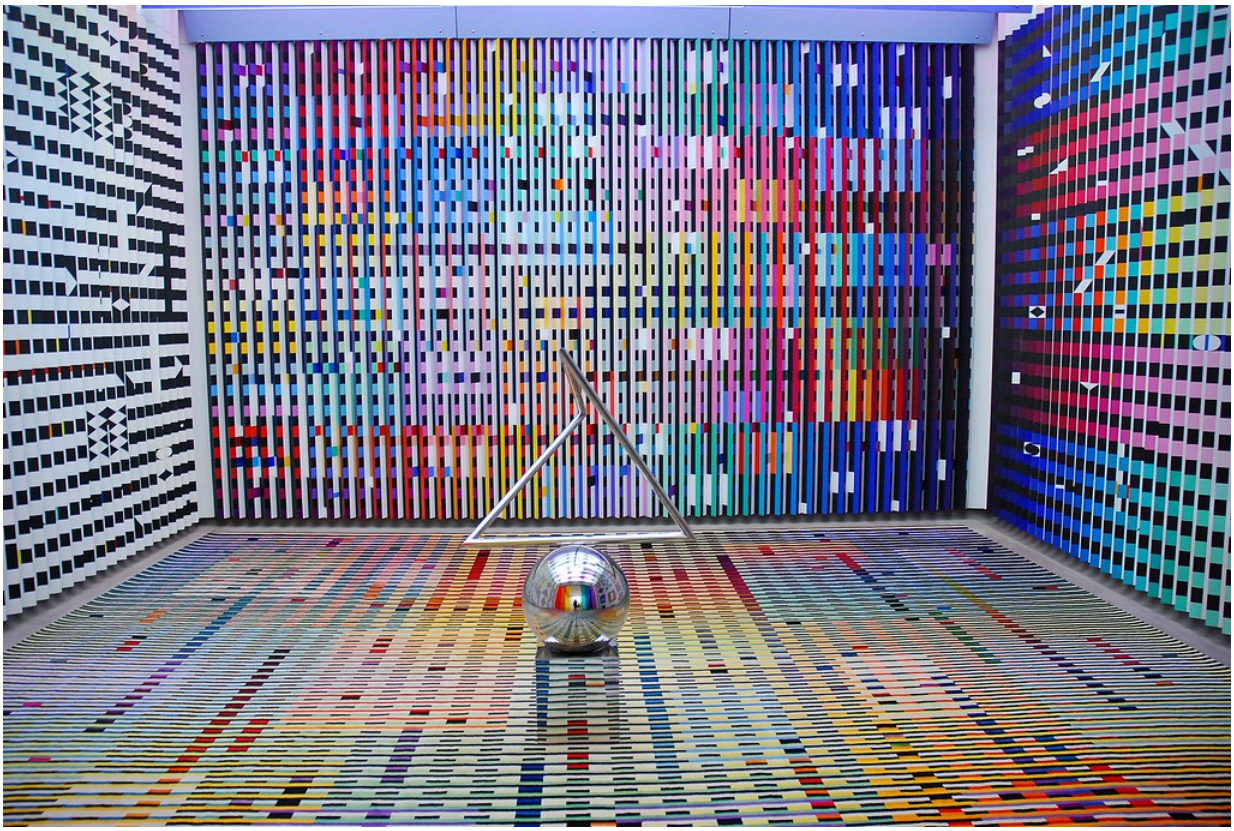


Figure 7.2.18: Antechamber of the private apartments of the Elysée, by melina1965, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



Figure 7.2.19: Closeup of sphere in antechamber, by Medieval Karl, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

The kinetic artists brought unique ideas of integrating the concept and capabilities of technology into art, replacing the static forms with dynamic constructions. Kinetic art was a lively movement, thriving for over a decade. Although the unique junk-art style of Tinguely and the mobile art pioneered by Calder eventually faded, the concepts of mobility and integration of technology remain in art today.

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7.3: Minimalism (1960 – early 1970)

Introduction

Minimalism became one of the important art forms during the 1960s, using primary color and sleek geometric contours without decorative embellishments. The movement started in New York with young artists challenging the boundaries of traditional media, perceived emotions, and overt symbolism. By the 1970s, the movement spread across the United States and Europe, and artists used industrial materials, changing the concept of sculptures and painting. They created pure objective elements of simplistic shapes made from commercial materials.

Minimalist artists seldom used traditional materials; instead, they incorporated methodologies found in commercial manufacturing and fabrication. Using abstracted construction removed the artists' emotion, expression, and feelings found in brushstrokes, patterns, or color. The artists generally used house paint, cement, or fiberglass instead of oil paint, canvas, or clay. A part of Minimalism was to incorporate the contiguous space into their artwork and bring the viewer into the space through multiple points of view. Industrial materials allowed artists to integrate characteristics of weight, light, size, or even gravity in their work.

The Minimalist sculptors were a significant part of the movement and created three-dimensional forms using fiberglass, plywood, plastic, sheet metal, and aluminum.[1] Sculptures were no longer elevated on platforms and sat directly on the floor with repetitive geometric shapes. Minimalist painters used geometric forms in repeated patterns and specific horizontal and vertical lines to delineate space. Some artists worked with light, using fluorescent tubes to form patterns of color and shapes. They focused on how the light affected the perception of the viewer's concept of shapes formulated by light.

Donald Judd was one of the first artists to reject traditional art forms and experiment with new minimalist concepts. An exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York became one of the new art style's significant places. The artist displayed their geometric and properly simplistic work, only representing precisely what it was, absent personal feelings. The exhibition opened a new way to express ideas, relying on the result, not the artist's expression.

Donald Judd

Donald Judd (1928-1994) was born in Missouri and enlisted in the Army right after World War II. Afterward, he received a bachelor's degree from Columbia University in philosophy. For a while, Judd tried printing and then woodcutting. In the early 1960s, he wrote articles for art magazines and experimented with materials and style. Judd developed his classic boxes, stacks, rectangles, and squares, all formed into progressions. He used basic materials of concrete, wood, or metal as well as Plexiglass. Some of his early works were wall-mounted, others free-standing. In 1968, Judd purchased a five-story building in New York, turning it into a residence and studio. He also started designing permanent installations instead of the temporary gallery or museum exhibitions used by most artists. Judd believed permanence brought importance to artwork instead of the transient nature of a temporary display. By 1971, he and his family moved to Texas, where he purchased large tracts of land and buildings, giving him room to build large and complex installations. Judd taught at several universities across the country and wrote extensively about art and artists for different publications.

Judd created several different series of artwork. From 1964 to the 1970s, he created a series based on "progression," each of the various pieces based on the previous one. The works were fabricated from different materials, colors, and sizes. *Untitled* (6.8.1) was made from copper, metal with a reflective surface when polished. Judd fabricated four pieces, each progressively larger, increasing in width by 3.8 centimeters moving from left to right. He also used spacing in the reverse progression.

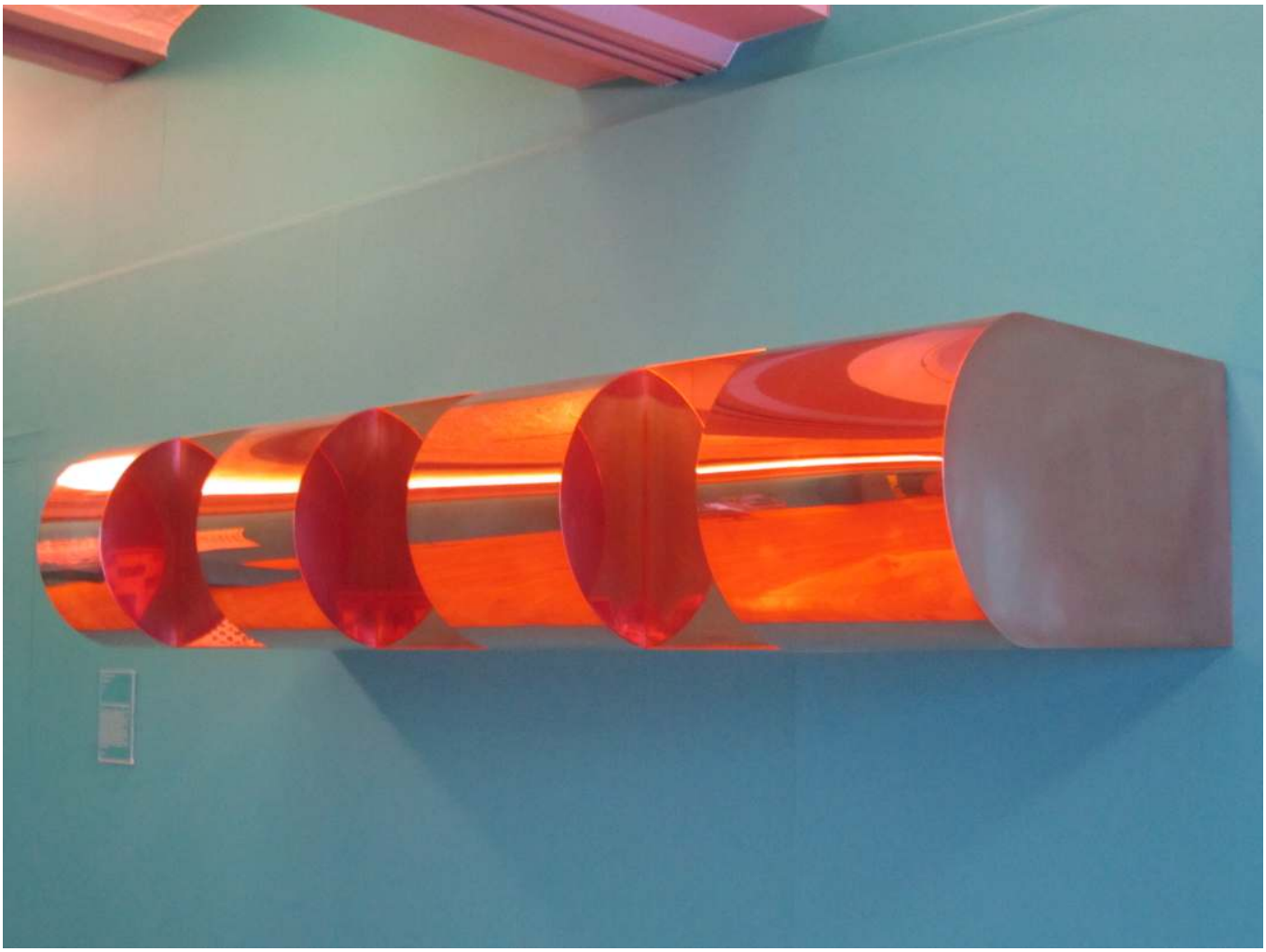


Figure 7.3.1: Untitled (1973, copper, 37.1 x 194.3 x 74.9 cm) by Rept0n1x, CC BY-SA 3.0

Untitled (6.8.2) was constructed from painted galvanized iron. Judd used similar progressives spacing, the widest space on the left side and progressing to the narrower spacing on the right side.

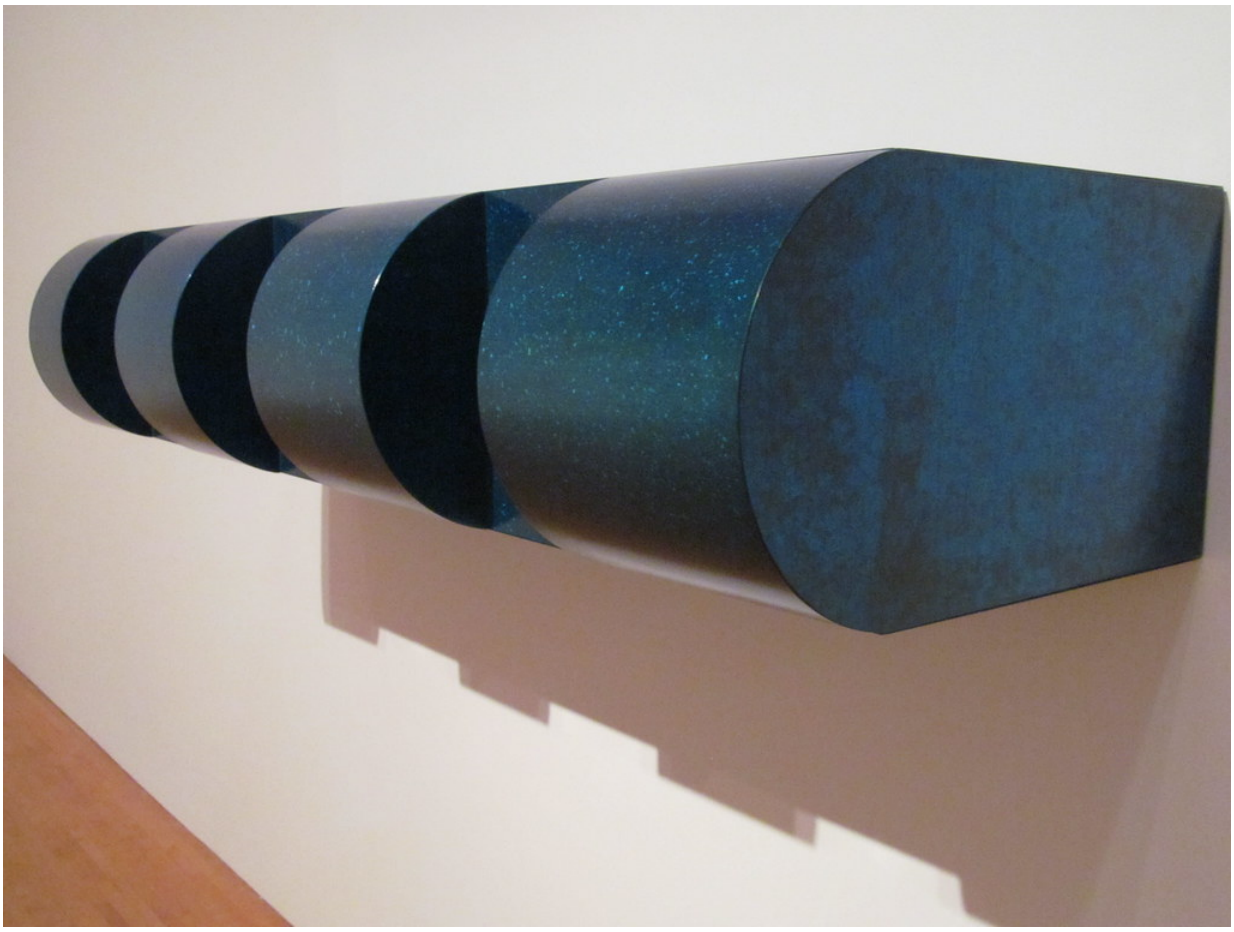


Figure 7.3.2: Untitled (1966, painted galvanized iron) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

Judd's *Untitled (Stack)* (6.8.3) hangs on the wall and projects almost 91.4 centimeters from the wall. Each of the boxes is made from galvanized iron and equal in size, maintaining the importance of every single box. Every box is 22.6 centimeters high, and they are placed in the formation of a ladder as they move upward, retaining the 22.6 centimeter spacing between them. Different numbers of boxes are displayed depending on the height of the wall space. In this stack, the sides of the boxes are unpainted and shiny. The shape of a box was a form Judd frequently used because he believed it did not represent any specific thing and was neutral in shape.



Figure 7.3.3: Untitled (Stack) (1966, galvanized iron, 10 units each 22.9 x 101.6 x 78.7 cm) by oliworx, CC BY 2.0

Judd created fifteen boxes *Untitled* (6.8.4) made of concrete he cast and constructed them from 1980 through 1984. Each separate unit was 2.5 x 2.5 x 5 meters, and each slab side was 25 centimeters thick. He installed each unit equally distanced from the other. An installation could be composed of different numbers of boxes as the scrubby desert land provided the perfect place for his concrete boxes. The various buildings and surrounding space still display much of his artwork today. Judd always believed the artwork stood by itself and stated, "A shape, a volume, a color, a surface is something itself. It shouldn't be concealed as part of a fairly different whole"[2]



Figure 7.3.4: Untitled (1980-1984, concrete, 2.5 x 2.5 x 5 meters each) by nan palmero, CC BY 2.0

Dan Flavin

Dan Flavin (1933-1996) was born in New York. After school, he and his twin brother enlisted in the Air Force during World War II. When the war ended, he studied art, including at Columbia University. Flavin married twice; the second marriage was held at the Guggenheim Museum. He started drawing and painting and, in 1959, began to make mixed media assemblages, finding objects on the streets of New York. By 1961, Flavin started experimenting with lights, including fluorescent and incandescent bulbs of all types and sizes, attaching the different lights to boxlike wooden structures. By 1963, Flavin found the medium he liked and focused on fluorescent tubes. At first, he used the standard white color. Flavin progressed to a palette of standard colors available, red, blue, green, pink, yellow, ultraviolet, and the full range of different whites found in commercial fluorescent lights.

He focused on the artistic variations achievable with the unusual commercial material throughout his career, exploiting the utilitarian use of light and the variable changes of color, shape, and position. He turned banal hardware into art and stated, "One might not think of light as a matter of fact, but I do. And it is, as I said, as plain and open and direct an art as you will ever find."[3] Flavin used perishable, readymade materials, forming them into objects he did not consider sculptures. He wanted his art to respond to the specific architectural setting.

Generally, he used straight lines in his work, running horizontal or vertical. Occasionally, he placed the bulbs at an angle or used a rare circular system. Flavin always tried to place the commercial stamps marking each bulb so they were visible. He did not like to refer to his works as Minimalism, although he and Donald Judd were great friends and his work paralleled Judd's ideas of objects. Flavin used the simple light tube in geometric formations, letting the light provide the colors of the walls; he wanted the walls to glow and form illusions.

Monument for V. Tatlin (6.8.5) is one of several combinations Flavin created using different lengths of standard white fluorescent tubes. Most of them were horizontal and resembled a tower or monument. The arrangement of the tubes was balanced and symmetrical, creating bright regions and more subtle light reflections. In this image, the length of each horizontal light is balanced, the center equally anchored.

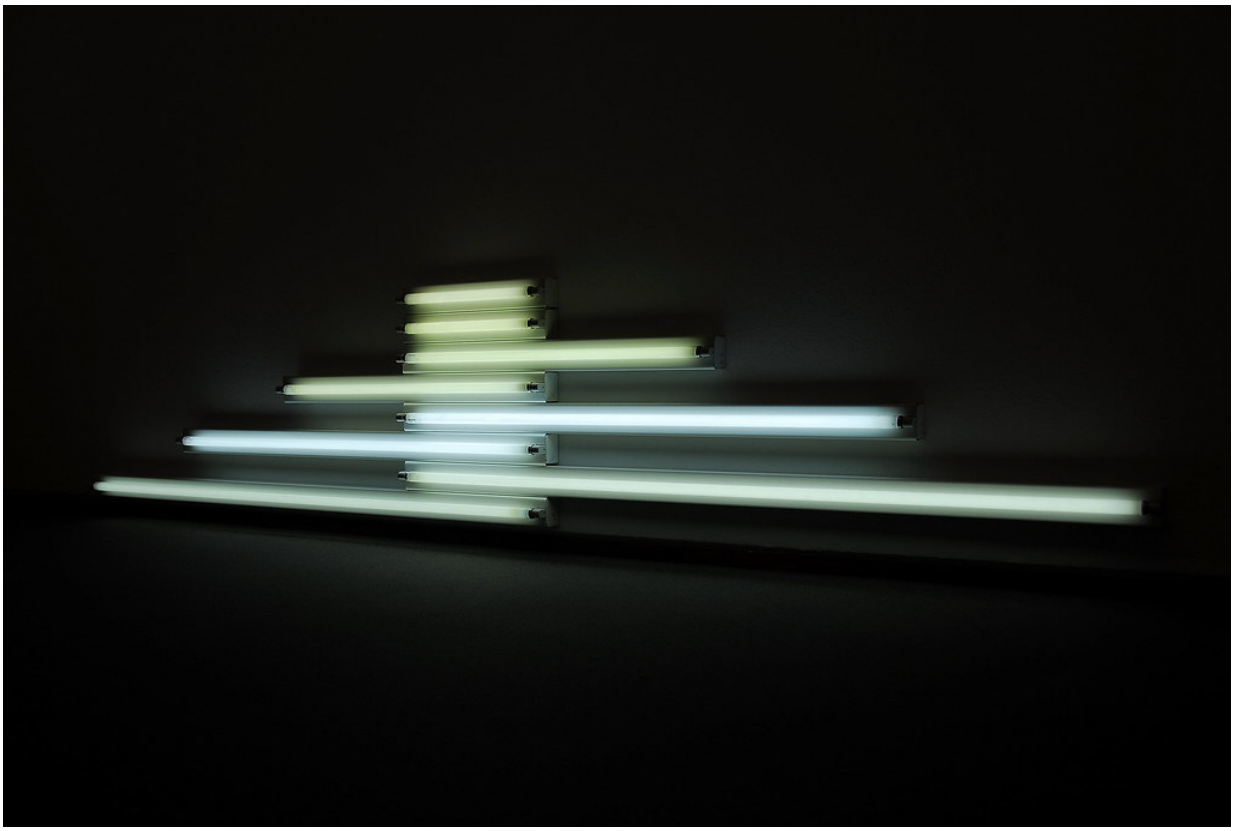


Figure 7.3.5: "monument" for V. Tatlin (1968, cool white fluorescent light tubes (70 x 425 x 11 cm) by Rino Porrovecchio, CC BY-SA 2.0

Untitled (in honor of Harold Joachim) 3 (6.8.6) forms a perfect square positioned across the corner of a room. The pink, yellow, green, and blue lights grid creates a soft glow reflected across the floor. To develop each artwork, Flavin drew multiple images before he achieved the look and feel he wanted. In this work, he used multiple green and blue tubes grouped vertically with spaces between them. Single tubes formed the thinner horizontal look.

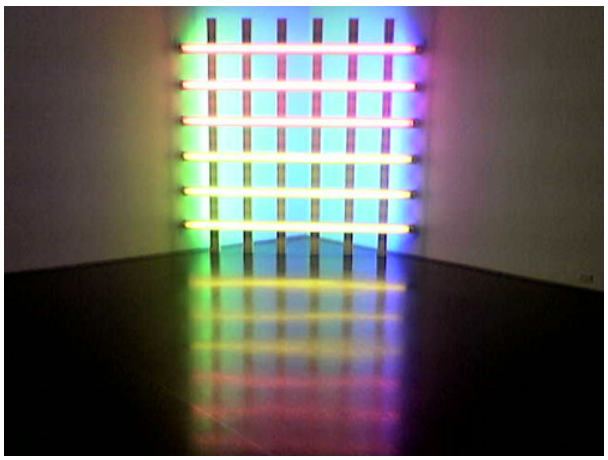


Figure 7.3.6: Untitled (in honor of Harold Joachim) 3 (1977, fluorescent light, 244 x 244 cm) by pandabrand, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

One of Flavin's major artworks was *Untitled (To Helga and Carlos, With Respect and Affection)* (6.8.7), a large-scale sculpture extending over the space and forming a barrier. The extensive work bathed the room with light, seemingly infinitely expansive. Flavin created a series of barrier-style work, modular pieces to change depending on the space available. The different blue colors emit light and a feeling of calm, or maybe it seems eerie. The spaces between the rows are open, like windows leaving the viewer to wonder what might be on the other side.



Figure 7.3.7: Untitled (To Helga and Carlos, With Respect and Affection) (1974, fluorescent lights, each unit 121.9 x 132.1 x 7.6 cm) by Dean Hochman, CC BY 2.0

Ellsworth Kelly

Born in New York, Ellsworth Kelly (1923-2015) lived in New Jersey as a child. His grandmother taught him about ornithology when he was growing up, and Kelly became fascinated with John James Audubon and his bird illustrations. Audubon's colors and forms later influenced his career. Kelly was always interested in art; however, his parents only wanted him to pursue technical education, so he went to the Pratt Institute until he was drafted into the army in 1943. Kelly served alongside other artists working on different camouflages for military equipment. After the war, he studied art, including Paris, where he stayed for six years and was inspired by French abstracted art. He returned to New York City for a few years, showing at a few galleries before moving to New York.

Kelly developed his early artwork based on the world around him, a window, shadows from the staircase, and a hidden door. He stated, "I realized I didn't want to compose pictures…I wanted to find them. I felt that my vision was choosing things out there in the world and presenting them…There was so much to see, and it all looked fantastic to me."[4] He combined the simple forms around him with the concepts of a pure and uncluttered form, spatial unity, and bold use of color. His canvases were different shapes and sizes, frequently joined together, the canvas itself becoming part of the work. Kelly covered the canvas with basic lines and geometric forms in vibrant colors. He usually started by applying multiple coats of white paint before adding color.

By 1959, Kelly started using non-rectilinear forms and embrace Minimalism in his painting *Running White* (6.8.8). He applied white first and then added coats of black on top. At this point, Kelly was still using a standard canvas format, the running line escaping off the sides of the panel. When Kelly was visiting friends in a French village, he saw a flight of stairs and noticed how the sun created different shadows from the steps and balustrade. He took several photographs of the scene, even at different times of the day, noting the changes in shadows as the sun moved.



Figure 7.3.8: Running White (1959, oil on canvas, 223.6 x 172.2 cm) by scalleja, CC BY-SA 2.0

Kelly used the photographs to create a series entitled *La Combe*. One of the series' paintings is *La Combe III* (6.8.9), the lines on the painting are arranged to imply steps and the shadows cast by each step. The shadows did not match a photograph; Kelly reconstructed the lines over the multiple panels in the series.



Figure 7.3.9: La Combe III (1951, oil on linen, 161.2 x 113 cm) by wallyg, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

In *Spectrum IV* (6.8.10), Kelly arranged the simple lines of color in the style of a rainbow, starting and ending with yellow. Individual colors stand-alone yet blend into the neighboring color. Each color is also a separate canvas, with thirteen panels to form the square. The long lengths of yellow on each side stand out against the white wall creating greater contrast.

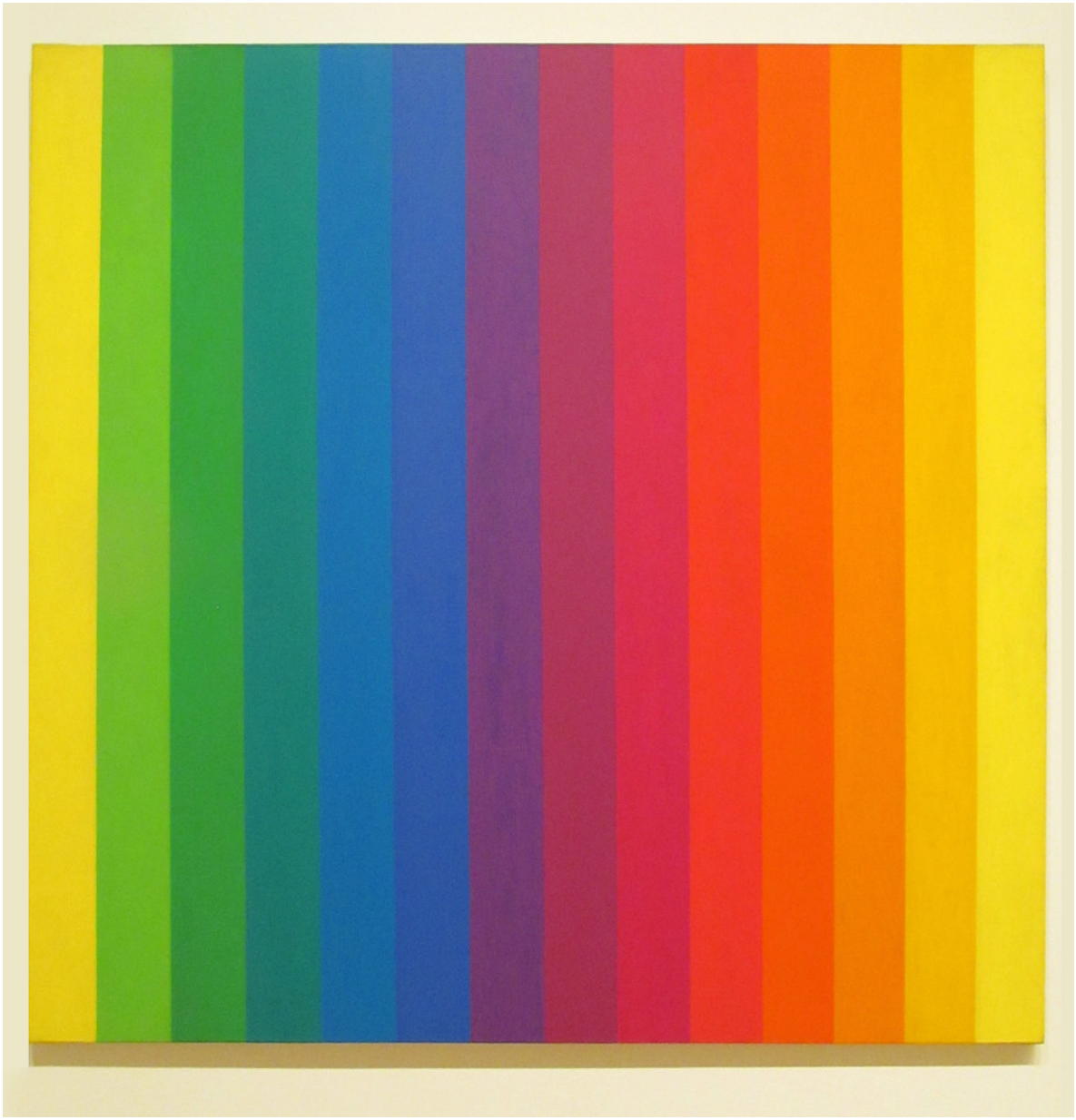


Figure 7.3.10: Spectrum IV (1967, oil on canvas, thirteen panels, 297.2 x 297.2) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

In *Spectrum V* (6.8.11), Kelly made single panels for each color. He used the same colors and sequence of colors in each work of the series, varying the panels' size and placement. In *Spectrum V*, each color is influenced by the contrast of the white wall instead of the color next to it, softening the hues, less bold as seen in *Spectrum IV*.



Figure 7.3.11: Spectrum V (1969, oil on canvas, each panel 84 1/8 x 34 inches) by sharkycharming, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Agnes Martin

Agnes Martin (1912-2004) was born in Canada and lived in Vancouver during her childhood. She went to college in Washington, received a bachelor's degree in education, and moved to New York City. There, Martin became interested in modern art and took several classes before attending the University of New Mexico, followed by earning a master's degree in art at Columbia University. In 1957, she moved back to New York in a local art community. Martin struggled with mental illness, including electric shock treatment. In 1967, she disappeared from New York and spent time crossing the United States and Canada, camping in different places. Martin finally settled in New Mexico, where she built her home and studio and eventually began to paint again.

Martin's work strongly resembles the rural and desert landscape she found in Canada's vast plains and New Mexico's dry, scrubby desert. Her palette was relatively monochromatic and unadorned. Martin destroyed her early works before adopting pure abstraction and Minimalist form. She focused on lines and grids with soft, subtle colors. Martin used mathematically divided lines, a regularity found in her work. Some of the lines were thin and pencil-like; others were wider and more painterly. Her addition of muted color gave her work the reflection of her beliefs in Eastern philosophy and timelessness. Martin's works were generally based on one concept with variations. She wanted them to convey to the viewers a broad range of emotions and experiences. Art reviewers consider her work in totality, with quiet contemplation of the relationships between the fine lines and soft colors.

In her painting, *White Flower* (6.8.12), Martin explained how the image was about a mental understanding, not the concept of an actual white flower. She wanted people to react to the painting as they would to the organic flower. The grid was made from white horizontal and vertical lines shaped into rectangles. Inside the small rectangles were proportioned white dashes resembling fabric. The actual white flowers she contemplated were based on the small white flowers with edible berries growing on the plains of Canada.

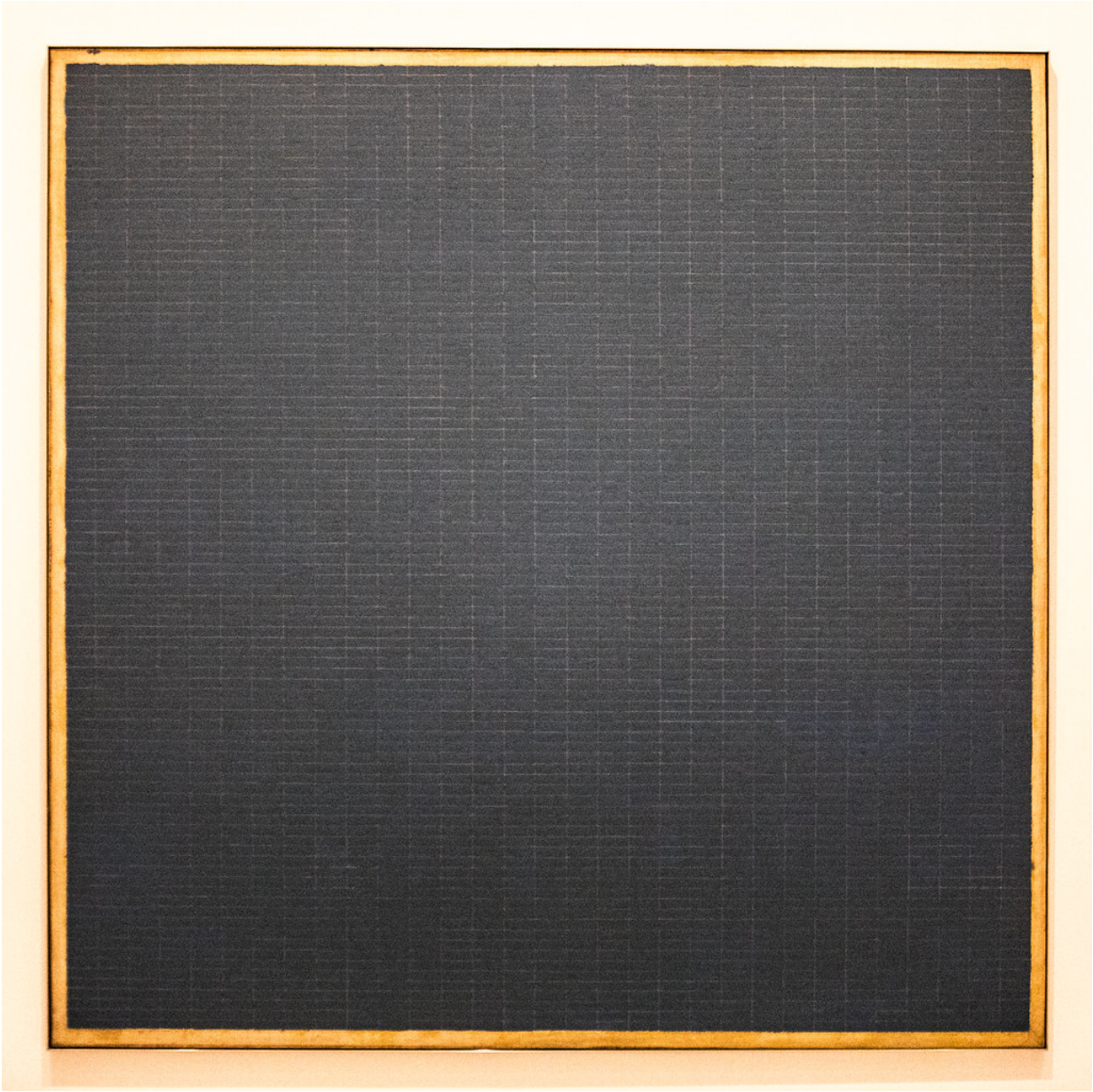


Figure 7.3.12: White Flower (1960, oil on canvas, 182.6 x 182.9 cm) by Thomas Hawk, CC BY-NC 2.0

Untitled #12 (6.8.13) displays a graphite grid against the light background. Many art historians view the image as one of her more spiritual works and a balance between sensual and austere. Martin remarked, "Work like mine describes the subtle emotions that are beyond words, like music."[5]

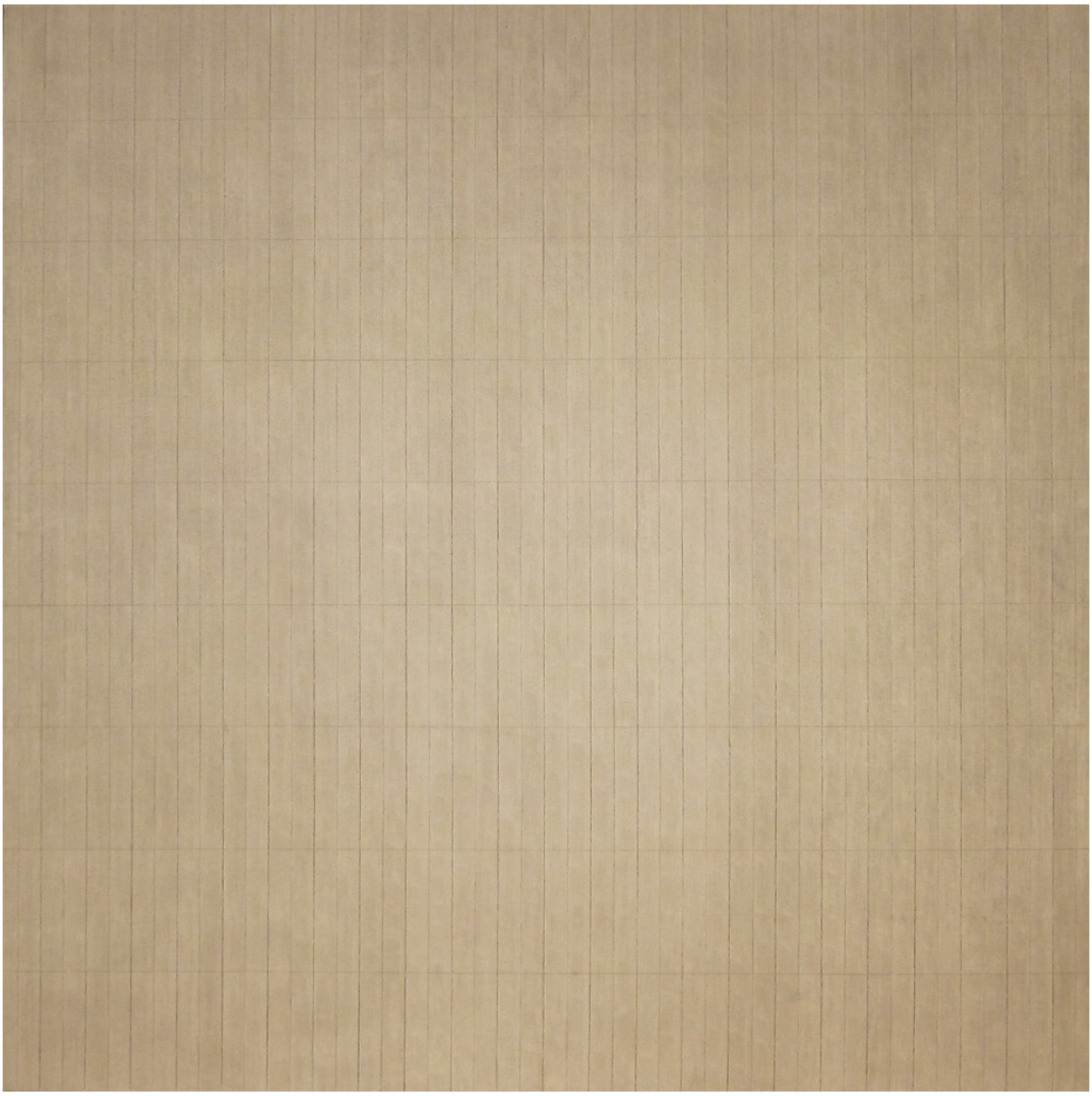


Figure 7.3.13: Untitled #12 (1977, India ink, graphite, gesso on canvas, 182.9 x 182.9 cm) by Sharon Mollerus, CC BY 2.0

In *Untitled #14* (6.8.14), Martin used ink, pencil, and paint, multiple types of material, a common thing she frequently included in her work. By using numerous materials, Martin obtained different looks in each of her paintings. In #14, she applied gesso on the canvas before adding the lines and color, building a distinctive texture. The darker line against the light gray background demonstrated her use of the signature grid pattern. Martin used this basic grid and varied it with texture, width between lines, color, or materials. Although Minimalism relied on a more rigid formula of lines, Martin's grid use was not systematic, only coordination of lines from space to space.

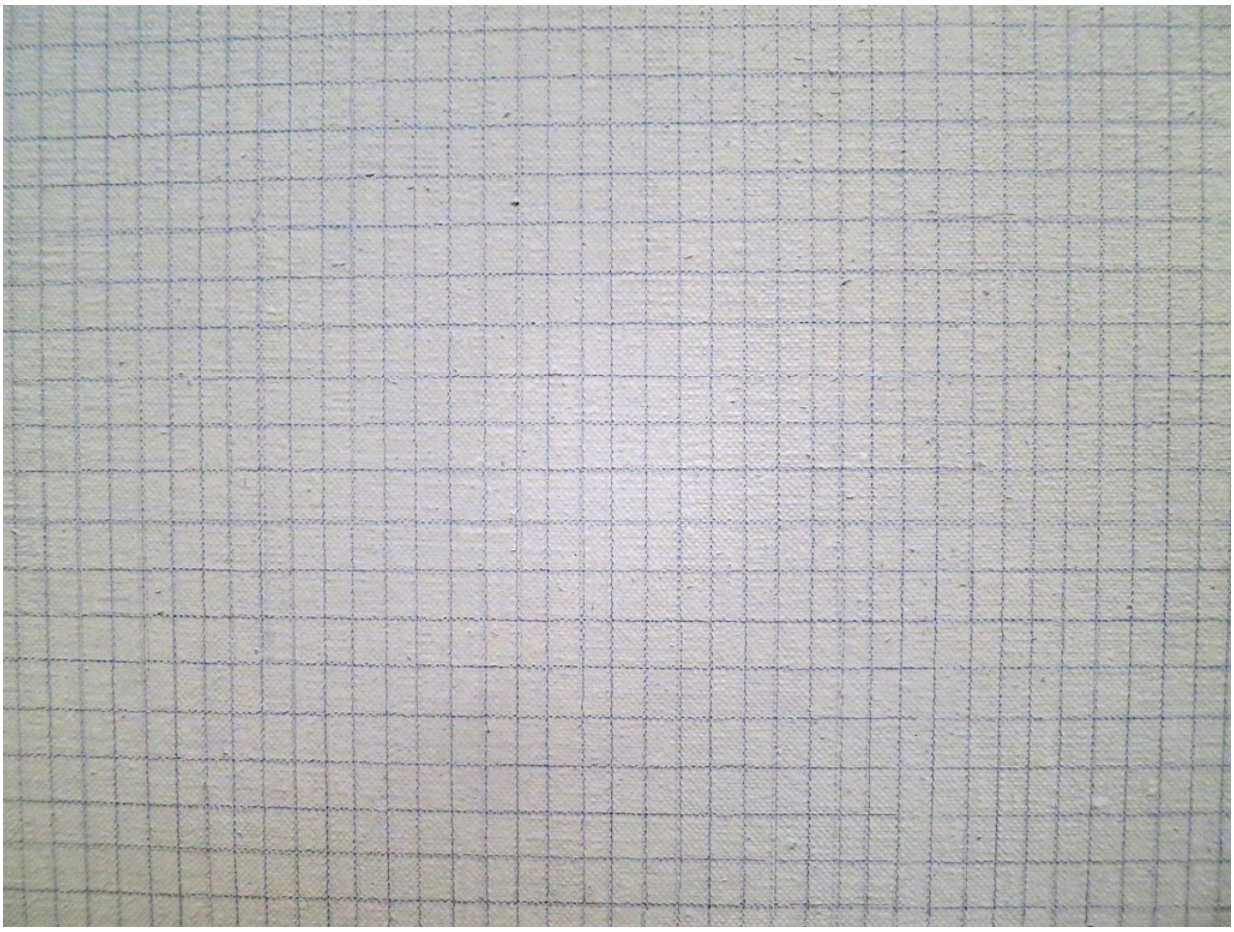


Figure 7.3.14: Untitled #14 (1977, ink, graphite, gesso on canvas, 182.9 x 182.9 cm) by Medieval Karl, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Eva Hesse

Eva Hesse (1936-1970) achieved success as an artist despite a difficult life. She was born in Germany to a Jewish family in 1936. The family tried to leave Germany as the war was starting and sent Hesse and her sibling on one of the last Kindertransport trains. The trains were loaded with small children bound for the Netherlands to escape the brutal roundup by the Nazis. Her parents escaped six months later, and the family emigrated to New York. After World War II, her parents divorced, and her mother committed suicide. Hesse attended Yale University, graduating with a bachelor's degree. After college, she returned to New York and worked with some of the other new Minimalist artists. Hesse was married for a few years before she divorced. In 1969, she developed a brain tumor, had multiple unsuccessful operations, and died at 34. However, Hesse's short artistic career was very successful.

Hesse worked with three-dimensional and industrial materials, primarily focusing on latex and fiberglass because latex could be molded or cast, and hardened. Hesse belonged to a group experimenting with new synthetic materials and even invented her own method of rubberizing fabric. Her sculptures were usually grouped together or placed in a grid-like formation, minimally based on simple formations and a reduced color palette. The works were generally wrapped, wound, or threaded. Hesse's work was abstract while frequently referring to male or female bodies, contradictory illusions, or interpretations. *Untitled* (6.8.15) changed the rigid straight lines used by Minimalist artists to irregular, softer organic lines. Hesse knotted different pieces of rope together and soaked them in liquid latex. When the rope hardened, she assembled the parts into a sculpture of twisted, arching lines. The work is attached to the ceiling and wall, flexible enough to support variable installations. In her conceptual drawing of the work, Hesse wrote, "hung irregularly tying knots as connections really letting it go as it will. Allowing it to determine more of the way it completes itself."[6]



Figure 7.3.15: Untitled (1969-70, latex, rope, string, wire, variable size) by veritatem, CC BY 2.0

Repetition Nineteen III (6.8.16) is an installation of nineteen round, translucent forms shaped similar to a bucket. The forms are twenty inches high and hand-formed instead of manufactured, so they are irregular and can be arranged in any formation. Hesse used fiberglass and resin, two materials with a tendency to discolor or deteriorate over time, a phenomenon happening in her work today. She always said, "Life doesn't last; art doesn't last. It doesn't matter." [7]



Figure 7.3.16: Repetition Nineteen III (1968, fiberglass, polyester resin, each 27.8 x 32.2 cm in diameter) by mava, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Hang Up (6.8.17) was made in 1966 when Hesse decided to stop painting and concentrate on sculptural works. She wrapped the blank canvas made from bed sheets on a frame and added an excessively long tube made from steel and covered with a cord to protrude into the viewer's space. Hesse thought this image was one of her most important because it was so absurd, blurring the line between paintings and sculptures.

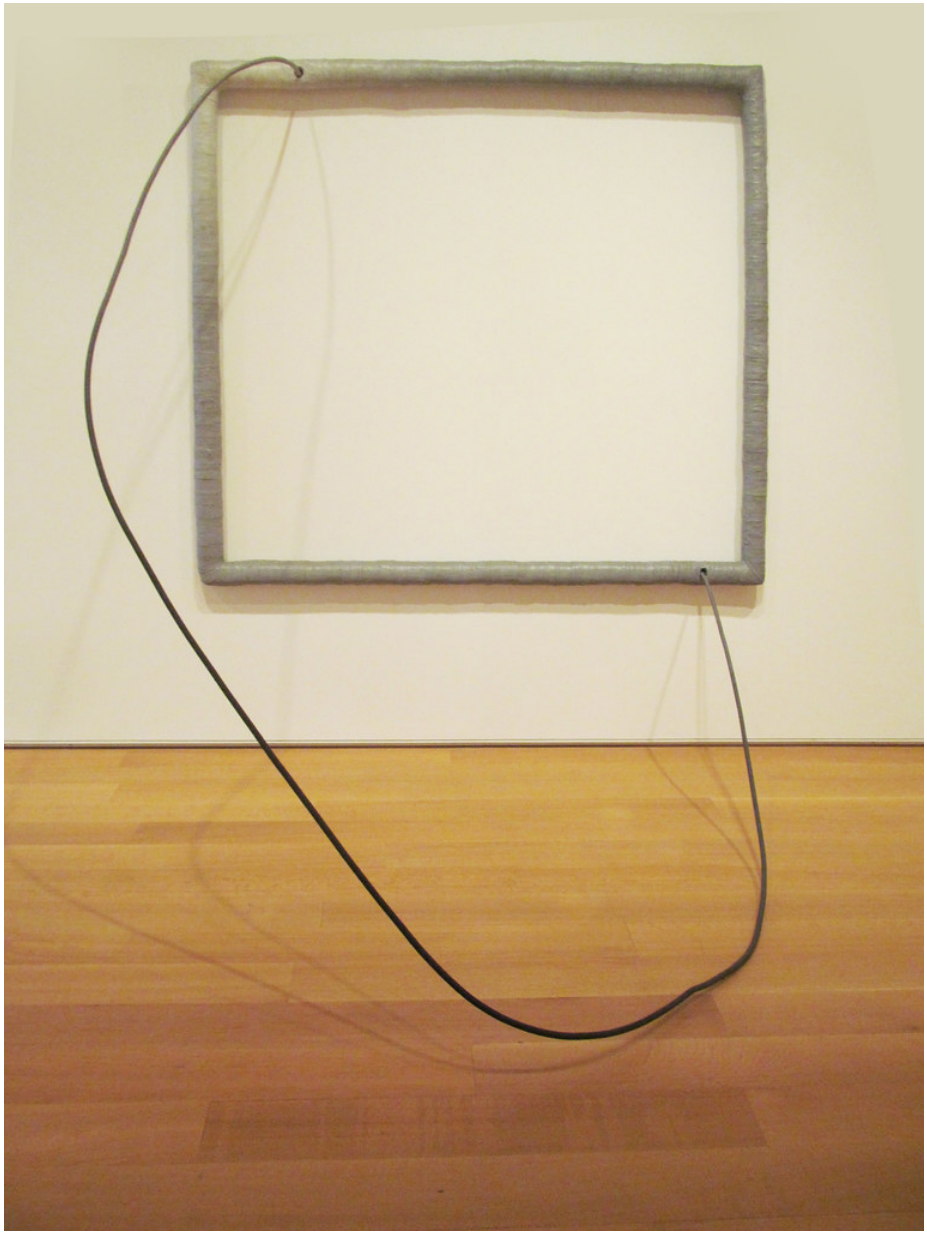


Figure 7.3.17: Hang Up (1966, acrylic on cloth over wood, acrylic on a cord over steel tube, 182.9 x 213.4 x 198.1 cm) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

Hesse's work, *Not Yet* (6.8.18), reflected her desire to create forms interpreted as almost human parts, however just an erotic resemblance. She used cotton netting and plastic drop cloths to make the image, materials found in any artist's studio. Hesse used repetitive forms like the Minimalists. However, she used forms that were uneven and irregular. Instead of manufactured materials, she handmade her shapes. Historians often explain Hesse's work as the reflection of her anxieties stemming from a painful childhood.



Figure 7.3.18: Not Yet (1966, Cotton, plastic, paper, lead, string, 180.3 x 39.4 x 21 cm) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

Carmen Herrera

Carmen Herrera (1915-) was born in Havana, Cuba, one of seven children. Her father was part of the Cuban intellectual elite, a captain in the army liberating Cuba from Spain. Her mother was an author and journalist. Herrera had private art education when she was young, even going to school in Paris at fourteen. She studied architecture at the Universidad de la Habana for one year, quitting because of the continual fighting in the streets and the unstable ability of the university to remain open. Herrera married a teacher from New York and moved there where she studied art before moving to Paris. Refining her art, Herrera focused on her straight-line, hard-edge style, a technique she developed similar to Ellsworth Kelly, who lived in Paris during the same period. When she returned to New York, she continued to face rejection as an artist, a problem Herrera attributed to prejudice against women. She was not allowed to exhibit at one gallery because she was female and received little recognition until the 2000s. She did not sell a painting until she was eighty-nine and did not attain acknowledgment until 2009 when a large exhibition of her work was held in the United Kingdom.

Herrera's training as an architect influenced her concepts and focused on lines and color within the lines, a limited color palette, and simplistic geometric shapes. She developed a process of painting she still used today. She started by drawing a concept and then recreated the idea on vellum, where she added colors with paint markers. On the final canvas, Herrera marked her lines with tape

before applying layers of paint. "I like straight lines, I like angles, I like order. In this chaos that we live in, I like to put order. I guess that's why I am a hard-edged painter, a geometric painter"[8] *Untitled* (6.8.19) was one of her breakthrough paintings, establishing her style and gaining recognition. She also asserted her love for straight lines. The painting looks like a W; however, she changed the lines by reversing the black and white colors on the four panels to create the visual effect.



Figure 7.3.19: Untitled (1952, acrylic on canvas, 63.5 x 152.4 cm) by smallcurio, CC BY 2.0

Amarillo Dos (6.8.20) demonstrated her use of line and color to convey movement. The perceived two parts of the painting appear to be tilting; however, the top and bottom are still level. Herrera developed a sense of instability using the bold yellow color with the symmetrical and yet asymmetrical image.



Figure 7.3.20: Amarillo Dos (1971, acrylic on wood, 101.6 x 70 x 8.3 cm) by jackszwergoldarchives, CC BY-NC 2.0

Green and White (6.8.21) also have irregular shapes, not quite fitting together, the white sections generating different spatial balance with the negative space. Herrera used a bold contrasting color to enhance the feeling of unbalance. She created her innovative body of work in the 1960s and 1970s and went unrecognized. She was now thought of as a woman ahead of her time.



Figure 7.3.21: Green and White (1959, acrylic paint on canvas, 116.4 x 154.3 cm) by jackszwergoldarchives, CC BY-NC 2.0

By the end of the 1970s, the ideals of Minimalism were accepted in galleries by art dealers and influential publications. The use of industrial and readymade materials became common for artists giving viewers new experiences of the appearance of weight and height, the influence of line, geometric forms, and pure separated colors. The concepts of Minimalism and the use of manufactured materials continue in artwork today.

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[1] Retrieved from https://magazine.artland.com/minimalism/

[2] Retrieved from https://www.theartstory.org/movement/minimalism/

[3] Retrieved from https://www.nga.gov/features/slidesh...ospective.html

[4] Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellsworth_Kelly. Based on "A Giant of the New Surveys His Rich Past". *The New York Times*. October 13, 1996.

[5] Retrieved from https://www.artic.edu/artworks/89403/untitled-12

[6] Retrieved from https://whitney.org/collection/works/5551

[7] Retrieved from https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_lear...teen-iii-1968/

[8] Retrieved from https://whitney.org/audio-guides/51?...&page=1&stop=1

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- **6.8: Minimalism (1960 – early 1970)** is licensed CC BY 4.0.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

8: Global cultures 1980 - now

Global Cultures 1980 – now

It can be difficult gain perspective on your own time, but these artists manage to do just that.

1980 - now

8.1: A beginner's guide
8.2: Appropriation and ideological critique
8.3: Identity and the body
8.4: Banality and Kitsch
8.5: Ritual, spirituality, and transcendence
8.6: Histories, real and imagined

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8.1: A beginner's guide

Contemporary Art, an introduction

by DR. VIRGINIA B. SPIVEY

"Getting" Contemporary Art

It's ironic that many people say they don't "get" contemporary art because, unlike Egyptian tomb painting or Greek sculpture, art made since 1960 reflects our own recent past. It speaks to the dramatic social, political and technological changes of the last 50 years, and it questions many of society's values and assumptions—a tendency of postmodernism, a concept sometimes used to describe contemporary art. What makes today's art especially challenging is that, like the world around us, it has become more diverse and cannot be easily defined through a list of visual characteristics, artistic themes or cultural concerns.



Figure 8.1.1: Girl Looking at: Andy Warhol, *Campbell's Soup Cans*, 1962, synthetic polymer on 32 canvases each 20 x 16″ (The Museum of Modern Art) (photo: Steven Zucker)

Minimalism and Pop Art, two major art movements of the early 1960s, offer clues to the different directions of art in the late 20th and 21st century. Both rejected established expectations about art's aesthetic qualities and need for originality. Minimalist objects are spare geometric forms, often made from industrial processes and materials, which lack surface details, expressive markings, and any discernible meaning. Pop Art took its subject matter from low-brow sources like comic books and advertising. Like Minimalism, its use of commercial techniques eliminated emotional content implied by the artist's individual approach, something that had been important to the previous generation of modern painters. The result was that both movements effectively blurred the line distinguishing fine art from more ordinary aspects of life, and forced us to reconsider art's place and purpose in the world.

Shifting Strategies

Minimalism and Pop Art paved the way for later artists to explore questions about the conceptual nature of art, its form, its production, and its ability to communicate in different ways. In the late 1960s and 1970s, these ideas led to a "dematerialization of art," when artists turned away from painting and sculpture to experiment with new formats including photography, film and video, performance art, large-scale installations and earth works. Although some critics of the time foretold "the death of painting," art today encompasses a broad range of traditional and experimental media, including works that rely on Internet technology and other scientific innovations.

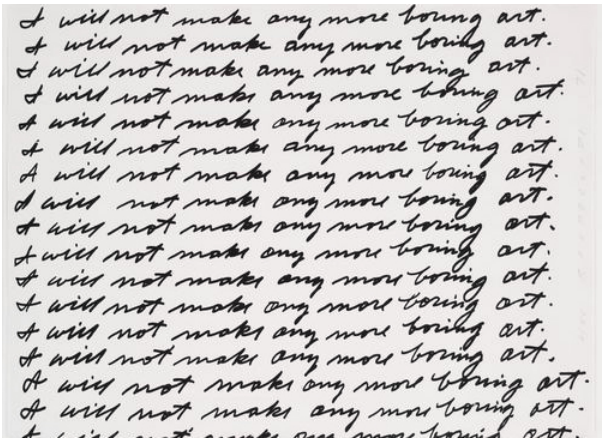


Figure 8.1.2: John Baldessari, *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art*, 1971, lithograph, 22-7/16 x 30-1/16″ (The Museum of Modern Art). Copyright John Baldessari, courtesy of the artist.

Contemporary artists continue to use a varied vocabulary of abstract and representational forms to convey their ideas. It is important to remember that the art of our time did not develop in a vacuum; rather, it reflects the social and political concerns of its cultural context. For example, artists like Judy Chicago, who were inspired by the feminist movement of the early 1970s, embraced imagery and art forms that had historical connections to women.

In the 1980s, artists appropriated the style and methods of mass media advertising to investigate issues of cultural authority and identity politics. More recently, artists like Maya Lin, who designed the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Wall in Washington D.C., and Richard Serra, who was loosely associated with Minimalism in the 1960s, have adapted characteristics of Minimalist art to create new abstract sculptures that encourage more personal interaction and emotional response among viewers.

These shifting strategies to engage the viewer show how contemporary art's significance exists beyond the object itself. Its meaning develops from cultural discourse, interpretation and a range of individual understandings, in addition to the formal and conceptual problems that first motivated the artist. In this way, the art of our times may serve as a catalyst for an on-going process of open discussion and intellectual inquiry about the world today.

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Figure 8.1.3: More Smarthistory images…

The Case for Copying

by THE ART ASSIGNMENT



Video 8.1.1: Speaker: Sarah Urist Green

The YBAs: The London-based Young British Artists

by ROSE AIDIN



Figure 8.1.4: Rachel Whiteread, Holocaust Memorial, Judenplatz, Vienna, steel and concrete, 2000

"Young British Artists" (or YBAs as they swiftly became known) is now something of a misnomer. For this group of artists can no longer be described as young—they are mostly now in their fifties—and they are very international, and barely share a common style. Yet this small group of London-based artists, who came to prominence in the nineties, changed the international art world. The YBA phenomenon directly contributed to the climate of acceptance of modern and contemporary art in the U.K. which enabled the success of Tate Modern when it opened in 2000. The YBA remain a powerful force in the international art world today.

I first encountered the Young British Artists as a freelance journalist covering the arts for the mainstream press in the late nineties. By then art was no longer confined to single column reviews in remote arts pages, as it had been for decades. Instead, contemporary art was splashed over front and features pages. The Tate's annual **Turner Prize** for contemporary art had become headline news, with the award ceremony broadcast live on television, and for an intoxicating time, London was the center of the international creative world—all thanks largely to the YBAs.

So who and what are the YBAs?

The YBAs were a loose and disparate group, very much associated with London in the 1990s and the period of increased pride in popular British culture dubbed "Cool Britannia." YBA artists included Jake and Dinos Chapman, Tracey Emin, **Damien Hirst**, Gary Hume, Sarah Lucas, **Chris Ofili**, Marc Quinn, Sam Taylor-Johnson, Mark Wallinger, and Rachel Whiteread. Many of the artists had studied together at Goldsmiths College of Art in London, which had abolished the traditional separation between art forms (painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking) and focused on **conceptual art**, however there is no one single YBA style or approach. The work can be shocking, conceptual, or even traditional in its formal features: the principal link between the YBAs was social and attitudinal.

The majority of the artists came from non-establishment backgrounds, had grown up with Margaret Thatcher as prime minister and, perhaps as a result, had acquired an entrepreneurial, "can-do" approach to art and life. Then in their twenties and thirties, these artists were often glamorous and generally loved to party, and the nineties art world—and "Cool Britannia"—was happy to give them free rein.

Damien Hirst, *Freeze*, and Charles Saatchi

So how did the YBAs come into being? Damien Hirst was de facto ringleader of the YBAs. In 1988, while studying at Goldsmiths College, Hirst curated and promoted a "pop up" exhibition in an empty warehouse of work by him and his peers, entitled *Freeze*. Charles Saatchi, an advertising titan and art collector, bought work from Hirst's *Freeze* show and from the fledging artists' representatives. In 1992, the phrase "Young British Artists" was first used by *Art Forum* magazine to describe the group, and when

Saatchi exhibited their work at his 30,000 square foot space in a converted paint factory in North London that same year, he entitled the show *Young British Artists*. And so a new movement was born. The work was new, fresh, and exciting: immediately accessible to the public, yet also with high art resonances and references.

The most expensive fish without chips



Figure 8.1.5: Damien Hirst, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*, 1991, glass, painted steel, silicone, monofilament, shark and formaldehyde solution (private collection) at *Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection*, the Brooklyn Museum, October 2nd, 1999–January 9th, 2000



Figure 8.1.6: Damien Hirst, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* at the Saatchi Gallery, 1991

Damien Hirst's *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* of 1991, a shark suspended and preserved in a tank of formaldehyde, looked sensational in the Saatchi Gallery's warehouse-style setting in the 1992 *Young British Artists* exhibition. *The Sun* tabloid newspaper ran a story about the piece entitled "£50,000 for fish without chips?" and "the shark" became an icon of nineties art and culture. As a result, Hirst was shortlisted for that year's Turner Prize, and in 1995 was awarded the prize, which was presented to him by Charles Saatchi. The YBA star was firmly in the ascendant.

Hirst's Turner Prize exhibition included ***Mother and Child Divided*** (1993), a cow and calf cut in half and preserved in a vitrine of formaldehyde. The work caused outrage among the animal-loving British public. Hirst commented, "I remember what Warhol said: you don't read your reviews, you weigh them." He might well have added another of Warhol's aphorisms: "Making money is art. And working is art. And good business is the best art."

YBAs at the heart of the establishment



Figure 8.1.7: ***Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Gallery*** at the Royal Academy, London

It was Charles Saatchi again, master of both presentation and media coverage, who positioned the YBAs firmly in the mainstream of popular culture with the 1997 exhibition *Sensation*, which filled the Royal Academy in London with 110 works by 42 artists from Saatchi's personal collection. It was the year that Princess Diana died and Tony Blair became Prime Minister. The country was ripe for a change. The YBA's column inches became column miles: the exhibition was visited by 285,000 people, almost half of them aged under thirty. A new audience and climate had been created for modern art. Contemporary art was now at the fore of public consciousness.

The path to Tate Modern

Until Tate Modern opened in 2000, London was the only major European city without a public art gallery for modern and contemporary art. Britain was resolutely philistine about the visual as epitomized by a controversy in 1976 triggered by the display of Carl Andre's ***Equivalent VIII*** (1966) as a recent acquisition at the Tate Gallery in Millbank (now Tate Britain). *The Evening Standard* referred to the sculpture as a "pile of bricks." Public outrage and protest focused on the expenditure of "tax payers' money" on this **Minimalist** work made of manufactured bricks. Evidently, much needed to change before a museum of modern art would be welcome in London. Private funds would be required in order for public collections to acquire modern and contemporary art, and ultimately to support a London museum dedicated to its display.

In 1984 the Tate's annual Turner Prize for new art was founded with the long-term goal of creating an open and understanding climate for modern and contemporary art. By the mid-nineties, thanks to the nominated Young British Artists' high profile and pulling power, the Turner Prize had become a major annual event, with record-breaking numbers of visitors to the Tate's exhibition of short-listed artists, and its gala dinners and prize-giving ceremonies avidly attended and covered, with the likes of Madonna presenting the prize. The purpose of the Turner Prize was accomplished, thanks in great part to the YBAs, and the public made ready for the opening of Tate Modern.

"Art is power"



Figure 8.1.8: Tate Modern from the Millennium Bridge, photo: **Michael Day** (CC BY-NC 2.0)

When Tate Modern (a museum dedicated to modern and contemporary art) opened in London in May 2000, its launch party for 4,000 people was the hottest ticket in town, and broadcast live on the BBC. Invitations were said to be changing hands for up to £1,000 and some left town rather than admit they were not on the list. “Everyone” was there, yet it was the Young British Artists who had done so much with their talent, energy and glamour to bring the art world’s focus to London for the first time in centuries (and to create a climate of acceptance for contemporary art), who provided the stardust. The YBAs ensured that Tate Modern’s opening party was the place to be and the museum was an instant success, with visitor numbers vastly higher than anticipated.

As the artistic duo **Gilbert & George** said as they opened the building earlier that day in front of the Queen of England, “Art is power.” The YBAs ruled the establishment: the artists were celebrities and everyone wanted to know more about them. And that, for a while, was how I made my living. Then it all suddenly came to an end, with 9/11 as a marker. Shortly after the twin tower attacks, Charles Saatchi closed the private gallery that had done so much to incubate the YBA movement, and there was a sense of moving on. I went into teaching and now teach the work of many of the artists I interviewed. The young adults I teach are consistently fascinated by the YBAs’ work, which speaks very strongly to them, and convinces me that even now—long after the parties and the scene have faded—the work itself will endure and stand the test of time.

Additional resources:

Tate on the Young British Artists

Damien Hirst: Art and Life (video)

The Saatchi Gallery on *Sensation* at the Royal Academy

Tate on The Turner Prize

Tate archive on Carl Andre’s *Equivalent VIII* and the “Bricks controversy”

Tate archive on the opening of Tate Modern

Rose Aidin, “The Comeback King,” *The Saturday Telegraph Magazine* (October 2, 2001)

Rose Aidin, “Brit Art’s square dealer moves on,” *The Guardian* (September 22, 2002)

“Tate Gallery Buys Pile of Bricks—Or Is It Art?,” The New York Times (February 20, 1976)

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8.2: Appropriation and ideological critique

Appropriation and ideological critique

Contemporary artists use copying and other visual methods to deconstruct the myths that inform our daily lives.

1980 - present

Masami Teraoka, *American Kabuki*

by EMMA ACKER AT THE FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.2.1: Masami Teraoka, *American Kabuki (Oishiiwa)*, 1986, watercolor and sumi ink on paper mounted on a four-panel screen, 196.9 x 393.7 x 3 cm (de Young Museum, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco), © Masami Teraoka Seeing America video Speakers: Emma Acker, Associate Curator of American Art, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and Steven Zucker

Additional resources:

This painted screen at the de Young Museum, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

Ai Weiwei

The Case for Ai Weiwei

by THE ART ASSIGNMENT



Video 8.2.2: Speaker: Sarah Urist Green

Additional resources:

Ai WeiWei's website

Ai WeiWei on Art21

Ai Weiwei, *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn*

by TIFFANY WAI-YING BERES

How can the destruction of an artifact also be an act of preservation? *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn* (1995) by **Ai Weiwei** is a highly provocative work of art. This series of three black and white photographs portray the artist holding a 2,000-year-old Han dynasty urn that, frame by frame, he drops, it falls, and shatters. As much a work of photography as a work of **performance art**, in each still an unaffected Ai looks directly at the camera aware of his destructiveness. In fact, to capture the action on film (rather than digital photography, which lets you review the image immediately), the artist actually broke two ceramic vessels, just in case. This kind of blatant destruction of artifacts may seem highly irreverent, yet it also forces viewers to consider issues of transformation and destruction of the past.



Figure 8.2.1: Ai Weiwei, *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn*, 1995 (printed 2017), Three gelatin silver prints, 148 x 121 cm each (photo: © Ai Weiwei)

Ai Weiwei

Born in Beijing, China, in 1957, Ai Weiwei is an activist, filmmaker, curator and one of the world's most famous artists. Ai began his artistic career in New York City, where he lived from 1981 to 1993. When he returned to China in the mid-90s, a time of rapid modernization for his home country, he was shocked to discover that certain objects of **cultural patrimony** were not highly valued. Ai explains that when he came across these Han dynasty ceramic objects, they were just a dime a dozen: "I still have a photo of when I was in Xi'an. There was a farmer sleeping on top of these two urns waiting for someone to pay him a few hundred yuan. For him that was a few months' salary, but even then nobody wanted them." [1] Ai realized that during that period, most of his fellow countrymen were not nearly as interested in their country's historic art objects as he was. For this reason, Ai began collecting antiquities, particularly ancient vessels and furniture, and eventually began converting these objects into contemporary artworks. Whether he reworks a discarded four-hundred-year-old wooden stool into a standing sculpture or creates an installation from hundreds of salvaged blue and white ceramic shards, Ai is interested in giving these historical found objects a second life as contemporary art.



Figure 8.2.2: Shang Dynasty jade from the tomb of Fu Hao, 1300-1046 B.C.E., Anyang, China (photo: © National Museum of China, Beijing)

Historical legacy

This kind of repurposing of the past also relates to Chinese aesthetics and culture. In China, there is a long and rarified tradition of collecting ancient material remains and transforming them into new art. For millennia before the advent of modern scientific archeology, rulers and elites collected ancient materials and acted to preserve them or emulate them in new works, whether it was preserving important documents by recording them on durable surfaces like stone steles or incorporating ancient designs into bronze or ceramics. For example, Fu Hao's tomb in Anyang, a Shang dynasty (1600-1046 B.C.E.) royal burial tomb excavated in the 1980s, enabled scholars to push the history of antique collecting in China back to the thirteenth century B.C.E. The 775 **jade** carvings found in this tomb of a powerful Shang queen included both a collection of prehistoric jades as well a collection made in her era but modeled on earlier **Neolithic** prototypes. [2] This is an important revelation because it suggests that more than three thousand years ago, antique collections were already providing references and inspirations for making new works of art. This tradition of collecting and revitalizing antiquity has encouraged generations of Chinese artists and craftsmen to look to the past in making contemporary art.



Figure 8.2.3: Tomb of Fu Hao, late 13th century B.C.E., Shang dynasty, Anyang, China (photo: **Gary Todd**, CC0 1.0)



Figure 8.2.4: Ai Weiwei, *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn* (second image), 1995 (photo: © Ai Weiwei)

Act of revitalization?

Ai Weiwei has chosen an unusual way of continuing this legacy of transforming the material past while at the same time expressing dissent against a country that sometimes obliterates its own cultural heritage: through direct confrontation. On the one hand we can view his work as a destruction of another artist's work; on the other, Ai's act can also be thought of as a kind of collaboration with an ancient artist over thousands of years—a revitalization. Once an ancient receptacle, the urn in *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn* takes on new meaning as contemporary art. In Ai's work, the object is less a vessel than an emblem of Chinese history. For this performance, it seems that the object selection is almost immaterial—it might as well have been any ancient object. However, in recognition of Ai's own celebrity, the artist has transformed this urn into something of great significance just by selecting it to become the subject of his art, by including its name in the title, and, of course, by destroying it. The sensationalism of breaking something so old and rare is what modern audiences find so compelling. Here the nostalgia for what once was serves as a mirror, reminding us that China's past remains important and relevant today.

Destruction as preservation

The event that Ai Weiwei created and captured in these photographs is one of violence. Many feel that it is unethical to destroy an artifact under any circumstances—that such an act indicates a lack of value and respect. Indeed, law professor Joseph Sax calls such destruction a kind of "unqualified ownership" because it enables "the indulgence of private vice to obliterate public benefits." [3] Certainly, the destruction of art for ideological or egoistic reasons reflects badly on a collector of ancient objects. Yet was *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn* a true obliteration? The Han dynasty urn still exists for the public but it has been transformed into the form of captured film stills. The loss of one object gives the new artwork its potency.



Figure 8.2.5: Ai Weiwei "According to What" exhibition, Art Gallery of Ontario, (photo: **Joseph Morris**, CC BY-ND 2.0)

Ai himself says that he considers the act of dropping the urn one of creation rather than destruction: "People always ask me: how could you drop it? I say it's a kind of love. At least there is a kind of attention to that piece [because of the photograph]." [4] From

the artist's point of view, his act was one of preservation through transformation. Indeed, this triptych (set of three photographs) and the shadow of the vessel captured within it now receive unprecedented attention. These photographs are displayed in museums and public institutions around the world. The work is widely available online, and even the focus of academic essays like this one. Given Ai's own celebrity status and the significance of this artwork, *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn* is also now far more valuable than the original ceramic object. In 2016, this limited edition work **sold for nearly 1 million dollars** at Sotheby's Auctions in London. [5]

Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn is one of many works by Ai Weiwei that focuses on heritage loss and the importance of the past. According to the artist, "the power [of my artwork] comes not from the act but from the audience's attention, the challenge to their values. The act is easy—every day we can drop something, but it is when we are forced to come face to face with this action and make a judgment … that is the interesting part." [6] Ultimately the work demands a judgment: was the provocation and the global attention Ai garnered for the urn worth the destruction of the urn itself? This set of photographs encourages its viewers to question value of antiquity in our modern world and whether it is worth preserving.

Notes:

1. Tiffany Wai-Ying Beres, "A Battlefield of Judgments: Ai Weiwei as Collector," *Orientations* 46, no. 7 (2015), pp. 87–92.
2. Wu Hung, ed., *Reinventing the Past: Archaism and Antiquarianism in Chinese Art and Visual Culture* (Chicago: Art Media Resources, 2010), pp. 16–39.
3. Joseph L Sax, "Collectors: Private Vices, Public Benefits," in *Playing Darts with a Rembrandt: Public and Private Rights in Cultural Treasures* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), p. 63.
4. Beres, p. 92.
5. Sotheby's Auction: www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/lot.42.html/2016/contemporary-art-evening-auction-l16020
6. Beres, p. 92.

Additional resources:

Ai Weiwei's website

The Art Assignment, "The Case for Ai Weiwei"

Ai Weiwei, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)*

by MEGAN LORRAINE DEBIN



Video 8.2.3: Video from **Tate**

Subversive seeds

Ai Weiwei often uses his art to critique political and economic injustice. This can be seen in work such as his 2010 installation, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)* at Tate Modern, London.



Figure 8.2.6: Ai Weiwei, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)*, 2010, one hundred million hand painted porcelain seeds (photo: **Drew Bates**, CC BY 2.0)

Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds) consists of more than 100 million tiny, handmade porcelain sunflower seeds, originally weighing in at 150 tons. They filled the enormous Turbine Hall at Tate Modern, an industrial building-turned-contemporary art space. Sunflower seeds evokes a warm personal memory for the artist, who recalls that while he was growing up, even the poorest in China would share sunflower seeds as a treat among friends. The use of sunflower seeds as the basis of his installation was also designed to subvert popular imagery rooted in the artist's childhood. Communist propaganda optimistically depicted leader Mao Zedong as the sun and the citizens of the People's Republic of China as sunflowers, turning toward their chairman. Ai Weiwei reasserts the sunflower seed as a symbol of camaraderie during difficult times.



Figure 8.2.7: Ai Weiwei, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)*, 2010, one hundred million hand painted porcelain seeds (Tate Modern, London)

Though each of the 100 million carefully crafted individual seeds can draw the viewer's attention, once arranged together in a neat rectangle, or covering the floor of an entire room, the hyper-realistic seeds create a sense of vastness. In the Tate installation, there was a sense of precision in the arrangement of the seeds, creating visual order and uniformity. The individual seed is lost among the millions, a critique of the conformity and censorship inherent in modern China.



Figure 8.2.8: Ai Weiwei, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)*, 2010, one hundred million hand painted porcelain seeds (Tate Modern, London) (photo: **Waldopepper**, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Made In China

More than 1,600 artisans worked to make the individual porcelain seeds by hand in Jingdzhen, the city known as the "Porcelain Capital," where artists have been producing pottery for nearly 2000 years. Porcelain, first produced during the Han dynasty in about 200 B.C.E. and later mastered during the Tang dynasty, is made by heating white clay (kaolin) to a temperature over 1200 degrees Celsius. The fusion of the particles within the clay during firing allowed artists to create vessels with thin but strong walls. Porcelain— a symbol of imperial culture in China—was also made for export via the Silk Road and became important to the creation of the idea of China in the West.



Figure 8.2.9: Some of the 1,600 highly skilled craftspeople from Jingdezhen hired to create and paint porcelain sunflower seeds

Ai Weiwei's use of porcelain comments on the long history of this prized material while also rejecting the common negative connotations of the modern term "Made in China." Utilizing skilled artisans known for their exquisite craftsmanship to make objects that can only be differentiated one from another upon close inspection, alludes to the important porcelain tradition in Jingdzhen, as well as to the uniformity and diffusion of modern (cheap and fast) labor that is responsible for China's hard-won place in the world economy. *Sunflower Seeds* asks us to examine how our consumption of foreign-made goods affects the lives of others across the globe.

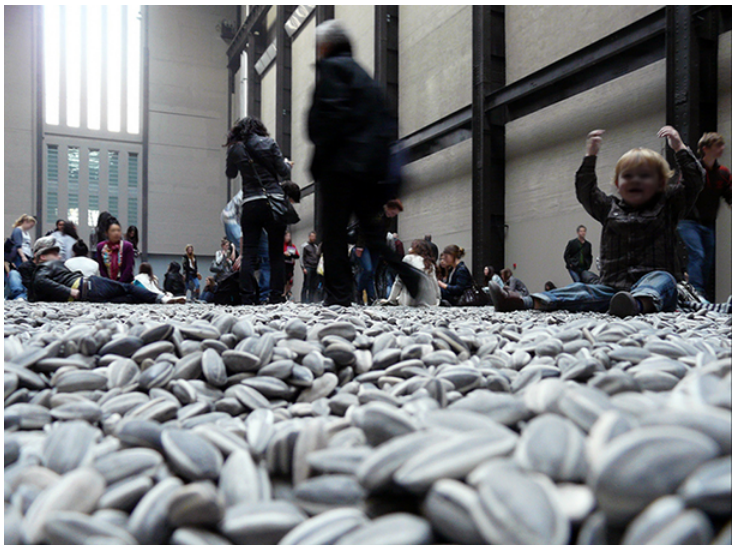


Figure 8.2.10: Ai Weiwei, Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds), 2010, one hundred million hand-painted porcelain seeds (Tate Modern, London) (photo: Loz Flowers CC BY-SA 2.0)

How we experience an artwork impacts our perception of the work. In the tradition of participatory contemporary art, *Sunflower Seeds* asks the public to physically interact with the art. Initially, Tate visitors were invited to walk over and lie on the seeds, though the museum, in consultation with the artist, suspended this opportunity about a week into the exhibition because of safety concerns.

Art and activism

Ai Weiwei was arrested at the Beijing Capital International Airport on April 3, 2011 during his Tate exhibition.[1] He was detained for 81 days. The artist, along with many in the international community, asserted that his true offense was his political activism for democracy and human rights. Ai Weiwei had blogged for four years—investigating cover-ups and corruption in the government's handling of a devastating 2008 earthquake in Sichuan and the country's hosting of the Olympics. Ai Weiwei's blog was shut down in 2009. Since then, he has turned to Twitter and Instagram. During his detention, the international community, including major US art institutions, rallied for his release. Officials eventually released him, charging Ai Weiwei with tax evasion, but his passport was withheld, preventing him from leaving the country for four years. It was returned in 2015.



Figure 8.2.11: Ai Weiwei's continues to address issues of human rights in his work. The 2015 exhibit *@Large*, installed on Alcatraz, the former island prison in the San Francisco Bay, comments on surveillance, freedom, and political prisoners by mixing fine and traditional arts with pop culture materials including silk dragon kites and Lego portraits (above).

[1] Andrew Jacobs, "China Takes Dissident Artist Into Custody," *The New York Times*, 4/3/11, A4

Additional resources:

You can follow Ai Weiwei on Instagram and Twitter @aiww

More information on Ai Weiwei's Sunflower Seeds

Sunflower Seeds exhibition at the Tate

Ai Weiwei from art21

Ai Weiwei, *Remembering* and the Politics of Dissent

by JP MCMAHON



Figure 8.2.12: Ai Weiwei, *Remembering*, 2009, backpacks on the facade of the Haus der Kunst* (Munich)

Dangerous Art

All art is political in the sense that all art takes place in the public arena and engages with an already existing ideology. Yet there are times when art becomes dangerously political for both the artist and the viewers who engage with that art. Think of Jacques-Louis David's involvement in the French Revolution—his individual investment in art following the bloodshed —and his imprisonment during the reign of terror. If it were not for certain sympathisers, David may well have ended up another victim of the guillotine. Goya is another example of an artist who fell foul of government power. There are instances in the 20th century when artists have faced down political power directly. Consider the photomontages of John Heartfield. Heartfield risked his life at times to produce covers for the magazine A/Z, which defied both Hitler and the Nazi Party.

Ai Weiwei

The Chinese artist, Ai Weiwei, offers is an important contemporary example. In 2011, Weiwei was arrested in China following a crack down by the government on so-called "political dissidents" (a specific category that the Chinese government uses to classify those who seek to subvert state power) for "alleged economic crimes" against the Chinese state. Weiwei has used his art to address both the corruption of the Chinese communist government and its outright neglect of human rights, particularly in the realm of the freedom of speech and thought. Weiwei has been successful in using the internet (which is severely restricted in China) as a medium for his art. His work is informed by two interconnected strands, his involvement with the Chinese avant-garde group "Stars" (which he helped found in 1978 during his time in the Beijing Film Academy) and the fact that he spent some of his formative years in New York, engaging there with the ideas of conceptual art, in particular the idea of the readymade. Many of the concepts and much of the material that Weiwei uses in his art practice are informed by post-conceptual thinking.



Figure 8.2.13: Ai Weiwei, *Sunflower Seeds*, 2010, one hundred million hand painted porcelain seeds (Tate Modern)

An International Audience



Figure 8.2.14: Handpainted seeds (detail), Ai Weiwei, *Sunflower Seeds*, 2010, one hundred million hand painted porcelain seeds (Tate Modern)

Weiwei has exhibited successfully in the West in many major shows, for example, the 48th Venice Biennale in Italy (1999) and Documenta 12 (2007). He also exhibited *Sunflower Seeds* (October, 2010) in the Turbine Hall in the Tate Modern. In this work, Weiwei filled the floor of the huge hall with one hundred million porcelain seeds, each individually hand-painted in the town of Jingdezhen by 1,600 Chinese artisans. Participants were encouraged to walk over the exhibited space (or even roll in the work) in order to experience the ideas of the effect of mass consumption on Chinese industry and 20th-century China's history of famine and collective work. However, on October 16, 2010, Tate Modern stopped people from walking on the exhibit due to health liability concerns over porcelain dust.

"…a natural disaster is a public matter."

Perhaps the work that contributed most to Weiwei's current imprisonment and the destruction of his studio was his investigation of corruption in the construction of the schools that collapsed during the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan, China. Like many others, Weiwei investigated how improper material and the contravention of civil engineering laws led to the wholesale destruction of schools (which led in turn to the deaths of thousands of children trapped within them), Weiwei has produced a list of all the victims of the earthquake on his blog. This act is typical Weiwei's use of the internet to communicate information. This information is his "art", in much the way that American artists of the late 1960s used words and ideas as art.



Figure 8.2.15: Visitors entering the Ai Weiwei show *So Sorry* in the Haus der Kunst (detail), Ai Weiwei, *Remembering*, 2009, backpacks on the facade of the Haus der Kunst* (Munich)

So Sorry

In his retrospective show *So Sorry* (October 2009 to January 2010, Munich, Germany), Weiwei created the installation *Remembering* on the façade of the Haus der Kunst. It was constructed from nine thousand children's backpacks. They spelled out the sentence "She lived happily for seven years in this world" in Chinese characters (this was a quote from a mother whose child died in the earthquake). Regarding this work, Weiwei said,

> ***The idea to use backpacks came from my visit to Sichuan after the earthquake in May 2008. During the earthquake many schools collapsed. Thousands of young students lost their lives, and you could see bags and study material everywhere. Then you realize individual life, media, and the lives of the students are serving very different purposes. The lives of the students disappeared within the state propaganda, and very soon everybody will forget everything.***

The title of the show referred to the apologies frequently expressed by governments and corporations when their negligence leads to tragedies, such as the collapse of schools during the earthquake. Two months before the opening of this exhibition Weiwei suffered a severe beating from Chinese police in Chengdu in August 2009, where he was trying to testify for Tan Zuoren, a fellow investigator of the shoddy construction and the student casualties. Weiwei underwent emergency brain surgery for internal bleeding as a result of the assault.

The Arrest



Figure 8.2.16: Blue, yellow, and red backpacks (detail), Ai Weiwei, *Remembering*, 2009, backpacks on the facade of the Haus der Kunst* (Munich)

On April 3rd 2011, Weiwei was arrested at Beijing's airport while while waiting for a flight to Hong Kong. While his detention is broadly believed to be linked to his criticism of the Chinese government, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared that he is "under investigation for alleged economic crimes." Weiwei's participation in the Jasmine Rallies, a series of peaceful protests which took place all over China in February, no doubt contributed to his arrest.

Additional Resources:

*Historical Note on the Haus der Kunst: The Haus der Kunst (designed by Paul Ludwig Troost, "first master builder to the führer") was sited by Adolf Hitler and sought to express Nazi ideology by using stone from German quarries and with its references to the work of Klenze and Schinkel. From its opening in 1937, the Haus der Kunst held exhibitions glorifying the "Blood and Soil" propaganda of the Nazi regime.

Ai Weiwei's TED Video

Tate Modern: Sunflower Seeds Video

Simon Elegant, "Ai Weiwei: Interview Transcript", *Time*, May 12, 2009

Roberta Smith, "12 Heads Do the Talking for a Silenced Artist," *The New York Times*, May 2011

Hans Haacke, *Seurat's "Les Poseuses" (small version), 1884-1975*

by SAL KHAN, DR. BETH HARRIS and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.2.4: Hans Haacke, *Seurat's "Les Poseuses" (small version), 1884-1975*, 1975

Keith Haring, *Subway Drawings*

by DR. AMY RAFFEL

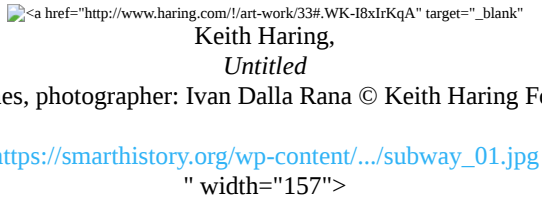


Figure 8.2.17: **Keith Haring, *Untitled*, 1984, chalk on paper, 88 1 /2 x 46 inches, photographer: Ivan Dalla Rana © Keith Haring Foundation**

An international art star, Keith Haring and his work have often been characterized as quintessentially of the eighties—an embodiment of the decade's street art, hip hop, and urban energy in New York. While his career involved a diverse range of art making—painting, drawing, performance, video, murals, and art merchandising—his subway drawings stand among his most well-known and celebrated work.

Haring drew over 5,000 chalk drawings over a five-year period, from 1980 to 1985, in New York City subway stations (visit the **Keith Haring Foundation website** to see his work year by year). Since the beginning of his career, Haring was determined to create art that could be for everyone, both through an accessible style and by locating his work in easily reachable, public locations. Creating art on the street meant that a bigger audience could see his work, outside of the more insular space of an art gallery.

Previous Street Art

Haring's subway drawings were not his first intervention into public, urban space. In New York City, early in 1980, he began to subtly alter street advertisements, such as one for Chardón Jeans, in which he blocked out letters, so the ad read "hard on Jeans." He also posted small collages on street lamps made up of images appropriated from print media and bits of painted paper. In the summer of 1980, Haring made more overtly political collages by cutting and rearranging headlines from the *New York Post*, to say things like "**REAGAN SLAIN BY HERO COP**" and "POPE KILLED FOR FREED HOSTAGE." He xeroxed these works by the hundreds and posted them all over the city in an effort to undermine the political conservatism of the period. These early experiments helped set the stage for Haring's subway drawings.

Subway Drawings



Figure 8.2.18: **Keith Haring working in the subway. Photographer, Chantal Regnault 1983**

In late 1980, Haring noticed that New York City subway's blank advertising spaces were covered with black matte paper when advertising subscriptions expired. He immediately purchased some chalk, and started drawing. Over the next five years, this became a daily, repetitive obsession: he would ride the subway, look for these empty spaces of black paper, and draw quickly—without any preparation—and then leave on the next train. Through incessant repetition,Haring's subway drawings allowed him to perfect his highly recognizable reduced linear vocabulary, and to create an inventory of images. Simplification was practical: he needed to complete his drawings as fast as possible to avoid being arrested. He created characters, such as the barking dog and the radiating baby, which he drew on flat planes with no spatial depth, often with only a horizon line or a staircase to suggest space. Drawn close to the surface like cartoons, his images had immediacy and impact, and could carry multiple meanings through various combinations.

The **radiant baby**, for example, could represent birth or purity, but could also be read as a symbol of nuclear energy or bodily corruption depending on what he drew around it. Haring intentionally sanitized the subject matter of his subway drawings, leaving out any explicit sexual and political imagery. He wanted his audience, which included children, to enjoy his works. This made his drawings more ambiguous to an extent, but also more outwardly positive and universal in theme. This work, though, while

seemingly straightforward, did incorporate some darker references, including generalized themes of oppression and the abuse of power (image below left), but these were often simplified to such an extent that they remained open to multiple interpretations.



Figure 8.2.19: **Keith Haring, *Untitled* (Subway Drawing), 1982, chalk on paper @ Keith Haring Foundation**

Graffiti scene

Haring's arrival in New York coincided with graffiti's peak in 1978-79, when artists covered subway cars, walls, and storefront gates throughout the city. Haring's well-defined style benefited from graffiti, which offered lessons in how to make graphic images visible in a cluttered urban environment and stressed the importance of motion, speed, and improvisation. Haring never considered himself to be a graffiti artist however. His subway drawings significantly differed from graffiti in location, timing, and medium. Haring often used white chalk and worked during the day so that he could interact with his audience. In contrast, graffiti artists usually used spray paint or markers, working at night. Graffiti encompassed a subculture at the social margins of New York City that excluded artists like Haring both racially and socio-economically.

Downtown Arts Scene

Other artists of Haring's generation worked within the public spaces of New York City to create and display art including **Jean-Michel Basquiat**, Kenny Scharf, Barbara Kruger, Jenny Holzer, and Richard Hambleton. In addition the artist collectives Colab, Fashion Moda, Gran Fury, and Group Material used the street as canvas. Like Haring, these artists experimented with alternate distribution systems to expand their reach outside of the commercial art world. Through posters, billboards, or small sculptures, or by engaging the community through artist-run events, pop-up exhibition spaces, or activist demonstrations, these downtown artists (like Haring) regularly put their art and ideas on the street to be enjoyed, and to inform and involve the public. Their intention was inclusion, rather than to alienate or confuse.

Burgeoning Celebrity

Haring drew several works of art every day, over many years in the New York City subway, a system used by millions of people. While he made his subway drawings for free, they proved to be a promotional tool that catapulted him into the public spotlight and helped launch his gallery career. In effect, he co-opted spots meant for advertising and campaigned for himself. His drawing was also performative—often attracting an audience captivated by his quick actions and improvisation. He promoted his subway work in other media, including one instance in which a friend taped one of his arrests by the MTA police, which was then featured on CBS News on a nationwide special. He also designed buttons illustrating his characters and gave away thousands to subway riders. Attached to shirts and bags, these buttons enhanced the visibility of his work.

In 1982, Haring joined the Tony Shafrazi gallery, but continued to work in the subway. This was a strategy he used throughout his career: operating in both the contemporary art world and in public spaces. His gallery career helped to fund his time making street art for free, and they both reinforced his public presence. Eventually, Haring's popularity meant that his work in the subways became so valuable that people began to steal panels as soon as he drew them, ending this phase of his work. He continued to create art for all through posters and prints, merchandising, and large scale public murals in cities around the world. Before Haring became a worldwide celebrity, however, he was a local celebrity—generating his first fame through his subway drawings.

Additional resources:

The Keith Haring Foundation

Henry Geldzhaler, Introduction to *Art in Transit*

Michael Auping, *Urban Theater: New York Art in the 1980s* (New York: Rizzoli, 2014).

Peter Belsito, *Notes from the Pop Underground* (Berkeley, CA: Last Gasp of San Francisco, 1985).

Jeffrey Deitch and Carlo McCormick. *Keith Haring: 31 Subway Drawings* (New York: Art Issue Editions, 2012).

John Gruen, *Keith Haring: The Authorized Biography* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1991).

Keith Haring and Robert Harris Thompson, *Keith Haring Journals* (New York: Viking, 1996).

Tseng Kwong Chi and Henry Geldzahler, Keith Haring, *Art in Transit: Subway Drawings* (New York: Harmony Books, 1984).

Keith Haring: Journey of the Radiant Baby (Piermont, N.H.: Bunker Hill Pub., 2006).

Cedar Lewisohn, *Street Art: The Graffiti Revolution* (New York: Abrams, 2008).

Anselm Kiefer

Anselm Kiefer, *Shulamite*

by REBECCA TAYLOR



Figure 8.2.20: Anselm Kiefer, *Shulamite*, 1983, oil, emulsion, woodcut, shellac, acrylic, and straw on canvas, 213 x 145″ / 541 x 368.3 cm (Doris and Donald Fisher Collection) © Anselm Kiefer, courtesy of the artist

> ***Black milk of morning we drink you at night***
> ***we drink you at noontime Death is a gang-boss aus Deutschland***
> ***we drink you at dusktime and dawntime***
> ***we drink and drink Death is a gang-boss aus Deutschland his eye is blue***
> ***he shoots you with leaden bullets his aim is true***
> ***there's a man in this house your golden hair Margareta***
> ***he sets his dogs on our trail he gives us a grave in the sky***
> ***he cultivates snakes and he dreams Death is a gang-boss aus Deutschland***
> ***your golden hair Margareta***
> ***your ashen hair Shulamite***

—the final lines of Paul Celan's poem, "Death Fugue," published 1947 (trans. Jerome Rothenberg)

Breaking postwar silence

Born in Germany just months shy of the end of World War II, Anselm Kiefer came of age in the late 1960s when the silence surrounding the crimes of the Nazi regime was ruptured by a vocal younger generation horrified by their collective German "past," struggling to reconcile such shame and redefine what it meant to be German in a post-Nazi world.

For Kiefer, who had studied with the artists Peter Dreher in Karlsruhe and Joseph Beuys in Dusseldorf, painting became the arena to vocalize and elucidate his contempt for the Nazis and their reprehensible legacy, instilling every brush stroke with palpable rage, grief, and shame. In the 1970s, Kiefer developed a signature style that was influenced in part by the Neo-expressionist style of Georg Baselitz, but also by his teacher Beuys, particularly Beuys's tendency to use commonplace materials, such as fat and felt within his artistic practice. Kiefer augmented his thick layers of impasto with lead, glass, straw, wood, dried flowers, and more, yielding highly textured, viscous surfaces. As his list of materials grew, so too did the scale of his canvases, which though large and formidable, felt ephemeral and fragile as a result of the materials he utilized.

A thick impasto

All of the canonical elements of Kiefer's work are present in *Shulamite*—a thick impasto resulting from a hardened mixture of oil, acrylic, emulsion, and shellac; a brittle, textured surface infused with commonplace materials (in this case, straw and ash); mythological or biblical references (Shulamite refers to the heroine in the Song of Solomon); a literary reference (Celan's "Death Fugue"); and a historical subject or location (a Nazi Memorial Hall in Berlin).

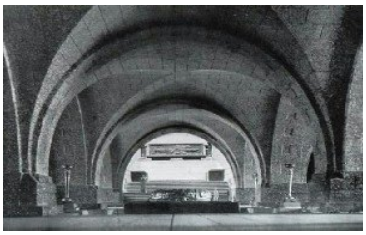


Figure 8.2.21: Wilhelm Kreis, Funeral Hall for the Great German Soldier in the Hall of Soldiers, c. 1939 (Berlin)

Kiefer's hall is not a memorial to great men with patriotic flags waving boldly, but a gateway to damnation, a dark and foreboding road to hell, enclosed by low arches and paved with massive stones —the whole mise-en-scène (a stage set that tells a story) suggestive of an oven (immediately bringing to mind the hyperactivity of the crematoria at the Nazi death camps). Sulamith, is inscribed in the upper left hand corner, a graffiti-like testament in white paint upon the stone, to Celan's brave young Jewish girl consumed by this living hell, who came to her death in a chamber such as this because she had not the golden hair of Aryan Margarete but the dark "ashen hair" of Shulamite. Kiefer transformed architecture meant to honor Nazi heros into a memorial for their victims.

Emotional honesty

Comparisons to Jackson Pollock in terms of both scale and expressive, gestural style are understandable, but for me Kiefer's paint handling is even more reminiscent of Vincent van Gogh, in terms of raw beauty and emotional honesty. Just as van Gogh's paint can transport me into the Dutch or French countryside and fill my nose with the smell of fresh sunflowers or irises, so too can Kiefer transport me to another place in time and space—but rather than a hayfield in Holland it is the dark abyss of a concentration camp with the stomach-churning smell of burning flesh sullying the air.

Special thanks to Sandy Heller, The Heller Group, LLC

Additional Resources:

Paul Celan, Death Fugue, Copyright © 2005 by Paul Celan and Jerome Rothenberg. From Paul Celan: Selections. Reprinted with permission of the University of California Press. Poets.org

Nicolas Wroe, "Life in Art: Anselm Kiefer," essay in the Guardian Newspaper, March 18 2011

Anselm Kiefer, *Bohemia Lies by the Sea*

by COREY D'AUGUSTINE and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.2.5: The conservator's eye: Anselm Kiefer, *Bohemia Lies by the Sea*, 1996, oil, emulsion, shellac, charcoal, and powdered paint on burlap, 75 1/4 in. × 18 ft. 5 inches / 191.1 × 561.3 cm (The Metropolitan Museum of Art). Speakers: Corey D'Augustine and Steven Zucker.

Julie Mehretu, *Stadia II*

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG



Figure 8.2.22

Opening / Ceremonies

When looking at *Stadia II*, first try to isolate the black lines from the rest of the composition. Does this centrifugal structure remind you of a sports arena, an amphitheater or opera house? Perhaps a political chamber? It could denote all of these, broadly invoking our experiences as individuals and collective bodies in such spaces. The built environment, for Mehretu, provides a setting in which people can gather, protest, pray, and riot in mass numbers.

Now, try to imagine yourself in a large stadium, at an important athletic championship such as the FIFA World Cup or the Olympics. How do the crowds behave? What types of phrases or slogans are they shouting, and at what volume? Think about the matching clothing and the painted faces of spectators wearing team colors, or the flags and banners that they wave over their heads.

In her monumental paintings, murals, and works on paper, Julie Mehretu overlays architectural plans, diagrams, and maps of the urban environment with abstract forms and personal notations. The resulting compositions convey the energy and chaos of today's globalized world. *Stadia II* is part of a triptych of works created in 2004, and explores themes such as nationalism and revolution as they occur in the worlds of art, sports, and contemporary politics.

Gaze back into the painting and observe the various shards of color floating over the work's architectural skeleton. The scene, however abstract, could easily represent our visualization of the sports arena. Small circles, dots, and hash marks float through the open space at the center of the composition, resembling the eruption of confetti that announces a winning team's victory (or, alternately, that of a lucky political candidate on Election Day).



Figure 8.2.23: Julie Mehretu, detail, *Stadia II*, 2004, ink and acrylic on canvas, 108 x 144″ (Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh) (© Julie Mehretu)

Notice the larger circles, triangles, blocks and parallelograms that float across the upper register. Far from arbitrary, these basic pictorial elements could comprise the designs of nearly any country's national flag. The cluster of red and blue stripes, for instance, located along the top-right edge of the canvas, resemble the American flag, without necessarily resolving into a perfect match. We

may also find corporate logos and religious symbols interspersed throughout; Mehretu is intentional in drawing analogies between these forms and the propagandistic ways in which they are often used.

Lastly, observe the painterly grey marks that seem to rise from the lower and central registers like plumes of smoke. Stadiums and capital buildings can represent triumph, pride and celebration, but they are also common targets for bombings and acts of terror, which are often motivated by a comparable degree of zealousness and ideological fervor.

Process

Mehretu's working process begins with the projection of maps and diagrams onto the work's blank surface. From these, the artist makes traces and hash marks that eventually grow into characters and communities. The first layer is coated with an acrylic-and-silica mixture that seals the drawing under a transparent ground. After drying, this ground is itself overlaid with more figures and photographs that are again assimilated into the composition.

The artist describes her final product as containing a "stratified, tectonic geology (…) with the characters themselves buried—as if they were fossils."[1] This distinct sense of temporality serves as a metaphor for history, memory, and the legacies of past cultural epochs that still influence contemporary life.

Utopian Abstraction

While nationalism, sports and global politics are key points of entry into the work, Mehretu also considers art historical precedents for these themes.

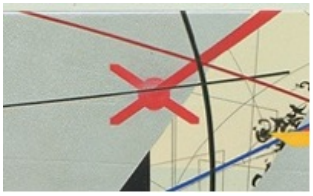


Figure 8.2.24: Julie Mehretu, detail, *Stadia II*, 2004, ink and acrylic on canvas, 108 x 144″ (Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh) (© Julie Mehretu)

Take a look at the orange diamonds at the side edges, the black quadrilaterals interspersed above, or the dynamic red "X" found at the top edge. These lines and shapes are unmistakable references to the Russian constructivist and Bauhaus movements of the early twentieth century, and to artists such as Alexandr Rodchenko, Kasmir Malevich, El Lissitzky, and Wassily Kandinsky. These artists conceived of pure abstraction as a way to wipe clean the slate of history and to promote universalism and collectivity in art, politics and culture.

Mehretu has long explored the use of abstraction in service of revolution and utopian politics throughout the history of Modernist art, "I am (…) interested in what Kandinsky referred to in 'The Great Utopia' when he talked about the inevitable implosion and/or explosion of our constructed spaces out of the sheer necessity of agency. So, for me, the coliseum, the amphitheater, and the stadium are perfect metaphoric constructed spaces."[2] These can represent both the organized sterility of institutions and the "chaos, violence, and disorder" of revolution and mass gathering.

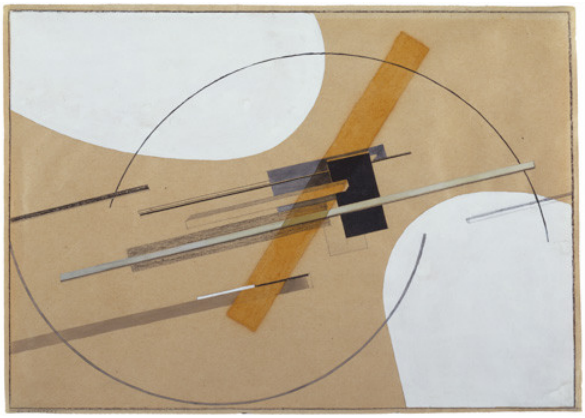


Figure 8.2.25: El Lissitzky, *Proun (Entwurf zu Proun, S.K.)*, 1922-23, watercolor, gouache, india ink,graphite, conté crayon, and varnish on buff paper, 8 7/16 × 11 3/4″ / 21.4 × 29.7 cm (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York)

Global Networks

Because Mehretu builds her piece from multiple layers of figure and ground alike, the colors, shapes, and planar forms in *Stadia II* seem to be suspended between surfaces, and are often caught in a swirling motion around the axis of her compositions. The dynamism of the work makes reference to traffic patterns, wind and water currents, migrations, border crossings and travel.

Depicting patterns of movement, Mehretu emphasizes, on one hand, the militarization of bodies moving within and between national (or digital) spaces, and acknowledges the increasing speeds at which the world seems to be moving. Yet, while her compositions might be vertiginous and disorienting at times, we are given a chance to reflect on the potential and importance of such interconnectedness.

Born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Mehretu has lived in Michigan, Rhode Island, and Dakar Senegal, and now resides in New York City.

1. Julie Mehretu, quoted in Thelma Golden, "Julie Mehretu's Eruptive Lines of Flight as Ethos of Revolution," in *Julie Mehretu: The Drawings*, ed. Catherine de Zegher and Thelma Golden, New York, NY: Rizzoli, 2007.

2. Julie Mehretu, "Looking Back: Email Interview between Julie Mehretu and Olukemi Ilesanmi, April 2003" in *Drawing into Painting*, Minneapolis, MN: Walker Art Center, 2003: 13-14.

Doris Salcedo, *Shibboleth*

by DR. DORIS MARIA-REINA BRAVO

The Turbine Hall

Since 2000, the Tate Modern has commissioned installations (the Unilever series) for the museum's enormous Turbine Hall, including Olafur Eliasson's *The Weather Project* (2003) and Ai Weiwei's *Sunflower Seeds* (2010). In the eighth iteration, the Colombian artist Doris Salcedo produced *Shibboleth*, a deep meandering crack in the floor. Despite the unassuming nature of this work, it defies neat description and exists in a limbo between sculpture and installation; and the provocative title complicates the work instead of decoding it.

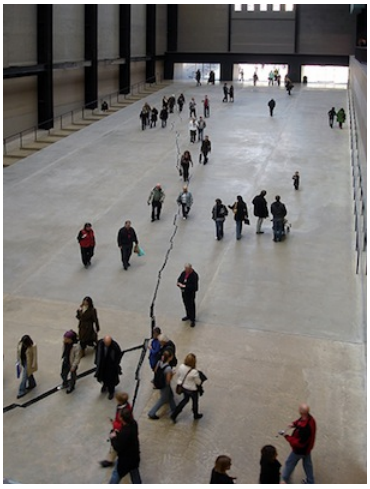


Figure 8.2.26: Doris Salcedo, *Shibboleth*, 2007-08, installation, Tate Modern © Doris Salcedo (photo: Nuno Nogueira/Nmnogueira, CC BY-SA 2.5-altered)

Salcedo has offered few explanations beyond stating how the fissure represents the immigrant experience in Europe. Though this theme is apparent in the work, it is by no means the only issue raised. As photographs of the installation demonstrate, visitors contorted their bodies in infinite ways as they tried to see below the crack. In *Shibboleth*, Salcedo elaborates a complex socio-political topic in a work with a tremendous formal presence.

Coded identification

Salcedo's installation requires attentive viewing. The rupture measures 548 feet in length but its width and depth vary (changing from a slight opening to one several inches wide and up to two feet in depth). The viewer's perception into the crevice alters, as he or she walks and shifts to better glimpse inside the cracks and appreciate the interior space, notably the wire mesh embedded along the sides.



Figure 8.2.27: Doris Salcedo, *Shibboleth*, 2007-08, installation, Tate Modern (photo: Chris Geatch, CC BY-NC 2.0-altered)

Change in perspective is one of Salcedo's goals. She quotes the Frankfurt School theorist Theodor Adorno: "We should all see the world from the perspective of the victim, like Jewish people that were killed with their head down in the Middle Ages. So he wonders, what is the perspective of a person that is agonizing in this position?"

To go from viewing this installation as a fissure in concrete to an artwork about the disenfranchised may seem like a big step. It is helpful to think of *Shibboleth* as a work of conceptual art since the ideas that frame the physical crack in the floor are of equal, if not greater importance than the material work itself. Salcedo's installation at the Tate Modern would be completely different if it were simply untitled; indeed, the analysis of the work would then settle exclusively on its formal qualities. But Salcedo has bestowed a curious and specific name: "Shibboleth," a codeword that distinguishes people who belong from those who do not.



Figure 8.2.28: Doris Salcedo, *Shibboleth*, 2007-08, Tate Modern (photo: Dallas Ewing, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0-altered)

Every community, culture, and nation has its shibboleth. Among the U.S. military, "lollapalooza" was used during World War II since its tricky pronunciation could identify native, English-speaking Americans. But the sinister history of the word "shibboleth" illustrates how friends and enemies are separated by fine, linguistic lines. Any stranger in a foreign land appreciates the vulnerability this entails, especially the fear of being outed as a foreigner and exposed in a hostile environment.

Irrevocably "other"

Salcedo's experience as a Colombian artist working abroad has made her especially sympathetic to the plight of marginalized people. Between 2002 and 2003, Salcedo completed two installations that make this clear. In the first work, the artist staged a performance where she lowered empty wooden chairs over the side of the Palace of Justice in Bogotá. The performance lasted 53 hours and commemorated the 1985 siege in that building where three hundred people were held hostage; the siege ended in a bloody confrontation between rebels and the military.

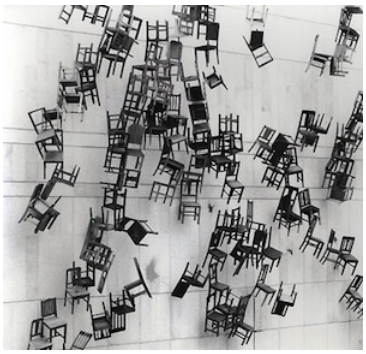


Figure 8.2.29: Doris Salcedo, *Noviembre 6 y 7*, 2002, Supreme Court, Bogotá © Doris Salcedo

The second installation also honored the victims of senseless violence. Salcedo piled more than 1,500 chairs into a space between two buildings in Istanbul. The breathtaking sight of this nearly three-story sculpture highlighted how warfare disrupts everyday life and creates refugees out of ordinary citizens as it recalls the countless shoes discovered at concentration camps at the end of World War II.

For Salcedo, the ravine in the Tate Modern's floor represents the immigrant experience in Europe, notably the racial segregation that marks people from the third-world as irrevocably "other," a permanent state apart. Yet, the artist offers some hope. After seven months, the show ended and the Tate Modern filled the crack, leaving a scarred floor. This is a remarkable symbol of the possibility of healing through figurative and literal closure; however, the mark is also an obstacle to any attempts to erase the past.



Figure 8.2.30: Shibboleth filled, Tate Modern (photo: Damien Everett, CC BY 2.0-altered)

Sources

From an institutional perspective, this scar is remarkable for other reasons: it is usually unimaginable for museum officials to permit an artist to permanently alter the exhibition space.



Figure 8.2.31: Lucio Fontana, *Spatial Concept: Expectations*, 1960, slashed canvas and gauze, 100.3 x 80.3 cm (MoMA) © 2013 Fondation Lucio Fontana

Salcedo's act remains transgressive: the act of deliberately breaking one's media (in this case a concrete floor) is an act of rebellion. In this way, *Shibboleth* joins a tradition of artists experimenting with surface. In the late 1940s Lucio Fontana developed "Spazialismo," an approach to art-making that converted the two-dimensional canvas into a three-dimensional space. Fontana

slashed his monochrome canvases, and revealed a new space underneath the gashes. The artist's bold move to disrupt the canvas's nearly sacred surface was revolutionary and influenced later artists.



Figure 8.2.32: Gordon Matta-Clark, *Splitting*, 1974

Throughout the 1970s Gordon Matta-Clark sawed into the walls, floors, and ceilings of buildings, often leaving cracks like the line of light in *Splitting* (1974). For centuries, a canvas was a flat plane, the support for an image rather than an object in its own right. A building by definition sought to be structurally sound; any structural damage makes it unstable and dangerous. To highlight their subversion, these artists flaunt the negative space made by their incisions: Matta-Clark's cuts in *Splitting* are illuminated by blinding light, while Fontana's slashes and Shibboleth each reveal a startlingly dark void previously unseen.

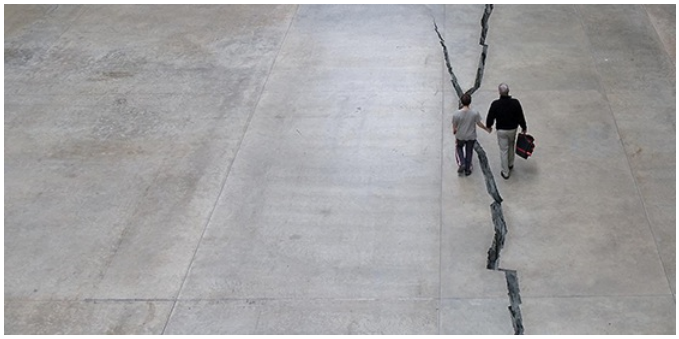


Figure 8.2.33: Doris Salcedo, *Shibboleth*, 2007-08, Tate Modern (photo: Wonderferret, CC BY 2.0-altered)

Meanings

Matta-Clark, Fontana, and Salcedo create art that is difficult to classify. Is this painting? sculpture? architecture? installation? intervention? Salcedo's strength as an artist is her ability to balance the formal impact of *Shibboleth* with its message, while preventing one from overshadowing the other. Salcedo's reticence to discuss her process and meaning at length is our opportunity to develop infinite interpretations.

Cindy Sherman

Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still #21*

by DR. SHANA GALLAGHER-LINDSAY and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.2.6: Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still #21*, 1978, gelatin silver print, 7.5 x 9.5 inches or 19.1 x 24.1 cm (MoMA)

Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #228*

by MARY BETH LOONEY



Figure 8.2.34: Cindy Sherman, *Untitled #228*, from the History portraits series, 1990, chromogenic color print, 6′ 10 1/16″ x 48″ (208.4 x 122 cm) (The Museum of Modern Art)

This photograph is from Sherman's History Portraits series—where she draws inspiration from the history of art.

Description

The artist depicts herself in costume, standing in front of printed textiles parted slightly to reveal darkness beyond. She wears a red satin, full length dress, which is cinched by a dark blue sash across the shoulders, just under the bust line, and also well below a seemingly swollen abdomen. A gold sash wraps around her head and neck and drapes over each shoulder. In one hand she holds the head or mask of an old person, with a wrinkled, receding hairline, a large nose and bloodshot eyes. In the other hand, which is bloody, she holds a knife.

The figure tilts her head slightly to one side as she gazes at the viewer with a blank expression. The face is artificially made up with thin, arching brows and lips stained red in the center to suggest that they are puckered, as if about to kiss. Bare feet point outward, and appear enlarged in proportion to the rest of the figure.

Judith

In *Untitled #228*, Sherman cites the story of Judith and Holofernes—a popular subject during the Renaissance and Baroque periods (especially the 16th-17th century).

The Book of Judith (included In some versions of the Bible), recounts the story of Judith, who, to save her people (the Israelites in the town of Bethulia) from the Assyrian King Nebuchadnezzar, entered the tent of the invading general (named Holofernes), who found her attractive. She seduced him into drinking too much, and then beheaded him. In triumph, she brought the severed head back to the Jewish people.



Figure 8.2.35: Elisabetta Sirani, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, 1638-55, oil on canvas, 129.5 x 91.7 cm (The Walters Art Museum)

For Renaissance and Baroque audiences, the story of Judith and Holofernes symbolized triumph over tyranny (much like the story of David and Goliath). Painters such as Caravaggio, Artemisia Gentileschi and Elisabetta Sirani provided patrons with select stages in the story—at times depicting Judith in the act of severing Holofernes' head, sneaking away from the darkened enemy encampment while carrying the severed head, or marching forward in triumph, holding aloft the head by the hair, as the citizens of Bethulia look on.

Sherman's photographic interpretation of this subject conflates two of those picture types. While Judith (enacted by Sherman herself) stands, holding the general's head in a fully lit space, the array of printed textiles draped behind her evokes a middle Eastern motif—referencing Holofernes' tent. The darkened parting between two cloths implies that Judith has just left.

The subject is pushed forward in the picture plane, backgrounded by the row of hanging textiles (this treatment of space is typical of Baroque art of the 17th century). She occupies a shallow stage. Her feet splay outwards, perhaps as a reminder of proto-Renaissance artists' struggles with foreshortening of forms intended to project towards the viewer (see frescos by Giotto, for example).



Figure 8.2.36: Raphael, *The Small Cowper Madonna*, c. 1505, oil on panel, 59.5 x 44 cm (National Gallery of Art)

In a nod to Raphael's many High Renaissance Madonna images (right), the rich primary colors of red, blue and yellow figure prominently, and the two heads, arms and hand form a small, triangular composition within an otherwise vertically oriented format. The suggestion of a swollen abdomen may refer to Renaissance era fashion, in which women's empire-waisted garments deemphasized natural waists and hips. It may also be a way of conflating the figure of the Virgin Mary of the New Testament—typically portrayed in reds and blues in the Renaissance period—with the Old Testament heroine Judith.

Props

Sherman's work in this series is characterized by the blatant use of props and prosthetic devices. The full mask or head appears to be a store-bought "fright mask" typically used for Halloween. It is a jarringly out-of-place element in an image that historically featured a somewhat younger adult man. Both the rounded belly and the overly large feet are also obvious prosthetic enhancements. Sherman's facial makeup exaggerates the overall effect of artificiality.



Figure 8.2.37: Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith and Holofernes*, 1620-21, oil on canvas, 162.5 x 199 cm (Uffizi Gallery, Florence)

Sherman asks the viewer to consider layers of un-realities, beginning with the props and prosthetics she has employed in the image. Sherman herself is a prop: a real stand-in for the idealized Judiths of art history. As the props undermine the seriousness with which we might consider the scene, the image also questions the complex implications of a violent murder. As in many of the historical paintings, Judith's hands are bloody, but her garments and face remain clean. Her face—like the bland faces of so many other images of Judith is matter-of-fact, revealing no trace of the grim act that was purportedly committed (the exception to this is

Artemisia Gentileschi's *Judith*). The direct studio lighting of Sherman's image dampens the drama and further heightens the artificiality of the scene.

The artist invites the viewer to consider how all of these matters converge in a photograph. In the early 19th century, painters struggled to supplant or utilize the technical advantages of photography. Both painting and photography can and do afford the opportunity for invention. By adopting contrivances from prior centuries and adding multiple contemporary contrivances to her interpretation, Sherman's *Untitled #228* both blatantly exposes and provides an art historical context for her contemplations on the nature of narrative and pictorial invention.

Additional resources:

Smarthistory essay on Gentileschi's *Judith Slaying Holofernes*

Cindy Sherman from Art21

Interview with Sherman from the Walker Art Center

Cindy Sherman at MoMA

Kara Walker, *Darkytown Rebellion*

by DR. DORIS MARIA-REINA BRAVO

Brilliant patterns

The Art of Kara Walker, a "PBS Culture Shock" web activity, tests the participant's tolerance for imagery that occupies the nebulous space between racism and race affirmation. Though the activity gives the participant only two options at the end (whether or not to feature one of Walker's silhouettes on the "Culture Shock" homepage), the activity explores the multiple and complex reactions Walker's work elicits. Yet to focus solely on the controversy Walker's art generates is a disservice to her artistic training and the strength of her art, especially in a stunning and absorbing installation like *Darkytown Rebellion*. Here, a brilliant pattern of colors washes over a wall full of silhouettes enacting a dramatic rebellion, giving the viewer the unforgettable experience of stepping into a work of art. Walker's talent is not about creating controversy for its own sake, but building a world that unleashes horrors even as it seduces viewers.



Figure 8.2.38: Kara Walker, *Darkytown Rebellion*, 2001, cut paper and projection on wall, 4.3 x 11.3m, (Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg) © Kara Walker

In contrast to larger-scale works like the 85 foot, *Slavery! Slavery!* (1997), *Darkytown Rebellion* occupies a 37 foot wide corner of a gallery. This ensemble, made up of over a dozen characters, plays out a nightmarish scene on a single plane: one figure stands upright over his severed limb, despite his bleeding leg stump, with bones protruding from his hips; another figure, also exhibiting a severed limb, rolls on his back; a woman with a bonnet and voluminous hoop skirt may be attacking a smaller figure on its back, perhaps a crying baby, with a long, plunger-like instrument.

Silhouettes and concealment

What is most remarkable about these scenes is how much each silhouette conceals. Without interior detail, the viewer can lose the information needed to determine gender, gauge whether a left or right leg was severed, or discern what exactly is in the black

puddle beneath the woman's murderous tool. The color projections, whose abstract shapes recall the 1960s liquid light shows projected with psychedelic music, heighten the surreality of the scene.

Walker is a well-rounded multimedia artist, having begun her career in painting and expanded into film as well as works on paper. The layering she achieves with the color projections and silhouettes in *Darkytown Rebellion* anticipates her later work with shadow puppet films.

In addition to creating a striking viewer experience, *Darkytown Rebellion* reflects on the historical representation of African Americans in American visual culture. From the infamous Brookes slave ship print (1789), to *Birth of a Nation* (1915) to the Aunt Jemima logo (c.1890-today), powerful visuals shape African-American stereotypes and inform how popular culture perceives this community. Walker is one of several African-American women who use art to engage with and challenge visualizations of race within popular culture; others include Renee Cox, Adrian Piper, and Faith Ringgold.

Perverse ingenuity

Walker anchors much of her work in documents reflecting life before and after the Civil War. *The Daily Constitution 1878* (2011) emerged after Walker read an 1878 article from the eponymous Atlanta newspaper about a mob lynching a black woman and the brutal way the tree flung the woman's body into the air. Walker converted the article into a drawing because, as she stated, "it's this completely absurd, extreme, violent situation that required so much perverse ingenuity."[1]

Darkytown Rebellion is also born from a desire to translate the past into visual form. Walker discovered a landscape painting in *American Primitive Painting*, a book featuring artwork by unschooled artists. One anonymous landscape, mysteriously titled *Darkytown*, intrigued Walker and inspired her to remove the over-sized African-American caricatures. She placed them, along with more figures (a jockey, a rebel, and others), within a scene of rebellion, hence the re-worked title of her 2001 installation. Through *Darkytown Rebellion*, Walker is not attempting to correct a late-nineteenth century depiction of African-Americans but rather to broach a discussion: are these merely images from the past or do these caricatures still resonate in the twenty-first century?

Incomplete histories

Walker's dedication to recovering lost histories through art is a way of battling the historical erasure that plagues African Americans, like the woman lynched by the mob in Atlanta. Though this lynching was published, how many more have been forgotten? Who was this woman, what did she look like, why was she murdered? The impossibility of answering these questions finds a visual equivalent in the silhouetted voids in Walker's artistic practice.

Silhouettes began as a courtly art form in sixteenth-century Europe and became a suitable hobby for ladies and an economical alternative to painted miniatures, before devolving into a craft in the twentieth century. Traditionally silhouettes were made of the sitter's bust profile, cut into paper, affixed to a non-black background, and framed. Except for the outline of a forehead, nose, lips, and chin all the subject's facial details are lost in a silhouette, thus reducing the sitter to a few personal characteristics. In Walker's hands the minimalist silhouette becomes a tool for exploring racial identification. All things being equal, what distinguishes the white master from his slave in *Darkytown Rebellion*? Walker forces the viewer to confront the visual cues that make up stereotypes: these cues distill human forms into basic and arbitrary shapes that compose the basis of racial discrimination.

Though *Darkytown Rebellion* is full of shapes lacking detail, Walker reserves sharp outlines for faces and limbs. Walker's silhouettes are (mostly) full-bodied figures, captured in various poses from the traditional profile, to a three-quarter turn, to full frontal. This plurality of poses, often in a single body, is another example of obscured detail within the silhouette tradition: here not only is the face absent, but the body's action is also ambiguous. As mentioned earlier, it is impossible to make out which leg is severed on the standing figure near the corner, yet Walker manages to give the gory details of that man's tragedy. If traditional silhouettes illustrated a contained shape, Walker's figures overflow these boundaries, whether through graphic violence or metaphorically, in terms of subject matter.

Getting at the truth

In contrast to *The Daily Constitution 1878*, which was born from a news article, Walker herself developed the narrative for the orphaned figures that compose *Darkytown Rebellion*. Though the title suggests a historical event, both the original nineteenth-century painting and Walker's response are visual inventions rather than documents in a traditional sense. Walker enjoys this ambiguity between history and fiction: "I'm not making work about reality; I'm making work about images. I'm making work about fictions that have been handed down to me, and I'm interested in those fictions because I'm an artist, and any sort of attempt at getting at the truth of a thing, you kind of have to wade through these levels of fictions, and that's where the work is coming from."[2]

Darkytown Rebellion does not attempt to stitch together facts, but rather to create something more potent, to imagine the unimaginable brutalities of an era in a single glance.

1. Laura Barnett, "**Kara Walker's Art: Shadows of Slavery**," *The Guardian* (October 10, 2013)

2. "**Kara Walker Rattles Art World Again**," NPR (March 07, 2008)

Art, Race, and the Internet: Mendi + Keith Obadike's *Black.Net.Art Actions*

by DR. MEGAN DRISCOLL



Figure 8.2.39: Logo for *New Black Portraitures*, Rhizome website

Looking at the landscape of the internet today, it's hard to imagine conversations about race not being a central part of net culture. Consider "Black Twitter," a concept that goes beyond user demographics to describe the significant role the internet plays in promoting dialogues about race in all parts of our lives.[1] Or spend some time exploring the many social media accounts dedicated to the cultural heritage of specific racial and ethnic groups, from **influential Asian Pacific Islander women** to **artists of Africa and the African diaspora**. You'll also find these conversations happening in art-specific venues like Rhizome, which in 2017 hosted *First Look: New Black Portraitures*, a primarily online exhibition that links the history of portraiture to questions surrounding blackness, representation, and image making in our networked present.[2]

However, net culture looked very different back in the 1990s when internet use first started to become popular. It's not that no one was talking about race online—there were actually quite a few email lists and other proto-social networks focused on race and ethnicity—but these discussions tended to be ignored in the mainstream, or simply treated as peripheral.[3] Cyber enthusiasts had long promoted the misguided perception that virtual communication could allow users to interact without the prejudices associated with physical difference such as race, gender, or disability.[4] When advertisers seized on this premise as a strategy for making the strange new world of the internet seem more approachable, they popularized the idea that, to quote a **1997 internet ad for telecom MCI**, on the internet "there is no race." In fact, the notion that race was simply irrelevant to life online became so prevalent that sociologist Alondra Nelson once declared it the "founding fiction of the digital age."[5]

During this same period internet art, or net art, was becoming a more widely recognized category of artistic practice. Like in the rest of net culture, race was not a common topic in early net art—but that doesn't mean there weren't artists addressing it.[6] Here, we'll focus on Mendi + Keith Obadike's *Black.Net.Art Actions* (2001–2003), a suite of retroactively grouped artworks that argue that racial discourses aren't just relevant online, they are essential to how we interact with computer networks.



Figure 8.2.40: Mendi + Keith Obadike, *Blackness for Sale*, 2001, online performance from *Black.Net.Art.Actions* (**Rhizome**)

Blackness for Sale

In 2001 the Obadikes released ***Blackness for Sale***, an online performance in which they attempted to auction Keith's Blackness on eBay. It received twelve bids over four days before eBay shut the project down, calling it "inappropriate." The item description includes benefits like "This Blackness may be used for making jokes about black people and/or laughing at black humor comfortably" as well as warnings like "The Seller does not recommend that this Blackness be used while voting in the United States or Florida."[7] The work thus reminds us that "Blackness" never just refers to a value-neutral color or the hue of a person's skin. Rather, it is bound to a complex history, simultaneously recalling the experiences of one individual and the condition of race relations across the United States.

By highlighting the field of meaning that surrounds language, *Blackness for Sale* also directs attention to how we talk about the platform that hosted it: eBay. As Keith Obadike has pointed out, many of the words we use to describe our activities online also describe the activities of colonization and slavery.[8] We cross the new electronic frontier, taking browsers like Navigator, Explorer, and Safari to plunder the Amazon and trade in the eBay. There we find representations of the Black body returned to the auction block, not just in this artwork but in the mammy figurines and other racist memorabilia sold alongside it as "Fine Arts and Black Americana."[9] *Blackness for Sale* argues that this digital frontierism is ideologically linked to the "real world" histories of colonialism and the slave trade, histories that cannot be divorced from how we interact online. In other words, even though our internet exchanges may appear to be virtual and therefore disembodied, what MCI called "communicating mind to mind," we still come to those exchanges with the experiences of our bodies and all of the histories that shape them.



Figure 8.2.41: Mendi + Keith Obadike, *The Interaction of Coloreds*, 2002, website originally produced for the Whitney Museum's Artport gate page program (**Rhizome**)

Website for the Whitney Museum

The Obadikes continued their investigation into how color and race signify online with ***The Interaction of Coloreds*** (2002), a website they originally produced for the Whitney Museum's now-defunct **Artport gate page program**. Both the work's title and the grid format of its opening page reference Josef Albers's *Interaction of Color* (1963), a modernist text that theorizes the relationship between color and personal preference. Moving your mouse over that grid reveals famous lyrics from a Big Bill Broonzy song that remind us how such color preferences emerge in our ideas about race: "if you're white you're right / if you're black get back / if you're brown stick around / if you're yellow you're mellow."



Figure 8.2.42: Mendi + Keith Obadike, *The Interaction of Coloreds*, Color Check, 2002, website originally produced for the Whitney Museum's Artport gate page program (**Rhizome**)

When you enter the main site you find the IOC Color Check System®, which the artists describe as a "brown paper bag test for the internet."[10] Using photographs of applicants' skin alongside answers to a "Hyper-Race Analysis" questionnaire, the System promises to return a precise hexadecimal color for your skin. This is a six digit HTML (hypertext markup language) code that tells

your web browser what color to show you—or, in this case, assigns a color value to a human being. Now, the System exults, "Websafe colors aren't just for webmasters," a reference to the fact that when IOC was produced there were only a limited number of "websafe" codes that would display consistently on all browsers. By proposing that the color of a person can also be used to designate her as "websafe," IOC demonstrates how social meanings are reasserted when human beings interpret the apparently neutral mathematical system of HTML. In the Color Check System® the "true white" of #FFFFFF is like the "right white" of the Big Bill Broonzy song, representing not just a full amount of additive light but also a full human being. And the #000000 of "absolute black" ("get back") doesn't just signify a lack of light; it signifies the lack of humanity too often associated with blackness. (Or, as *Blackness for Sale* put it, "The Seller does not recommend that this Blackness be used while making intellectual claims.")



Figure 8.2.43: Mendi + Keith Obadike, *The Interaction of Coloreds*, top of System, 2002, website originally produced for the Whitney Museum's Artport gate page program (**Rhizome**)

The IOC Color Check System® also invites us to consider for whom we are being designated "websafe." In addition to wry mentions of dating websites and airlines hoping to "offer lower rates on the web to customers with non-threatening bodies," the System suggests that it may be useful to a "new African-American web portal or an old Negro social club looking for a way to maintain your club's discriminating tastes in the information age." This is a reference to the racially oriented proto-social networks that flourished during the 1990s, such as the immensely popular BlackPlanet. Although these networks offered an important platform for many people who didn't see themselves reflected in other areas of internet culture, IOC points out that they also threatened to exaggerate racial segmentation and reduce Black internet users to a consumer category. In this way, the Obadikes not only challenge the idea that race is irrelevant on the internet, they also critique the assumption that simply having more Black people online will make the internet a more equitable place.[11]



Figure 8.2.44: Mendi + Keith Obadike, *The Pink of Stealth*, 2003, web interactive (**Mendi + Kieth Obadike**)

The Pink of Stealth or *Keeping Up Appearances*

The final work the Obadikes choose to include in the *Black.Net.Art Actions* varies depending on the url where it is accessed. In some publications it's ***The Pink of Stealth*** (2003); in others, it's ***Keeping Up Appearances*** (2001).[12] What these two works share in common is an emphasis on the gender and sexual politics that are only hinted at in *Blackness for Sale* and *The Interaction of Coloreds*. *Keeping Up Appearances* is a hypertextimonial poem by Mendi Obadike that explores the relationship between Blackness and femininity, in part through the visual signifier of the color pink. This signifier is picked up by *The Pink of Stealth*, which integrates a website, hypertext poem, sound collage, and Flash game to play with the different class, gender, sexual, and even health-related meanings that have been associated with pinkness over time. The inclusion of either work in the *Black.Net.Art Actions* rounds out the suite's focus on the multiple meanings of color language by insisting that racial discourses cannot be separated from their intersections with all of the other factors that influence our experiences—online as well as off.



Figure 8.2.45: Mendi Obadike, *Keeping Up Appearances*, 2001, hypertextimonial poem (**Rhizome**)

As discussed at the beginning, the fact that race no longer feels peripheral on the internet is a dramatic change from the years when the *Black.Net.Art Actions* were being produced. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the myth that race disappears online still shaped how many people understood the emancipatory potential of computer networks. The Actions helped to counter that myth by revealing how the histories that influence our ideas and experiences of race persist throughout our encounters on the network. In the process, these artworks also demonstrated that the relationship between race and computer networks is an essential subject for internet-based art.

Notes:

1. Donovan X. Ramsey and Meredith D. Clark, "The Truth About Black Twitter," *The Atlantic* (April 10, 2015), https://www.theatlantic.com/technolo...witter/390120/
2. Aria Dean, "An Introduction to New Black Portraitures," *Rhizome* (blog), October 26, 2017, http://rhizome.org/editorial/2017/oc...-portraitures/.
3. Email lists like the Afro-Am Listserv started popping up in the early 1990s, and by the end of the decade commercial enterprises like Community Connect were launching racially oriented social networks such as AsianAvenue and BlackPlanet. The latter quickly became a sprawling platform that would only be eclipsed in size and popularity by the rise of MySpace.
4. Two of the most well-known promoters of the model of the internet as disembodied home of the mind are John Perry Barlow, co-founder of the internet advocacy group the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), and Howard Rheingold, author of *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier* (1993), an oft-cited book on The WELL, the internet's first social network. This well-meaning argument is based on the assumption that a world of the mind would be inherently more just. However, it ignores the reality that embodied experience does shape life online, for better and worse, as well as the fact that not everyone is able to shed the histories associated with their bodily characteristics even in an apparently all virtual environment—nor does everyone want to.
5. Alondra Nelson, "Introduction: FUTURE TEXTS," *Social Text* 20, no. 2 (71) (Summer 2002): 1, https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-20-2_71-1. In 1998, Nelson founded the influential Afrofuturism online discussion group. While scholarship on race in early net culture was also relatively rare, she's not the only person working in this area. Other prominent voices include Lisa Nakamura, Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Jennifer González, and Tara McPherson.
6. It's important to note that while race wasn't central to early net art, it wasn't entirely marginalized either. Guillermo Gómez-Peña, the Mongrel group, Prema Murthy, Tana Hargest, and Mendi + Keith Obadike are just a few examples of artists who made relatively well-known work addressing the relationship between race and computer networks during the 1990s and early 2000s.
7. This is a reference to large-scale voter disenfranchisement in Florida during the 2000 US presidential election, which disproportionately affected Black voters. See Ari Berman, "How the 2000 Election in Florida Led to a New Wave of Voter Disenfranchisement," *The Nation*, July 28, 2015, https://www.thenation.com/article/ar...franchisement/.
8. Coco Fusco, "All Too Real: The Tale of an On-Line Black Sale; Coco Fusco Interviews Keith Townsend Obadike," September 24, 2001, http://blacknetart.com/coco.html.
9. This is the category to which the Obadikes submitted *Blackness for Sale* in 2001. eBay has since changed their categories, but a search for "Black Americana" still turns up plenty of racist memorabilia, much of it filed under "Ethnic & Cultural Collectibles."
10. The brown paper bag test is an historical form of colorism (racial prejudice within communities of color) that is said to have been used to admit—or deny—access to certain African American social institutions. Stories about this test claim that only those whose skin was lighter than a brown paper bag were allowed in.
11. The one area in which scholars did focus on the relationship between race and computer networks during this period was the question of access, often referred to as the "digital divide." While being able to use the internet had already become undeniably important, scholars such as Alondra Nelson argue that the digital divide narrative tends to frame Black people as inherently anti-technological while paying little attention to how race influences experience once people are online.

12. The Obadikes feature *The Pink of Stealth* as the third work in the *Black.Net.Art Actions* in Keith + Mendi Obadike, “The Black.Net.Art Actions: Blackness for Sale (2001), The Interaction of Coloreds (2002), and The Pink of Stealth (2003),” in *Re:Skin*, ed. Mary Flanagan and Austin. Booth (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), 245–50. It was later replaced by *Keeping Up Appearances* in the *Black.Net.Art Actions*’ **entry into the Rhizome Net Art Anthology**. Neither source is more authoritative; rather, this reflects the fluidity of internet art, which, like performance art, is often characterized by change over time.

Nari Ward, *We the People* (black version)

by DR. MINDY BESAW, CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.2.7: Nari Ward, *We the People (black version)*, 2015, shoelaces, 8 × 27 feet (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art), a Seeing America video

Smarthistory images for teaching and learning:

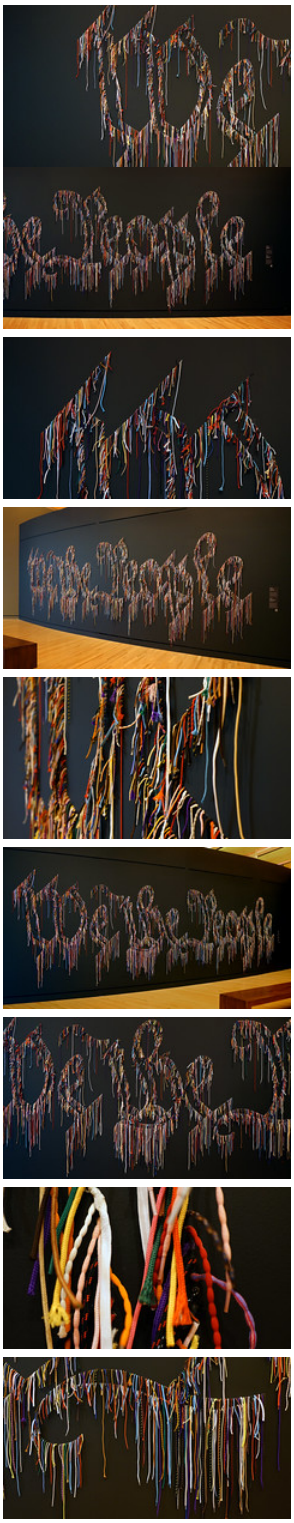


Figure 8.2.46: More Smarthistory images…

Alfredo Jaar, *A Logo for America*

by DR. DORIS MARIA-REINA BRAVO



Figure 8.2.47: Alfredo Jaar, *A Logo for America*, 1987, Spectacolor animation, Times Square, New York City, 42 seconds (photos: **Jane Dickson/Public Art Fund**)

In the spring of 1987, visitors to Times Square were confronted by a puzzling 45-second animation among the glittering billboards characteristic of this part of Manhattan. The animation consisted of three digital renderings that each combined images (maps and a flag) with simple lines of text. What mystified some viewers were not the images themselves, but the text that accompanied them: in the first frame, "This is Not America" was superimposed on a map of the United States; in the second frame, "This is Not America's Flag" was superimposed on the image of the United States flag; and in the last frame, the single word "AMERICA" was superimposed on the image of the North and South American continents together.

In less than a minute, artist Alfredo Jaar succeeded in provoking patriotic inhabitants of the United States by asserting that they are not the only "Americans." Jaar's message gave credence to a long-standing belief among Latin Americans in other countries that they, too, have the right to call themselves by that term. Nearly thirty years later, Jaar's *A Logo for America* remains a powerful example of art that uses the language of commercial advertising to convey a pointed political message.

Messages in Spectacolor



Figure 8.2.48: Catalina Parra, *USA, Where Liberty is a Statue*, 1987, Spectacolor animation, Times Square, New York City (photo: **Jane Dickson, Public Art Fund**)

In 1982, New York City's Public Art Fund launched the *Messages to the Public* program with the goal of exposing viewers to media-based artworks through Times Square's Spectacolor board. For nearly a decade, dozens of artists created short animations that would appear within loops of commercial advertising. A new "Message" would appear every month, providing the viewing public with a fresh animation. According to the project's originator, the painter Jane Dickson (who was working as a designer for Spectacolor at the time), the purpose was to inject a political message into daily life. "I picked that title," she said of *Messages to the Public*, "because I thought the propaganda potential from this project was terrific." [1] Other Latin American artists involved in the *Messages* project also used this opportunity to highlight their critical perspectives on U.S. culture. For example, Catalina Parra's *USA, Where Liberty is a Statue* (see image) critiques the promise of the modern immigrant experience using the country's most iconic symbol of liberty.

Jaar's message

Jaar illustrates two iconic symbols of the United States of America—the map of the country and the flag—and embeds them with messages that subvert their traditional meanings. The contrast is meant to pose the question, What exactly *is* America? As a potential answer, Jaar ends his animation with a rendering suggesting that the entire hemisphere is, in fact, "America." For those living in Mexico, Central, and South America, this is an argument that has often fallen on deaf ears. For example, it is common for someone from Chile—Jaar's country of birth—to simultaneously consider themselves a Chilean and an American. The distinction is simply the difference between national and continental affiliations. When Jaar was commissioned to create this work of art, he had only been living in the United States for a few years, and it would likely have struck him as odd to hear the term "America" being used to define only citizens of the United States.

Defining "America"



Figure 8.2.49: Alfredo Jaar, *A Logo for America*, 1987, Spectacolor animation, Times Square, New York City (Photos: Jane Dickson/Public Art Fund)

However, for many people living within the United States, this question is likely rarely, if ever considered: for them, "America" implies one country, one flag, and one nationality. According to Jaar, "Some of [the viewers] said live on national radio, 'This is illegal. How could they let him do this?' It is so embedded in their education that the U.S. is America, whereas the rest of the continent is erased." [2] Jaar elicited this reaction by appropriating a national symbol to critique mainstream ideas about Americanness—not only about the definition of the term itself, but the ways that the term's use in the United States implies superiority over other American countries and cultures. The final frame of his animation, which shows the outline of North, Central, and South America along with the word "AMERICA," is the new "logo" referenced in Jaar's title. It is a literal re-rendering—a "rebranding," to use the language of advertising—of the American continents that **Europeans encountered** in the late fifteenth century. Afterall, the lands of the Western hemisphere which came to be called America after the explorer and mapmaker Amerigo Vespucci, were perceived as one geographic entity, despite political subdivisions.



Figure 8.2.50: The first map to name America (after the explorer and cartographer, Amerigo Vespucci) and to show America and Asia as separate continents. Martin Waldseemüller, *Universalis Cosmographia*, 1507, composite map, 128 x 233 cm (**Library of Congress, Washington D.C.**)

Pop and propaganda

What does it mean to make this logo for America, a type of symbol normally used to represent products or corporations? A useful example can be seen in the earlier movement, **Pop Art**, and its use of consumer culture as a source of inspiration. Artists like Richard Hamilton, Roy Lichtenstein, and Andy Warhol appropriated the slick, graphic sensibility of mid-century advertising as well as the means and materials of industrial production. Warhol's *Brillo Boxes*, for instance, perfectly mimicked factory-made boxes, simultaneously drawing attention to the aesthetic appeal of what might otherwise be passed over as an unremarkable, mass-produced package, while critiquing high-minded notions of art that fetishized unique, handmade objects.



Figure 8.2.51: Andy Warhol, *Brillo Boxes*, c. 1964, house paint and silkscreen on plywood (Whitney Museum of American Art, photo: Dr. Steven Zucker)

However, unlike Warhol's *Brillo Boxes* which are exhibited within galleries and museums, *Messages to the Public* existed within a stream of actual advertising, emphasizing its critical opposition. Like the Pop artists before him, Jaar not only made use of the formal language of advertising, but in taking it out of the object-centric realm of the gallery and into the virtual space of the advertising screen, he also questioned the very definition of art-making, which he described as primarily a process of thinking:

> ***I think that artists are thinkers, they're intellectuals. And art is about thinking. For me, art is about 99% thinking and 1% making. So I spend most of my time, and I ask my students to spend 99% of their time, thinking. […] Only at the end of a very long thinking process [do] we make something […] And in my case I do not work with a specific medium. The medium I use is the one that I feel speaks the better for the ideas I'm working with. [3]***

Just as Jaar asserted the importance of thinking in creating his art, the viewer is also rewarded for investing time considering it—something one might not normally do in the face of advertising.

A Logo for America is still considered a seminal work of Latin American Art. It was acquired by the Guggenheim Museum as part of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative and was featured in the museum's 2014 exhibition, *Under the Same Sun: Art from Latin America Today*. Concurrent with this show, Jaar's video returned to Times Square for a month-long reenactment, playing every night on dozens of screens. Despite its simplicity, Jaar's message continues to stir emotions and serve as a daring intellectual exercise.

[1] Alfredo Jaar—Messages to the Public: A Logo for America," **Public Art Fund**.

[2] "In Conversation: Alfredo Jaar," **The Brooklyn Rail, April 6, 2009**.

[3] "Focus on: Alfredo Jaar," **Vogue Italia**.

Additional Resources:

This work at the Guggenheim

This work on the Public Art Fund website

Messages to the Public on the Public Art Fund website

Catalina Parra's *USA, Where Liberty is a Statue* on the Public Art Fund website

"A Logo for America" in the New Yorker, August 27, 2014

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8.3: Identity and the body

Identity and the body

Contemporary artists use the body as both medium and subject.

1980 - now

Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your gaze hits the side of my face)*

by DR. TOM FOLLAND

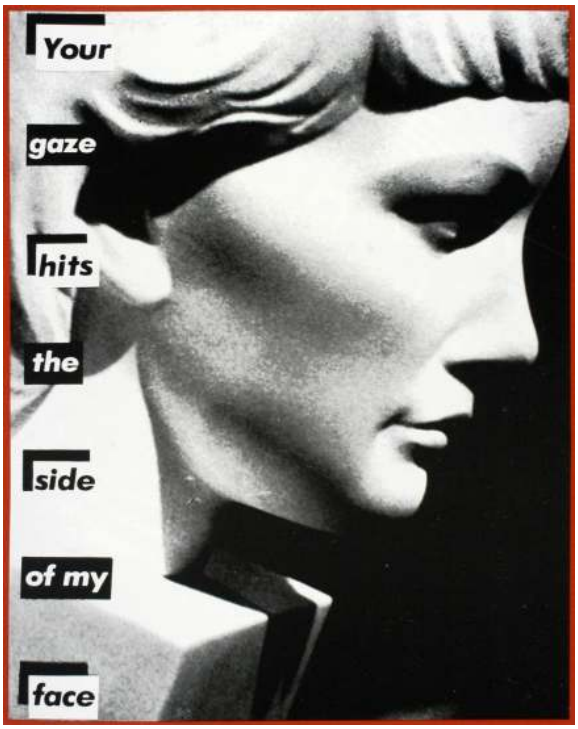


Figure 8.3.1: Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your gaze hits the side of my face)*, 1981

Has an artwork ever been more direct in acknowledging that the simple act of looking is a gendered (and gendering) act? “Your gaze hits the side of my face,” admonishes Barbara Kruger in *Untitled* (1981). The phrase is made stark and impersonal by arranging the words in a vertical stack, like those of a ransom note, to the left of a photograph of a female portrait bust in profile. Notice how the head is equally depersonalized; a stylized version in the classical tradition whose neck disappears into a block of stone, the suggestion here is that women are rendered inert in the act of being looked at. With an assumed male viewer — the subject of the possessive phrase “your gaze” — the subject of the portrait bust readily conforms to patriarchal fantasies of the passive female object.

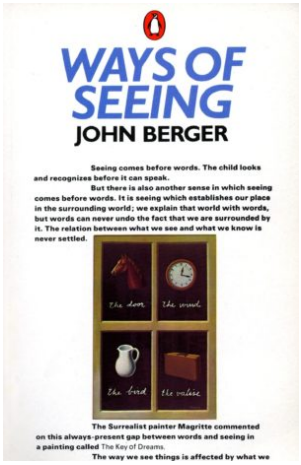


Figure 8.3.2: John Berger, cover of *Ways of Seeing*, 1972

In 1981 the concept of the male gaze spelled out a crucial problematic of feminist theory. Could women truly be liberated from the objectification implied in this act of being looked at? John Berger in his 1972 book *Ways of Seeing* described the history of Western oil painting as a catalogue of submissive nude women arranged for the pleasure of male viewers. Kruger confronts this tradition head on. The phrase "male gaze" referenced in Kruger's title is taken from Laura Mulvey, who coined the phrase in her 1975 essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," a landmark text of feminist theory.

Kruger's art is characterized by a visual wit sharpened in the trenches of the advertising world where the savvy combination of graphic imagery and pithy phrasing targeted a growing population of consumers in the post-World War II years. The portrait bust she uses for *Untitled (Your gaze hits the side of my face)* is a found picture, one of any number the artist would have encountered in her early career in graphic design. This included a stint at *Mademoiselle* magazine, whose glossy pages were a virtual catalogue of stereotypical images of femininity. In the late 1970s, Kruger began to choose for her photomontages images of women that were often heightened examples of such stereotypes to which her addition of text would, often humorously, expose and thereby deconstruct the supposed realism of such imagery.



Figure 8.3.3: Barbara Kruger, *Unititled (We have received orders not to move)*, 1982

A 1982 work, for example, shows a silhouette of a woman's body partially outlined by dressmaker's pins and leaning forward in a chair marked with the words "We have received orders not to move." The text here is laid across the body's midsection, adding another layer of the idea of being pinned in place. The sense that women were trapped or immobilized in the act of being seen runs throughout her body of work from this period and underlines how common this kind of depiction of women was in advertising, particularly during the mid-twentieth century, the period from which many of Kruger's images were culled.

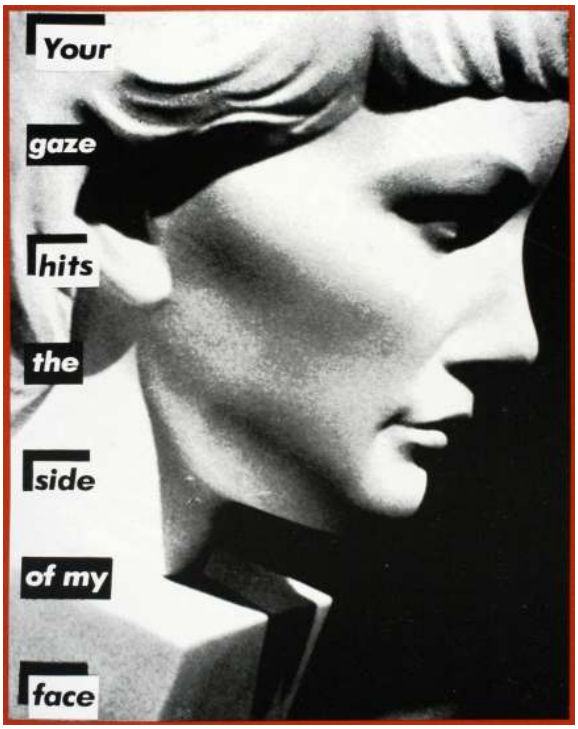


Figure 8.3.4: Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your gaze hits the side of my face)*, 1981

Kruger offers some resistance to the objectifying gaze of the titular male viewer. Only hitting the side in *Untitled (Your gaze hits the side of my face)*, one imagines it bouncing off as if merely ricocheting. But it nevertheless makes strategically visible the tacit assumption of Western visual traditions: women are looked at; men do the looking. In feminist terms, this means that women are negatively defined as lacking subjectivity or agency. Kruger staged an intervention, one could say, and it is in this way that her work is considered part of the feminist art canon.



Figure 8.3.5: Left: Eleanor Antin, *Carving: A Traditional Sculpture* (detail), 1972 (**Henry Moore Foundation**); right: Sylvia Sleigh, *The Turkish Bath*, 1973 (**Smart Museum of Art**, The University of Chicago, Purchase, Paul and Miriam Kirkley Fund for Acquisitions, 2000.104)

During the second wave of feminism in the 1970s, women artists sought, in different ways, to confront the problem of women's representation in art. Sylvia Sleigh's painting *The Turkish Bath* (1973), for example, renders a group of nude men in a traditional portrait genre usually reserved for women typified by the Neoclassical painter **Jean-Dominque Ingres**. Other artists, like **Eleanor Antin** (who also riffs off the classical sculptural tradition in *Carving: A Traditional Sculpture*, an important antecedent for Kruger) sought to subvert the usual depiction of women through unidealized and un-sexualized representations of the artist's own body.

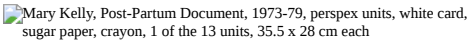


Figure 8.3.6: Mary Kelly, *Post-Partum Document*, 1973-79, perspex units, white card, sugar paper, crayon, 1 of the 13 units, 35.5 x 28 cm each

A different tactic was to refuse representation of women's bodies altogether. **Mary Kelly**'s monumental *Post-Partum Document* (1975), while an extensive portrayal of female subjectivity in relation to the mother-child relationship in psychoanalytic terms, makes no visual reference to herself or her body. Yet another approach was to develop a separate aesthetic predicated entirely upon women's experiences: ***Womanhouse*** was created by Miriam Schapiro and **Judy Chicago** in the early 1970s as a space to showcase feminist performances about rape or installations about menstruation. Finally, there is the use of craft traditions typically associated with the domestic labor of women. Elevating "craft" to a fine art became a symbol of the elevation of women themselves as they strove for inclusion and representation. Kruger's first artworks, in fact, were wall hangings that reframed craft in feminist terms. Despite the variances in approaches, at issue in feminist art practice was the place of imagery of women and artwork by women within patriarchy and in dialogue with political issues around gender and sexuality.

Kruger's work differs from her predecessors whose work I have just briefly outlined. She came of age as an artist at a time when many were taking existing imagery and then re-staging it in slightly altered form. The term for this was "appropriation," and it defined the strategy of a new generation of artists who wanted to refute modernism through invalidating ideas of originality, uniqueness, and even authorship. They became known, as did Kruger, as postmodern artists. Interestingly, many of these artists were women. Already critical of modernism because of its male-centered ideology, they filled the ranks of postmodernism to such extent that the critic Craig Owens described this congruence as a "crossing of the feminist critique of patriarchy and the postmodernist critique of representation." **Sherrie Levine** re-photographed a suite of images by the photographer Walker Evans in order to void his authorship. **Cindy Sherman** appropriated the cinematic tropes of Hollywood whose stock and trade was the vulnerable female in trouble and re-staged them using herself as model. While feminist art (and postmodern art) was largely a white movement, later artists such as Lorna Simpson, **Carrie Mae Weems** or **Kara Walker** would expand upon these earlier artistic strategies to address the intersection of race and gender.

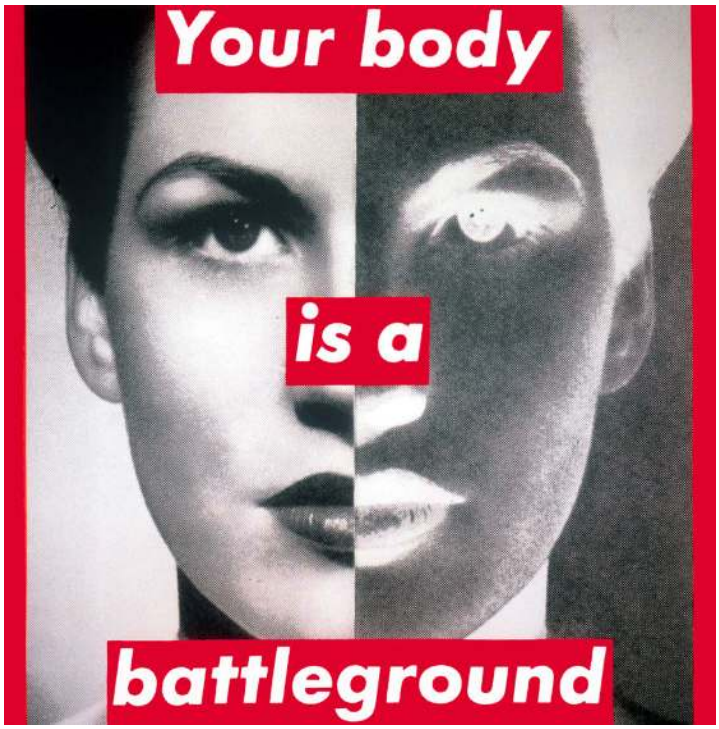


Figure 8.3.7: Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Your body is a battleground)*, 1989

The art of the "**Pictures Generation**" as these postmodern artists came to be called, was glossier, slicker, and more enamored of media culture than what had come before, to such an extent that the cultural critic Fredric Jameson worried that art and advertising had become one. Of course the aim was to critically analyze such imagery; Kruger redeployed its seductive techniques, usually pressed into the service of enticing consumers (and historically much of it was aimed at women consumers), to expose the subtle and pervasive ways in which stereotypes of gender roles were reinforced through advertising and cinema (later works by Kruger would target consumerism directly).

Deconstructing the supposed naturalism or ordinariness of these cultural fictions of femininity took on, within the larger political context of the feminist movement, an often agitprop or activist gloss. *"Your body is a battleground"* was produced for a 1989 women's march on Washington. Confining her imagery to black and white with the eventual addition of red was clearly a nod to the **photomontages** of Russian avant-garde artists in the early twentieth century. In the first years after the Russian Revolution, artists sought to harness the power of technology using photography and film to reach mass audiences and unmask false ideologies.

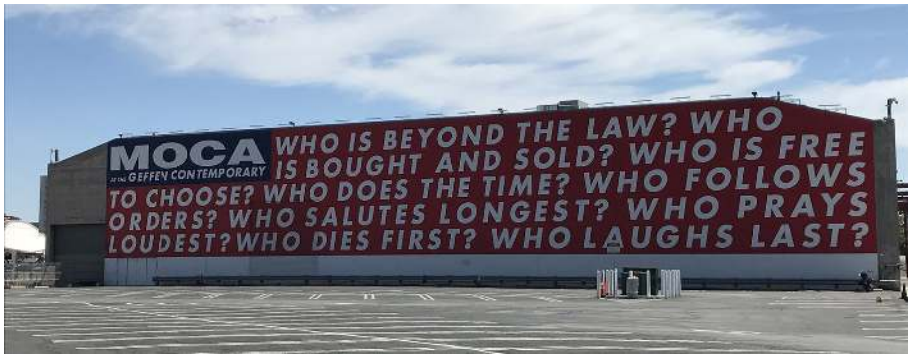


Figure 8.3.8: Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (Questions)*, 1990/2018 (**Geffen Contemporary;** photo: **rocor**, CC BY-NC 2.0)



Figure 8.3.9: Logo for the clothing brand Supreme

Much like the factory murals and posters of Russian avant-garde art, Kruger sought a broader audience outside the gallery. Her work would appear on billboards, train station platforms, bus stops, public parks, and even matchbook covers. In the early 2000s the street clothing brand Supreme acknowledged that Barbara Kruger was an inspiration for their logo, a white Futura font within a

red box. Despite its critical stance toward the advertising industry, Kruger's unique graphic style couldn't help but ultimately become influential in packaging and product design. Had Jameson been right about the collapse of art and advertising? Did the promotional and publicity structures of a consumer society eventually absorb postmodernism and thereby render its critique neutral?

Additional resources:

1. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen*, Volume 16, Issue 3, (Autumn 1975): 6–18.
2. Craig Owens, "The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism," in Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Seattle: Bay Press 1983): 78.

Jane Alexander, *Butcher Boys*

by DR. AMY NYGAARD MICKELSON



Figure 8.3.9: Jane Alexander, *Butcher Boys*, 1985/86, mixed media (Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, photo: **Goggins World**, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Men or beasts?

Inside the Iziko South African National Gallery there are three monstrous figures that sit casually on a wooden bench thoroughly indifferent to their environment. Their indifference confounds gallery-goers who struggle to answer questions such as: Are these figures men or beasts? What do these figures represent? South African artist Jane Alexander created the life-sized sculpture, titled *Butcher Boys*, in 1985/86 while a graduate student at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. The figures are composed of reinforced plaster, animal bones, horns, oil paint, and the wooden bench on which they sit.

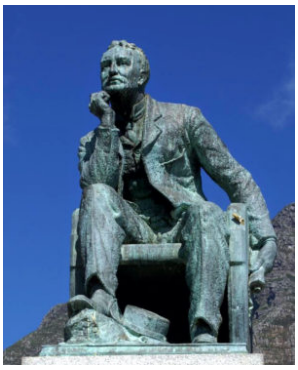


Figure 8.3.10: Marion Walgate, *Cecil John Rhodes*, 1934 (University of Capetown, photo: Danie van der Merwe, CC BY 2.0)

Uncanny resemblance

The forceful impact of the *Butcher Boys* resides in the figures' uncanny resemblance to us. Their figures are not all together unfamiliar within the history of art. There are flashes of resemblances to the familiar and celebrated figurative sculptures of the Greco-Roman tradition. The scale, definition in form, and physical proportions seen in Alexander's *Butcher Boys* echo those of the Hellenistic ***Boxer at Rest*** by Apollonius. Other stylistic associations to seated and contemplative figures, such as the now notorious monument to Cecil John Rhodes, can also be made.



Figure 8.3.11: Jane Alexander, *Butcher Boys*, 1985/86, mixed media (Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, photo: Ctac, CC BY-SA 3.0)

However, Alexander's figures are not, of course, continuations of these figurative traditions. Rather, hers are a critique in which she transforms the symbolic body of heroic/stately strength into a grotesque mockery of classicism. Their scarred flesh, exposed spinal bones, horned crania, and vacant black eyes undermine any sense of beauty to be found in their carefully modeled bodies. The *Butcher Boys* discomforts us because their form comes too close to that of humans, yet their anatomy is riddled with nonhuman elements and mutations. Alexander has eliminated, or grossly mutated, each figure's sense of sound, sight, smell, and taste. Each figure has irregular concavities where, perhaps, ears once protruded, but have otherwise been removed. They have the slightest suggestion of nasal cavities, which makes their lack of any oral cavity all the more prominent and perplexing. Additionally, deep scars traverse the larynx, past the heart and end just above the navel. Their limbs and torsos are decidedly human. Their arms and legs are without mutation, however, deep wounds down their spinal columns expose fragments of bones.

Viewers of the *Butcher Boys* confront an uncanny image of brutalization. The figures are not sympathetic victims or overtly threatening monsters. They are intimidating; yet, the violence against their bodies elicits a certain amount of empathy. They are unnamable beings without classification. They are neither man nor beast but rather both.



Figure 8.3.12: Jane Alexander, *Butcher Boys*, detail, 1985/86, mixed media (Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, photo: **Goggins World**, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Crime against humanity

The National Party in South Africa came to power in 1948 and was founded on white-supremacy and driven by an ideological platform of extreme segregation known as apartheid, or in Afrikaans, “apartness” or “apart-hood.” In 1985, the same year Alexander created *Butcher Boys*, South Africa was consumed by violent and non-violent resistance to apartheid. This was followed by a state of emergency (the second) issued by the National Party and state-sanctioned violence.

The earliest apartheid laws were distinctly concerned with the control and management of South Africans to assert and maintain white supremacy. The first two laws passed by the apartheid government were anti-miscegenation laws that criminalized marriage and sexual relations between “a European and a non-European.” The third, the “Population Registration Act” of 1950, forced citizens to register with the government according to its racial caste system. By 1973 the General Assembly of the United Nations recognized South African apartheid as a “crime against humanity.” This reality, of course, had long been recognized by those who fought against the regime. Despite growing international condemnation and internal resistance, the National Party continued to violently oppress any challenge to their power throughout the later decades of the 20th century. Given this context of brutality, Alexander’s *Butcher Boys* are commonly linked to the violence of apartheid and particularly the second state emergency. Art critic Ivor Powell wrote that “the *Butcher Boys* . . . [is] probably the most enduringly iconic image of the sinister and apocalyptic brutalisations of apartheid.”[1]

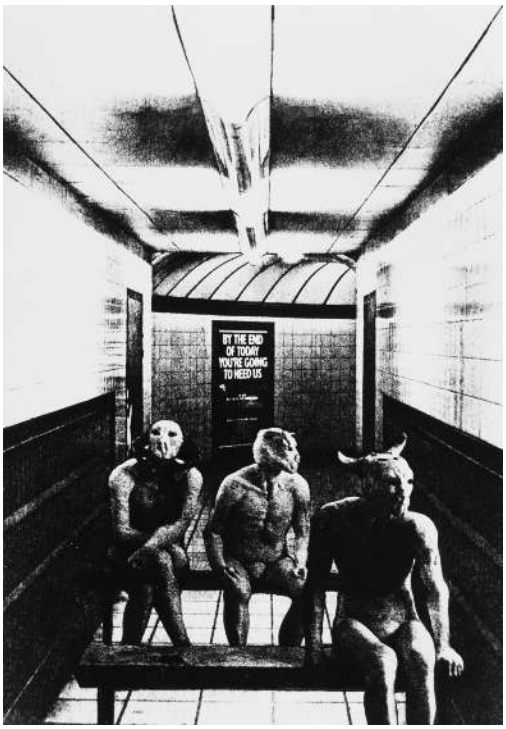


Figure 8.3.13: Jane Alexander, *BY THE END OF TODAY YOU'RE GOING TO NEED US*, 1986, fibre-based silver print, 29 x 20 cm (**Stevenson**)



Figure 8.3.14: Jane Alexander, *Ford, 1986*, 32 x 24 cm

Art, trauma, and political violence

Alexander, featured the *Butcher Boys* in photomontages, such as *BY THE END OF TODAY YOU'RE GOING TO NEED US* (1986), *Ford* (1986), and *Transmitter* (2007) among others. Since they are so commonly associated with apartheid violence and trauma, their presence becomes a potent symbol of that violence and trauma. Through the repetition of their image in photomontages, outside of the white-walled gallery space, Alexander appears to provide evidence of the *Butcher Boys'* existence within our world. In these photomontages, Alexander blurs and obscures the visual field just enough to give a candid or accidental aura to each image. It's as if the *Butcher Boys* are unwitting subjects within the series of photographs taken from everyday life.

By placing the *Butcher Boys* in a variety of scenes—on the outskirts of Cape Town, within a salvage yard, and waiting for a subway train—Alexander moves the audience beyond the physical components of the *Butcher Boys* and into a deeper consideration of their existence. This is the key to the work's iconic status. It is not just the shock of the physical, but even more so, the chilling recognition of the environment as the source of their trauma.



Figure 8.3.15: Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*, 1937, oil on canvas, 349 cm × 776 cm. (Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid)

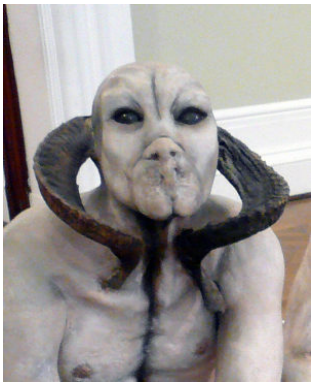


Figure 8.3.16: Jane Alexander, *Butcher Boys*, detail, 1985/86, mixed media (Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, photo: Ctac, CC BY-SA 3.0)

What Alexander achieved with *Butcher Boys* can be likened to Picasso's ***Guernica***. Both were created in the context of atrocities, which the governments (Franco's Spain and the National Party's South Africa respectively), inflicted on their own people. *Guernica* is so named because it depicts the bombing of a civilian target, the Basque city of Guernica in Spain. Its subject is local and specific; however, its reception propelled it into a totalizing indictment of fascism, much in the same way that Goya's ***Third of May, 1808*** depicts the events of a singular day of Napoleonic violence in Spain, but has come to represent the horrors of war more generally.



Figure 8.3.17: Francisco de Goya, *Third of May, 1808*, 1814, oil on canvas, 266 x 345.1 cm (Museo del Prado. Madrid)

Both Picasso's and Goya's paintings highlight an unsettling normalization of political violence. They give their viewers a chilling assessment of the unaffected banality of the environments from which these atrocities sprang. In so doing, these paintings resonate beyond their record of time and artistic movements as they reflect our seemingly endless slippage into enacting and accepting brutal violence. What sets Alexander's *Butcher Boys* apart from Picasso's and Goya's iconic paintings is that her work does not point to a singular event. Rather it is the totality of the apartheid's regime of violence that is called into question.

The *Butcher Boys* may be part man and part beast. Their identity as such, however, is less important than what they represent—violence and trauma. The *Butcher Boys* can be seen as a response to the public's willingness to depersonalize violence by ascribing such behavior to the monstrous. To acknowledge the truly violent nature of humankind is to implicate one's self in a relationship to such atrocities. These bodies visualize violence in a way that emphasizes how we dehumanize each other. It is easier to dehumanize violence than it is to see humanity in violence, and this transitional state of being between man and monster is where the *Butcher Boys* reside.

Notes:

1. Ivor Powell, "Inside and Outside of History," *Art South Africa* vol. 5, no. 4 (Winter 2007), pp. 32-38.

Additional resources:

Iziko South African National Gallery

Tate Modern, "Who is Jane Alexander?"

South African History Online, "Jane Alexander"

Pep Subirós, ed., *Jane Alexander: Surveys from the Cape of Good Hope* (New York: Museum of African Art, 2011).

Sophie Perryer, ed., *Personal Affects: Power and Poetics in Contemporary South African Art* (New York: Museum of African Art, 2004).

Sue Williamson, *Resistance Art in South Africa* (Southern Africa: David Philip, Publisher, 1989).

Jamie Wyeth, *Kalounna in Frogtown*

by TAYLOR L. POULIN and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.3.1: Jamie Wyeth, *Kalounna in Frogtown*, 1986, oil on masonite, 91.4 x 127.3 cm (Terra Foundation for American Art, Daniel J. Terra Collection, 1992.163) ©Jamie Wyeth, a Seeing America video speakers: Taylor L. Poulin, Assistant Curator, Terra Foundation for American Art and Beth Harris

Additional resources

This painting at the Terra Foundation for American Art

Marc Quinn, *Self*

by MATTHEW WILSON



Figure 8.3.18: Marc Quinn, *Self*, 1991, blood (artist's), stainless steel, Perspex and refrigeration equipment, 208 x 63 x 63 cm (originally collection of Charles Saatchi, now collection of Steve Cohen, New York)

The shock of the new

Shock value has been an important aspect of art since the nineteenth century. But is provocation always merely a case of superficial attention-grabbing, or can it ever have depth? Marc Quinn's *Self*, a sculpture depicting the artist's head made from his own frozen blood, is a perfect artwork for mulling over such questions. Shock is the probably the foremost element in its success and lasting impact on viewers: once seen, *Self* is not easily forgotten. The sight of blood often has this effect. For some it is an extremely distressing spectacle in its own right, and even for those of us used to transgressive artistic acts, the public display of real bodily fluids still retains its sense of taboo. But once the shock wears off, what are we left with? Does its meaningfulness erode over time, like a joke whose amusement diminishes on each rehearing?

Process and meaning



Figure 8.3.19: Making *Self* (1991): collecting blood

It is probably wise to first acknowledge the extraordinary amount of preparation and the lengthy ordeal Quinn put himself through to create *Self*. First, he took blood from his body – as you would do during a blood donation – over five separate sessions to stockpile a total of ten pints (5.7 liters). He then made a cast of his head by covering it with an all-over mask of plaster of Paris (leaving breathing holes for his nose). This perfect impression of the artist's facial features was then removed, filled with the blood and frozen. When it was solid, the blood head was mounted within a Perspex box filled with silicone oil at a subzero temperature.



Figure 8.3.20: Making *Self* (1991): making the cast

This careful, quasi-medical process indicates the seriousness and meticulous planning that lie behind Quinn's shock tactics. Ten pints is the average amount of blood in a human body, so among the other effects of *Self* is to make the spectator aware of the modest volume of this vital substance required to sustain a life. The freezing process is also one that might trigger thoughts of other modern medical practises such as cryopreservation (the technique of storing biological samples — and sometimes whole bodies — by keeping them at low temperatures for future regeneration). Quinn's sculpture is, among other things, a life support system. It therefore suggests wider issues of life and healthcare in the modern world: *Self* is as dependent on science as our own lives are, and it leaves us space to contemplate the magical promises of medical technology, as well as its limits.



Figure 8.3.21: Marc Quinn, *Self*, 1991, blood (artist's), stainless steel, Perspex and refrigeration equipment, 208 x 63 x 63 cm (originally collection of Charles Saatchi, now collection of Steve Cohen, New York)

Quinn's education as a student of History and History of Art at the University of Cambridge can be seen as a vital component of his work as a whole, and here his engagement appears to be with ancient tomb sculptures. Much of what we study as art from early civilizations (such as from **Egypt** and **China**) is from burial chambers, where the intention was to preserve bodies and spiritually conquer death. Also, one of the chief purposes of all portraits has been to conserve an individual's legacy. Quinn's engagement with cryopreservation in a gallery setting reminds us of art's ancient role in ensuring posterity.

Blood simple



Figure 8.3.22: Left: Marc Quinn, *Self*, 1991, blood (artist's), stainless steel, Perspex and refrigeration equipment, 208 x 63 x 63 cm (originally collection of Charles Saatchi, now collection of Steve Cohen, New York); Right: *Head of a Roman Patrician* from Otricoli, c. 75-50 BCE, marble (Palazzo Torlonia, Rome)

Disregarding the startling choice of sculptural material, there is little in the appearance of *Self* to cause alarm. In some respects, its presentation is rather archaic. It is a portrait bust, a format which originates in Europe with the **Romans**, and it sits on a plinth behind a glass case, much like an exhibit in a museum of antiquities. The head is subtly upturned with its lips pursed and eyes closed, giving it a sense of peacefulness and serenity — as if asleep or gracefully deceased. The casting process that Quinn used has picked up many tender textures from the surface of Quinn's face such as the eye lashes, creases on lips and the folds of flesh on the ears. A sense of the macabre is thus conveyed only through its bruised, red and blue coloration, and arguably also the surface texture which bears marks left behind from the mold used in the process of casting and makes the head look scarred or decayed. Casting is a very old sculpting technique, but it looks as though Quinn is making reference specifically to the tradition of death masks, which were used by the Romans to record the physiognomy of deceased family members.

A literal portrait

Unlike more traditional materials of western sculpture such as marble, blood is not durable and will decay if not frozen. Similarly, the process of casting is traditional, but usually it is done with bronze or other precious metals, and not a bodily fluid. Value therefore becomes a significant theme, as blood — unlike marble and bronze — lacks monetary worth and yet is essential to life. The use of bodily fluids increases the sculpture's status as a 'true' self-portrait in which the artwork serves not only to depict the artist but is also composed of a part of the artist's own body, his DNA. As mentioned before, the presence of a refrigeration unit underscores the sculpture's dependence on a source of power, arguably increasing its sense of vulnerability. Quinn has commented on the autobiographical dimension of *Self* saying that it reflects his alcoholism, as it is entirely dependent on electricity, just as he was reliant on alcohol. This self-expressive aim is also attested by Quinn's aim to pay homage to **Rembrandt, who repeatedly created self-portraits** in the latter stages of his career, by making a new 10-pint blood *Self* every 5 years.



Figure 8.3.23: Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with Shaded Eyes*, 1634, oil on panel, 71.1 x 56 cm (The Leiden Collection)

Sacrifice

Historically, blood is associated with sacrifice and ritual, such as in the **Aztec Empire** and Mithraism (an ancient Roman mystery religion centered on the god Mithras), and in some religions had been applied to sculptures in order to "animate" them. In Christianity the blood of Christ is also sacred and celebrated at the **Eucharist**. In other contexts, blood is symbolic of truth and family lineage — one speaks of a "bloodline" and agreements have sometimes been sealed by mingling blood. Quinn's self-portrait can be identified in the crossroads of these various associations, indicating the potent, generative powers of blood, the veracity and individuality of the artist's personal identity, as well as his self-sacrifice in the name of art.

The trope of the artist as a suffering, outcast martyr has been with us since at least the **Romantic** period. And it is not unrelated to the trope that this essay began with: that of the artist as provocateur, intent on shock tactics to turn heads. According to this stereotype, **artists should behave like outsiders** who position themselves beyond society, only in order to castigate and shock it with their piercing commentary. This tradition was given its most forceful early voice with Manet and his provocative works of the 1860s with such works as ***Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe***. In the fierce competition of the art world every young artist needs to court notoriety if they want to be noticed — quiet conservatism seldom makes for front-page news. Causing shock is relatively easy, but the outrage quick wears off if the work lacks dimension, and there will be many forgotten names in the history of twentieth-century art, music and cinema who resorted to the kind of superficial shock whose impact petered out all too quickly.



Figure 8.3.24: Édouard Manet, *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe (Luncheon on the Grass)*, oil on canvas, 1863 (Musée d'Orsay, Paris)

Does *Self* fall into this category? A defense of its merits would point to the breadth of themes addressed in this essay: its painstaking process, its appropriation of medical technology, its art-historical reference points and its aim to act as a vehicle of the artist's self-expression. *Self*, such an argument would run, serves as an example of provocation with a purpose, where medium, technique and message coalesce, and the art achieves both a memorable aesthetic and a satisfying quantity of conceptual ballast.

Additional resources:

The work of art at the artist's website

Making the work of art at the artist's website

Lucian Freud, *Standing by the Rags*

by DR. BETH HARRIS and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.3.2: Lucian Freud, *Standing by the Rags*, 1988-89, oil on canvas, 66.5 x 54.5″ / 168.9 x 138.4 cm (Tate Britain, London)

Smarthistory images for teaching and learning:

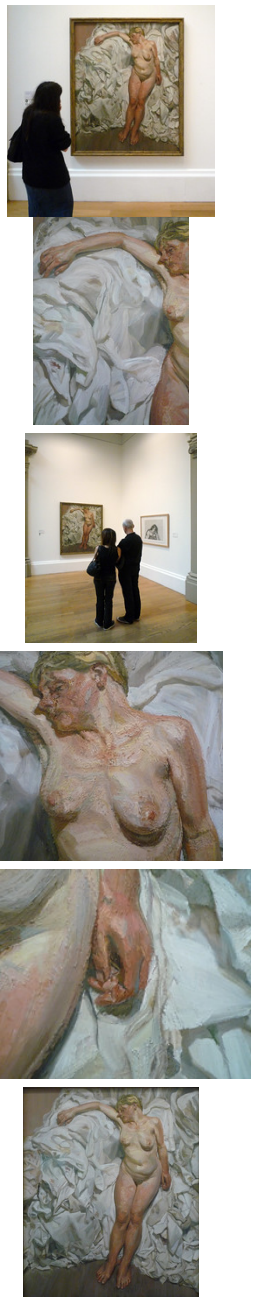


Figure 8.3.25: More Smarthistory images…

Carrie Mae Weems, *Untitled (Woman Feeding Bird)*, from *The Kitchen Table Series*

by LAUREN HAYNES, CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART) and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.3.3: Carrie Mae Weems, *Untitled (Woman Feeding Bird), The Kitchen Table Series*, 1990, gelatin silver print (printed 2015), 27.94 x 27.94 cm @ Carrie Mae Weems (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art)

Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *"Untitled" (billboard of an empty bed)*

by DR. TOM FOLLAND



Figure 8.3.26: Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *"Untitled" (billboard of an empty bed)* 1991, printed billboard, dimensions variable © The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation

Untitled (billboard of an empty bed) is a stark, black-and-white image of the rumpled sheets and pillows of an unmade bed. The depression in the center of each pillow, suggesting a recent presence, conveys a profound sense of intimacy. But this scenario is in jarring contrast to its public location—on a billboard. First exhibited on the streets of Manhattan, this evocation of absent bodies soon came to define all of Felix Gonzalez-Torres' work up until his death in 1996 from AIDS-related causes. The artist is most known for ephemeral installations: a pile of candy in a corner (below), a stack of posters on the floor, or strings of lights dangling from a ceiling—all of which recall the reduced visual and formal language of Conceptual and Minimalist art from the 1960s and 1970s.



Figure 8.3.27: Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *"Untitled" (Portrait of Ross in L.A.)*, 1991, multicolored candies, ideal weight 175 lbs., dimensions variable © The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation (photo: **henskechristine**, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Figure 8.3.28: Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *Untitled (for Stockholm)*, 1992, light bulbs, porcelain light sockets and extension cords, dimensions variable © The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation (photo: **Andrew Russeth**, CC CC BY-SA 2.0)

Yet Gonzalez-Torres didn't merely reference the work of earlier Minimalist artists like Donald Judd and Dan Flavin—he introduced a specifically contemporary note into his work. In the late 1980s and early 1990s artists were asking new questions around the construction of identity—including gay identity. For instance, the lights in his work were redolent of the environment of a dance club (left), and the candy on the floor was a perverse reference to the drug AZT used to combat HIV. And the bed? Much like the paired wall clocks he created the same year entitled *Perfect Lovers* that marched slightly out of step with one another (one is a few seconds off), the censored image of same-sex love slowly makes its imprint.

Bed's sexual politics

By 1987, a new era of gay activism had begun. The Aids Coalition to Unleash Power (ACTUP) formed and suddenly old questions around the relationship between art and politics took on new significance for gay artists. Artist-collectives like Gran Fury used appropriated image and text to convey overt political messages around the politics of AIDS. But Gonzalez-Torres did not follow this route. His disappearing but perpetually replenished works (viewers were allowed to remove a poster or take a piece of candy) took a more elegiac path: it was one in which any direct representation of homosexuality was seldom apparent. Thus his art became an abstract memorialization of loss. Gonzalez-Torres' memorialization resonated especially during a time when Ronald Reagan (U.S. President from 1981 until 1989) notoriously never uttered the word "AIDS" because of its predominant association with homosexuality. Heads pressed onto pillows in the *Untitled* billboard thus becomes a simultaneous declaration and disavowal of same-sex love—writ large within an urban landscape.

As an artist, Gonzalez-Torres came of age during the 1980s (he was born in 1957 in Cuba). At that time, Postmodern artists often worked with existing imagery and text, appropriating and examining an increasingly media-saturated world. His earliest work was in that vein. In the manner of Jenny Holzer, who reproduced found slogans or random sentiments on wheat-pasted posters throughout the streets of lower Manhattan in the late 1970s, one of Gonzalez-Torres' earliest works is a framed photostat (an early version of a photocopy) from 1988 of a sentence. It's really a jumble of words—white letters on a black background that read "supreme 1986 court crash stock market crash 1929 sodomy stock market crash supreme 1987." In this way, he offered a poetic commentary on the erasure of gay history by sandwiching a reference to the 1986 Supreme Court ruling that upheld the state of Georgia's sodomy laws (which effectively criminalized homosexuality) between significant dates in economic history.[1]

Back to the future

Gonzalez-Torres' *Untitled (billboard of an empty bed)* marked an important threshold in contemporary art history. In the late 1980s the art world underwent significant changes. It seemed to many critics at the time that postmodern art existed only to illustrate complex philosophical concepts, while the felt aspects of experience, important for the renewed surge of identity politics (political alliances based on identity, like the women's movement), were ignored. Foregrounding the bodily dimension of experience, artists like Robert Gober, Kiki Smith and Jane Alexander created sculptural works with visceral impact. Artists began to return to discarded artistic strategies like narrative, constructed (rather than appropriated) forms—anything that would invoke a sense of the contemporary, lived aspect of everyday experience without mediation. Bodies were often splayed upon the gallery floor or its parts protruded from a wall.

Gonzalez-Torres' art had, in a sense, a foot in both camps: *Untitled (billboard of an empty bed)* bore resemblance to the billboards Barbara Kruger had done as early as 1985. Her *Surveillance is Your Busy Work* is one that was unveiled in Minneapolis that year and featured her trademark use of advertising imagery reconfigured with text to correspond to discussions around public space, gender and corporate culture. But Gonzalez-Torres's image of a disheveled bed was shorn of any textual or even didactic directive. Significantly, the image is of his own bed. *Untitled (billboard of an empty bed)* suggested—even if it did not portray—a tangible if disappearing presence.

1. This ruling was eventually overturned.

Additional resources:

Print/Out: Felix Gonzalez-Torres, on Inside/Out, MoMA's blog (April 4, 2012)

Biography of the artist from Oxford University Press on MoMA.org

The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation

Art and Photography: the 1980s on The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History

Yinka Shonibare, *The Swing (After Fragonard)*

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG



Figure 8.3.29: Yinka Shonibare MBE, *The Swing (After Fragonard)*, 2001 (Tate, London) © Yinka Shonibare

With her fingers delicately grasping the thickly coiled rope of a swing suspended mid-flight, a life-sized female mannequin flirtatiously kicks up her left foot, projecting her slipper into the air where it hovers above a tangle of branches. Our gaze is directed from the arch of her foot towards the vibrant trim of her petticoat, gown and coat.

A recreation of a Rococo painting

The Swing (After Fragonard) is a three-dimensional recreation of the Rococo painting after which it was titled, which itself offers testimony to the opulence and frivolity of pre-Revolutionary France. Painted in 1767, Jean-Honoré Fragonard's *The Swing* depicts a coquettish young girl swinging in a lush and fertile forest and, of course, playfully kicking up her shoe. A sculpture of a bashful cherub looks on, but he is not alone; the female figure is flanked by two male figures lurking in the shadows, one seems to push her swing from behind, as the other mischievously glances up the layers of her dress to catch a glimpse of what is beneath.

> ***Living in England, with my colonial relationship to this country, one cannot escape all these Victorian things, because they are everywhere: in architecture, culture, attitude…***



Figure 8.3.30: Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *The Swing*, oil on canvas, 1767 (Wallace Collection, London

Shonibare's quotations of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century style and sensibility are visually captivating; at the same time, tableaux such as *The Swing* contain some dark undertones. To begin with, the beautiful young protagonist of Fragonard's painting has somehow become headless. This is likely a reference to the use of the guillotine during the Reign of Terror in the 1790s, when members of the French aristocracy were publicly beheaded. Drawing our attention to questions of excess, class and morality that were raised by revolutionaries two centuries ago, Shonibare invites us to also consider the increasing disparity between economic classes today, especially alongside the growing culture of paranoia, terror and xenophobia in global politics since 9/11.

As a British-born Nigerian, raised between Lagos and London, Shonibare is especially perceptive to the ways in which issues of access, nationalism and belonging have their roots in modern European history, particularly with regards to the United Kingdom and its relationship to its former colonies. Here is where the specific fabrics that Shonibare utilizes become more relevant, as their symbolism is steeped in histories of cultural appropriation, imperialism and power.

Indonesian motifs, made by Europeans, sold in West Africa

Though tailored in the fashion of eighteenth-century French aristocratic style, the costume that is modeled by Shonibare's protagonist has been sewn from colorful and abstractly patterned fabrics with quite different origins: the bright golds, reds and blues arranged in geometric motifs across her ruffled skirt are typical of the "African" Dutch wax fabrics that Shonibare has famously used to adorn his figural tableaux throughout his career.



Figure 8.3.31: Dutch wax print fabrics (photo: **ipercher**, CC BY-NC 2.0)

While these fabrics have come to signify African identity today, the patterns on Dutch wax fabrics were originally based on motifs found in Indonesian batiks, and were manufactured in England and Holland in the nineteenth-century. Predictably, the European imitations did not prove lucrative when sold in South Asian markets, so Dutch manufacturers then marketed the textiles to their West African colonies, where they have since been appropriated and integrated into local visual culture.

As such, Dutch wax fabrics as we know them today are the product of the complex economic and cultural entanglements that resulted from European imperialism. As curator Okwui Enwezor has explained, Shonibare uses the fabrics "as a tool to investigate

the place of ethnicity and the stereotype in modernist representation. (…) The textile is neither Dutch nor African, therefore, the itinerary of ideas it circulates are never quite stable in their authority or meaning."

Aesthetics and Authenticity

As fictional as their "African-ness" may appear to be, however, the fabrics have now been completely assimilated in places like Nigeria, where Shonibare grew up. As Enwezor points out, the material is "both fake and authentic, both readymade and original," not to mention indisputably cosmopolitan.

The question of what is "authentically" African has personal resonance for Shonibare, who, as an art student in London, was shocked when one of his instructors suggested that he make work that expressed his African identity. This conversation prompted him to think about stereotypes and the areas that exist between categories of identity and culture. The artist began using the material in 1992.

In Pursuit of Leisure

What might Shonibare wish to communicate by bringing together these "African" textiles with Fragonard's Rococo images, or any of the other European masterpieces that the artist has appropriated in his sculptural installations?

In imaging this particular moment in European history, Shonibare wishes to forge connections between imperialism, the aristocracy, and the "colonized wealthy class." In *The Swing (After Fragonard)*, which is loaded with references to the French Revolution, the Age of Enlightenment and colonial expansion into Africa, Shonibare asks us to consider how a simple act of leisure can be so controversial.

> ***While the leisure pursuit might look frivolous (…) my depiction of it is a way of engaging in that power. It is actually an expression of something much more profoundly serious insofar as the accumulation of wealth and power that is personified in leisure was no doubt a product of exploiting people.***

In this and other works, Shonibare chooses stories—including biographies, world events, and works of art—which are already effective allegories concerning race, class, corruption and greed, calling our attention to some of the darker moments in Western history. However, his use of the Dutch Wax fabric, with its spurious origins and its misleading aesthetic identity, serve as a reminder that history and truth are also themselves constructions.

Rineke Dijkstra, *Odessa, Ukraine, August 4, 1993*

by JOSH R. ROSE



Figure 8.3.32: Rineke Dijkstra, *Odessa, Ukraine, August 4, 1993*, 1993, Chromogenic print, 153 x 128.9 cm, © Rineke Dijkstra, courtesy of the artist

What makes a portrait so compelling? Historically, portraits were reserved for the elite and wealthy, but with the advent of the camera in 1839 portraiture became increasingly democratized and accessible across social classes. Today, we all appear in numerous portraits: family photos, formal school pictures, even the increasingly common "selfie" created for social networks. In an age of ubiquitous portraiture, what makes Dutch artist Rineke Dijkstra's photograph of a teenage boy standing on a Ukrainian shoreline so evocative?

Working in series

Dijkstra's photograph *Odessa, Ukraine, August 4, 1993* comes from the series *Beaches*, which was created between 1992 and 1998 across locations as diverse as Poland, Great Britain, South Carolina, Belgium, Coney Island, and the Ukraine. Typically working in series, Dijkstra prefers single subjects documented over time or multiple subjects recorded after moments of intensity, such as new mothers in the days after giving birth or Portuguese bullfighters immediately after a match. Working in series necessitates revealing through comparison.

In *Beaches*, her earliest series, Dijkstra was interested not just in capturing young men and women on the cusp of adulthood, but the unexpected social and cultural nuances that became apparent by portraying teenagers from different parts of the world:

"I think that in Poland [the subjects' bathing suits] reminded me of the '60s, they have twenty-year old bathing suits and no one cares…They were very easygoing. The Americans had very fancy bathing costumes and the poses were more self-conscious. One girl was really holding her belly in and her mother was behind her yelling 'You're too fat.' She was so unhappy."[1]

These powerful emotional responses are expressed through intricately captured details across the series *Beaches* and in each of the individual portraits. Dijkstra draws us in with the details captured using a flash (even in sunlight), from the type of swimming garment (full length swimsuit, speedo, underwear, cut-off jeans) to the expressions on the subjects' faces (cool, pensive, inquisitive).

Standing on a beach

Dijkstra's process entailed asking unknown adolescents to pose for her at the shore, and while she set up lighting and prepared her camera on a tripod, her subjects assumed their own stance.[2] As with each photograph in this series, the anonymous boy's vertical body is set against the rigid horizontals of the shore and horizon. He stands in contrapposto, causing his angular shoulders to protrude up and out, and his gangly frame is sunken in at the torso.

The careful lighting, which one writer has described as "clinical," starkly contrasts his pale skin against the cool tones of sky, water, and sand. The overwhelming blues and greys are augmented by the boy's dark red trunks that extend to the sharp bend of his pelvis, appearing unnaturally flattened as if pasted on the image afterward. In contrast to his young body, his mature face stares outward unabashedly, which is daunting when seen in its six foot tall printed form.

Behind his emotionless expression is a self-awareness that appears mature, relaxed, and casual. Dijkstra often strives to capture self-consciousness: "People think that they present themselves one way," the photographer once stated, "but they cannot help but show something else as well. It's impossible to have everything under control."[3] Dijkstra bridges the difficult gulf between self-presentation and photographic representation by allowing the subjects to assume their own pose. Despite choosing nearly identical settings for each photographs in the series, Dijkstra's portraits transcend simple visual documentation and become revelatory images of the awkwardness and transitory nature of puberty.

Typologies?

Because her title emphasizes location and date but excludes the name, Dijkstra intends for her subject to remain unknown. This insistence on anonymity and working in series is suggestive of a typology, or a system of classification based on type. As Allen Sekula has discussed, photographic typologies became increasingly common at the end of the nineteenth century, linked to the popular pseudo-sciences of physiognomy and phrenology.[4] Another photographer, the German August Sander, is important here. Dijkstra has often stated that Sander was a primary influence on her work and methodology; moreover, he also produced typological photographs.



Figure 8.3.33: August Sander, Sisters, 1927, gelatin silver print, 33 x 24.5 cm (The Museum of Modern Art, New York)

From 1910 to the early 1950s, Sander encyclopedically documented German people, emphasizing lifestyle and profession as an extensive photographic typology of *Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts (People of the Twentieth Century)*. Although his visual approach was modified over time, Sander's photographs emphasized clothing, tools, ephemera, and setting. In Sander's 1927 photograph *Sisters*, the simple folk dresses of the young girls standing on a forest path suggest their lineage with traditional German customs and love of nature (though offset somewhat by their wristwatches!). Sander likely posed and carefully composed his portraits, evident by the visual alignment of the waistline embroidery on the sisters' dresses.

While the influence of Sander on Dijkstra's own work is important, there are some key differences, most notably her method of unifying the composition with the shoreline. This, along with allowing her subjects to settle into their own stance, does not classify as much as expose by focusing less on extraneous details and more on the expressions and bodies of her subjects.

Posing as art history

One interesting byproduct of Dijkstra's method of allowing her portrait subjects to be conscious of the pose they strike is that at times her figures end up in stances that are remarkably similar to famous works of art. In one *Beaches* photograph from Poland, a young girl unconsciously mirrors a pose similar to that of Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*. In the Odessa photograph, the young man's contrapposto and nearly nude figure evokes the idealized youthful males of Early Classical Greek statuary.

These references, which Dijkstra states are unintended by her, are quite evocative, and suggest an ingrained, resonant sense of how late twentieth-century adolescents wish themselves to be portrayed when a Dutch photographer asks them to pose for her while spending their day at the beach.

Special thanks to Sandy Heller, The Heller Group, LLC

[1] As quoted in an interview with Jennifer Morgan, *Rineke Dijkstra: Portraits. Hatje Cantz* (Institute of Contemporary Art, 2001), p. 80.

[2] Michael Fried, *Why Photography Matters As Art As Never Before* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 2008), p. 206.

[3] As quoted in Katy Siegel, "Real People," *Rineke Dijkstra: Portraits, Hatje Cantz* (Institute of Contemporary Art, 2001) p. 10.

[4] Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (1986), p. 3.

Additional Resources:

Dijkstra's work at the Saatchi Gallery

Dijkstra in conversation with Abigail Christenson (Tate video)

August Sander on The Museum of Modern Art website

Marlene Dumas, *Models*

by DR. TOM FOLLAND

I<em
Models, 1994, 100 drawings, watercolor and ink-wash on paper, each 24 7/16 x 19 11/16 inches / 62 x 50 cm (Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven), installation view of the solo exhibition "Measuring your Own Grave," 2008, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, copyright Marlene Dumas © 2016" aria-describedby="caption-attachment-12338" height="500" sizes="(max-width: 823px) 100vw, 823px" src="
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300w" width="823">

Figure 8.3.34: Models, 1994, 100 drawings, watercolor and ink-wash on paper, each 24 7/16 x 19 11/16 inches / 62 x 50 cm (Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven), installation view of the solo exhibition “Measuring your Own Grave,” 2008, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, copyright Marlene Dumas © 2016

Painting Photography

The work of South African artist Marlene Dumas exists on a continuum between painting and photography. Simply put, she paints from photographic images. Or as she herself puts it: “I don’t paint people, I paint images.” Her sources range from the personal to the pornographic; from the medical to the political. Consisting of eerily rendered bodies and heads in thin washes of paint, ink or chalk, Dumas’s paintings approximate the genre of portraiture but her figures are stripped of any kind of individualizing features. Dumas’s portraits are, instead, rendered with a kind of dispassionate morbidity that is redolent of violence. A body or head in often sickly or garish colors and in broadly contoured outlines appears against a faint or blank backdrop. That her paintings seem bent on obliterating their photographic origins and reducing the figure to a lifeless prop, suggests that there is a profoundly social resonance to her work.



Figure 8.3.35: Single sheet from Marlene Dumas, *Models*, 1994, watercolor and ink wash on paper, 62 x 50 cm (Van Abbemuseum)

Models, *1994*, is a case in point: it conjures up a catalogue of the dead and/or missing—an all too frequent reference point that underlines the global contemporary. Arranged in the form of a grid, *Models* presents 100 female faces as if they were the carefully laid out heads of a morgue. Positioned on blank surfaces and retaining only a minimum of individualized features, each “model” stares frontally or is rotated to profile or three-quarter pose. Faces vary from light skinned to dark and some have pastel colored eyes, but these are not the warms blues, greens and browns one might expect: lavender or lime-green instead serves to only heightens the disconcerting appearance of these disembodied figures. Who are these so-called “models?” As Dumas describes it: “There are pictures of the insane, pictures of fashion models, you have pictures of my friends…” In her description, as in her painting, Dumas gives them equal treatment: one becomes virtually indistinguishable from the other.

Against Beauty

To unravel the meaning of this work, we might start with the title. What are we to make of it? Surely it is ironic. “Model” has a number of meanings—prominent among them is the life model, a venerable tradition in studio art. But Dumas dispenses with this approach; her models are not sourced from life. They are taken from polaroids (the friends she mentions), book illustrations (the

"insane") and other sundry sources where clippings are readily available. The grim visages on display, casually acquired but so carefully reworked, suggest that Dumas is also not interested in idealized forms of beauty, as "model" might also suggest. Fashion models are the unobtainable standard of idealized female bodies in contemporary culture and have long been a site of intervention for feminist art. The term "model" in both popular culture and art history functions as an indicator of the "beautiful"—it means the female body perpetually displayed for the presumed male viewer.

One of the faces in *Models* is taken from an image of the feminist author Simone de Beauvoir and although it should not be taken as an overt symbol, it is clear that Dumas's critical interrogation of the "beautiful" is part of a feminist lineage in art that includes, to take only but a few examples, the photo-documented performance ***Carving—A Traditional Sculpture* (1971) by Eleanor Antin**, the photo-text work of **Lorna Simpson ("Twenty Questions (A Sampler) (1986)**, the self-portraits of **Cindy Sherman** or even the 1990s performances by **Vanessa Beecroft** where standing live models (actual models) were posed clad in heels with little else and faced an often awkward audience. But unlike her feminist counterparts who abandoned or rejected painting, Dumas compels us to consider the specific social force painting might have in contemporary culture. "I wanted to give more attention to what the painting does to the image, not only to what the image does to the painting" (as quoted in "**Who is Marlene Dumas**?" from Tate).

There is a deconstructive impulse in Dumas's work: she de-eroticizes the pornographic imagery she appropriates; she de-personalizes portraits of friends; she turns the image of a celebrity icon like Naomi Campbell into something strange and unrecognizable. Even her portraits of children tack towards the monstrous.

Troubling and compelling

Comparisons are often made to the German painter Gerhard Richter (**his notable series on the imprisoned Bader-Meinhof terrorist group** for example) as well as to Dumas's contemporary **Lucs Tuyman** whose faded paintings (indeed they look as if they are drained of color) seem to speak to a contemporary painting's inability to fully invoke scenes of political life. But Dumas's works provoke strong reactions. Is it because they speak so forcefully of violence done to persons? Persuasive arguments have been made that tie her work to the culture of apartheid she witnessed growing up as an Afrikaans-speaking Dutch descendant whose only access to the world was through print imagery (television did not come to South Africa until 1976). This certainly is a factor that underlines her work. But images of the dispossessed, the missing, and tortured are fairly routine fare in contemporary life.

Dumas's troubling images are compelling not because of the haunting figures they construct but because of her transformation of once discrete categories of portraiture into something almost unrecognizable. For example, we expect "model" as a term to not stray too far from a conventional meaning, and as an image we expect the subject to hew to certain conventions. In the interplay between photography and painting that exists in Dumas's work, the traditional function of portraiture is negated. It once served, in the history of oil painting, to commemorate the social status of an individual, to provide visual evidence of a marriage, or document the social bonds of family. In the nineteenth century photography usurped that job. The modern photographic portrait was supposed to capture something of the inner truth of the subject—one's psychological being. The poetic reveries of **Juliet Margaret Cameron** or the individualized studio portraits of **Felix Nadar** became the standard bearer for a newly emergent bourgeois identity where self trumped community. Photography's ability to capture likeness was soon harnessed by emerging ethnographic, psychological and jurisprudential discourses—criminals, and the insane all came under the powerful scientific gaze of the camera's lens.

The artist and critic Allan Sekula once described, in an influential essay, two exemplary modes of photographic representation, regimes of visibility one might say that determined, rather than represented, identity. One is honorific: the respectable bourgeois portrait. The other is repressive: the cold mug shot of the criminal. In Dumas's painted portraits the subject that emerges is at once both and neither of these. In an increasingly uncertain global culture, Dumas paints the indeterminacies and terrors of social identity.

Shirin Neshat, *Rebellious Silence, Women of Allah* series

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG

In *Rebellious Silence*, the central figure's portrait is bisected along a vertical seam created by the long barrel of a rifle. Presumably the rifle is clasped in her hands near her lap, but the image is cropped so that the gun rises perpendicular to the lower edge of the photo and grazes her face at the lips, nose, and forehead. The woman's eyes stare intensely towards the viewer from both sides of this divide.

Shirin Neshat's photographic series *Women of Allah* examines the complexities of women's identities in the midst of a changing cultural landscape in the Middle East—both through the lens of Western representations of Muslim women, and through the more

intimate subject of personal and religious conviction.

While the composition—defined by the hard edge of her black chador against the bright white background—appears sparse, measured and symmetrical, the split created by the weapon implies a more violent rupture or psychic fragmentation. A single subject, it suggests, might be host to internal contradictions alongside binaries such as tradition and modernity, East and West, beauty and violence. In the artist's own words, "every image, every woman's submissive gaze, suggests a far more complex and paradoxical reality behind the surface." [1]



Figure 8.3.36: Shirin Neshat, *Rebellious Silence*, *Women of Allah* series, 1994, black and white RC print and ink, photo by Cynthia Preston ©Shirin Neshat (courtesy Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels)

The *Women of Allah* series confronts this "paradoxical reality" through a haunting suite of black-and-white images. Each contains a set of four symbols that are associated with Western representations of the Muslim world: the veil, the gun, the text and the gaze. While these symbols have taken on a particular charge since 9/11, the series was created earlier and reflects changes that have taken place in the region since 1979, the year of the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

Islamic Revolution

Iran had been ruled by the Shah (Mohammad Reza Pahlavi), who took power in 1941 during the Second World War and reigned as King until 1979, when the Persian monarchy was overthrown by revolutionaries. His dictatorship was known for the violent repression of political and religious freedom, but also for its modernization of the country along Western cultural models. Post-war Iran was an ally of Britain and the United States, and was markedly progressive with regards to women's rights. The Shah's regime, however, steadily grew more restrictive, and revolutionaries eventually rose to abolish the monarchy in favor of a conservative religious government headed by Ayatollah Khomeini.

Shirin Neshat was born in 1957 in the town of Qazvin. In line with the Shah's expansion of women's rights, her father prioritized his daughters' access to education, and the young artist attended a Catholic school where she learned about both Western and Iranian intellectual and cultural history. She left, however, in the mid-1970s, pursuing her studies in California as the environment in Iran grew increasingly hostile. It would be seventeen years before she returned to her homeland. When she did, she confronted a society that was completely opposed to the one that she had grown up in.

Looking back

One of the most visible signs of cultural change in Iran has been the requirement for all women to wear the veil in public. While many Muslim women find this practice empowering and affirmative of their religious identities, the veil has been coded in Western eyes as a sign of Islam's oppression of women. This opposition is made more clear, perhaps, when one considers the simultaneity of the Islamic Revolution with women's liberation movements in the U.S. and Europe, both developing throughout the 1970s. Neshat decided to explore this fraught symbol in her art as a way to reconcile her own conflicting feelings. In *Women of Allah*, initiated shortly after her return to Iran in 1991, the veil functions as both a symbol of freedom and of repression.

The veil and the gaze

The veil is intended to protect women's bodies from becoming the sexualized object of the male gaze, but it also protects women from being seen at all. The "gaze" in this context becomes a charged signifier of sexuality, sin, shame, and power. Neshat is

cognizant of feminist theories that explain how the "male gaze" is normalized in visual and popular culture: Women's bodies are commonly paraded as objects of desire in advertising and film, available to be looked at without consequence. Many feminist artists have used the action of "gazing back" as a means to free the female body from this objectification. The gaze, here, might also reflect exotic fantasies of the East. In **Orientalist painting** of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for instance, Eastern women are often depicted nude, surrounded by richly colored and patterned textiles and decorations; women are envisaged amongst other beautiful objects that can be possessed. In Neshat's images, women return the gaze, breaking free from centuries of subservience to male or European desire.



Figure 8.3.37: Shirin Neshat, *Faceless, Women of Allah* series, 1994, black and white RC print and ink, photo by Cynthia Preston ©Shirin Neshat (courtesy Barbara Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels)

Most of the subjects in the series are photographed holding a gun, sometimes passively, as in *Rebellious Silence*, and sometimes threateningly, with the muzzle pointed directly towards the camera lens. With the complex ideas of the "gaze" in mind, we might reflect on the double meaning of the word "shoot," and consider that the camera—especially during the colonial era—was used to violate women's bodies. The gun, aside from its obvious references to control, also represents religious martyrdom, a subject about which the artist feels ambivalently, as an outsider to Iranian revolutionary culture.

Poetry

The contradictions between piety and violence, empowerment and suppression, are most prevalent in the use of calligraphic text that is applied to each photograph. Western viewers who do not read Farsi may understand the calligraphy as an aesthetic signifier, a reference to the **importance of text** in the long history of Islamic art. Yet, most of the texts are transcriptions of poetry and other writings by women, which express multiple viewpoints and date both before and after the Revolution. Some of the texts that Neshat has chosen are feminist in nature. However, in *Rebellious Silence*, the script that runs across the artist's face is from Tahereh Saffarzadeh's poem "Allegiance with Wakefulness" which honors the conviction and bravery of martyrdom. Reflecting the paradoxical nature of each of these themes, histories and discourses, the photograph is both melancholic and powerful—invoking the quiet and intense beauty for which Neshat's work has become known.

As an outspoken, feminist and progressive artist, Neshat is aware that it would be dangerous to show her work in conservative modern-day Iran, and she has been living in exile in the United States since the 1990s. For audiences in the West, the "Women of Allah" series has allowed a more nuanced contemplation of common stereotypes and assumptions about Muslim women, and serves to challenge the suppression of female voices in any community.

[1] **Shirin Neshat, "Artist Statement," *Signs Journal*** (accessed July 2015)



Video 8.3.4

Additional resources:

Neshat at Gladstone Gallery

Neshat on NPR (audio)

Neshat from LACMA

Interview with Neshat from PBS

Pepón Osorio, *En la barberia no se llora (No Crying Allowed in the Barbershop)*

by DR. MAYA JIMÉNEZ

The Puerto Rico born artist Pepón Osorio trained as a sociologist and became a social worker in the South Bronx. His work is inspired by each of these experiences and is rooted in the spaces, experiences, and people of American Latino culture, particularly Nuyorican communities (Nuyorican refers to the Puerto Rican diaspora living in New York, especially New York City). Osorio's large-scale installations are meant for a local audience, yet they have also been exhibited in mainstream cultural institutions (though after the 1993 Whitney Biennial, Osorio vowed to show his work first within the community, and then elsewhere).



Figure 8.3.38: Pepón Osorio, *En la barbaria no se llora (No Crying Allowed in the Barbershop)*, 1994 Installation at Real Art Ways, Hartford, Connecticut, mixed media installation with barbers' chairs, photographs, objects and videos (Collection of the Museum de Arte de Puerto Rico) (photo by Pepón Osorio)

Nuyorican

Puerto Rico is a United States territory. Its residents are United States citizens and carry an American passport, yet they cannot vote in presidential elections or have representatives voting for their interests in Washington. This sense of marginality is further complicated when one considers that Nuyoricans often retain a distinct sense of cultural pride that is informed by their dual American and Puerto Rican identities.

Having lived both experiences—that of a Puerto Rican and Nuyorican—Osorio is best known for large-scale installations that address street life, cultural clashes, and the rites of passage experienced by Puerto Ricans in the United States. Outside the traditional museum setting, and commissioned by Real Art Ways (RAW) from Hartford, Connecticut, *En la barberia no se llora* (*No Crying Allowed in the Babershop*) is a mixed-media installation located in the Puerto Rican community of Park Street in

Hartford. Created in collaboration with local residents, Osorio engaged the public through conversation, workshops, and artistic collaborations. The art itself is visually lavish—his installations have often been dubbed "Nuyorican Baroque" (a reference to the seventeenth-century style characterized by theatricality and opulence and found in both Europe and Latin America).

Masculinity

Inspired from his first haircut in Santurce, Puerto Rico, Osorio recreates the space of the barbershop as one that is intensely packed with "masculine" symbols like barber chairs, car seats, sports paraphernalia, depictions of sperm and a boy's circumcision, phallic symbols, and male action figurines. Osorio boldly challenges the idea of masculinity, and particularly of machismo (a strong sense of masculine pride), in Latino communities.

Chucherías



Figure 8.3.39: Detail of Pepón Osorio, *The Scene of the Crime (Whose Crime?)* installation at The New Museum, 1993 (photo: **Hrag Vartanian**, CC BY-ND 2.0)

Spanish for trinkets or knick-knacks, and known to art historians as kitsch (mass produced objects characterized by—or ironically admired for—their bad taste), *chucherías* overpopulate Osorio's work. These include Puerto Rican flags, religious ornaments, plastic toys, dolls, ribbons, beads, etc., all of which function—to quote art historian Anna Indych-Lopez—as a "gesture of cultural resistance," presented as something universal yet personal.[1] The *chucherías* included in the installation *En la barberia no se llora*, (a flag, fake foliage, baseballs, framed portraits of famous Latin American and Latino men), serve to localize the work, yet these objects also raise issues of social class expressed here through taste, and the distinction between high and low art—effectively straddling a fine line between cultural celebration and social critique.

Video

One prominent aspect of *En la barberia no se llora* are the video installations featuring Latino men from Park Street in stereotypically "masculine" poses. The men vary in age. Osorio included older men from the retirement home, Casa del Elderly, presenting the issue of machismo as multi-generational and deeply ingrained in Nuyorican culture. As a foil to this construction, the artist also included videos of men crying, with the public reacting both in sympathy and disgust.

These same men then participated in workshops, in which they discussed how notions of masculinity had shaped their personal relationships as brothers, husbands, and fathers. Despite this participation of men, most of the visitors to the barbershop installation were, in fact, women.[2]

While *En la barberia no se llora (No Crying Allowed in the Babershop)* challenges definitions of masculinity, it also brings up—in a more subtle way—the relationship between machismo and homophobia, violence, and infidelity, and the ways in which popular culture, religion, and politics help craft these identities and issues.

1. "Nuyorican Baroque: Pepón Osorio's Chucherías," *Art Journal*, vol.60, issue 1, 2001, p. 75.

2. Erika Suderburg, Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art (University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 323.

Additional resources:

Pepón Osorio from art21 (video)

Pepón Osorio from the Ronald Feldman Gallery

Tracey Emin, *My Bed*

by DR. TOM FOLLAND

A Young British Artist



Figure 8.3.40: Tracey Emin, *My Bed*, 1998 (**Tate Britain**)

In 1998 the British artist Tracey Emin spent several days languishing in bed as the result of depression. When she emerged, she decided to turn the experience into art and the result was *My Bed*, an installation that consisted of her unmade bed and an assortment of sundry personal items associated with her time spent there. This was not the first time Emin made art about things that many would consider excruciatingly personal. She once exhibited, as art, a package of cigarettes belonging to an uncle killed in a car crash. In 1997, she created an installation entitled *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963–1995*, which was a tent appliquéd with the requisite names. Parts of *My Bed* were so shocking—it included soiled underwear for example—that she became a tabloid sensation.



Figure 8.3.41: Tracey Emin, *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963 – 1995*, 1995, appliquéd tent, mattress and light, 122 x 245 x 214 cm (**Saatchi Gallery**)

Emin was part of a group of artists who had studied at Goldsmith College and Royal College of Art in London and were dubbed the **YBAs** (Young British Artists). Members of this ad hoc group, including **Damien Hirst**, Sarah Lucas, Liam Gillick, and Gary Hume among others, very quickly coalesced into a movement, and began exhibiting together in warehouses and other informal spaces during the late 1980s. Hirst had organized the exhibition *Freeze*, widely acknowledged to have been the movement's origin, at an abandoned space in the London Docklands in 1988.



Figure 8.3.42: Damien Hirst, *Mother and Child (Divided)*, exhibition copy 2007 (original 1993), glass, stainless steel, Perspex, acrylic paint, cow, calf and formaldehyde solution, 2 parts: 208.6 × 322.5 × 109.2 cm, 208.6 × 322.5 × 109.2 cm (**Tate Britain**)



Figure 8.3.43: Sarah Lucas, *Self Portrait with Fried Eggs*, 1996, digital print on paper, 74.5 x 51.4 cm (**Tate Britain**)

YBA works quickly became associated with sensationalism and shock value, the impact of which was only heightened by the prevailing decade of **postmodern art** which, to a younger generation of artists, had increasingly become depersonalized and too reliant upon a dense theoretical framework. I remember an art school at the time in Canada issuing a call for work for a student exhibition with a list of caveats including "No hand wringing over the relationship between signifier and signified" (a reference to semiotic theory popular at the time). Everywhere it seemed a reaction to slick postmodernism was to be found in a return to a less technologically-mediated reality. The more visceral the better. Well-known YBA artworks include a calf suspended in formaldehyde (Damien Hirst), a sculpture of two fried eggs and a kebab arranged in the shape of a female body (Sarah Lucas) and of course Emin's *My Bed*, which scandalized a British public with its frank portrayal of the detritus of four days of depression spent in bed.

Shock value

Shock is of course not new in art; the art-going public have been routinely scandalized at least as far back as the nineteenth century, when artists first **went against accepted norms** for what constitutes art. The significance of Emin's installation, however, lies beyond its shock value. After all, shock is generally a short-lived phenomenon. Emin went on to become a nominee in 1999 for the Turner Prize, a prestigious visual arts award given annually in Britain. So what makes *My Bed* important as an artwork? Emin subjects to scrutiny one of the most abiding beliefs of art in Western modernism—the notion that art is always autobiographical, a reflection of the artist's inner being.



Figure 8.3.44: Albrecht Dürer, *Melencolia I*,1514, engraving, 24 x 18.5 cm (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

As Western art increasingly became governed by more individualistic approaches to style and as religious and royal patronage gave way to the marketplace in the nineteenth century, the association of art with individual identity became an accepted norm. "Every painter paints himself" is a phrase known since the renaissance and it is a metaphor of this very idea that art is always an expression of the self at its core. But what does it actually mean? What aspect of self is expressed? When pressed, one is hard put to offer anything other than the most generic response: it represents emotions or feelings and perhaps a sensibility. What Emin does is take

the meaning of self at its most literal sense and in the most provocative way possible. She does however present a portrait of the melancholic artist that references a tradition stretching as far back as the German renaissance artist Albrecht Dürer's 1514 engraving ***Melencolia I,*** an allegorical winged female figure in a state of pensive gloom considered to be a portrait of the artist himself. But Emin's is an unvarnished and unidealized version of depression in which glorified myths of the artist are shed in favor of a frankly visceral portrait of an artist who has spent her days in bed drinking and having sex. Emin perverts that tradition and therein lies its challenge to conventional taste.

A new conceptual art



Figure 8.3.45: Chris Burden, *Through the Night Softly*, 1973, performance (**Gagosian**)

In the 1990s, as artists searched for new alternatives, many considered **conceptual art** of the 1970s an unfinished project. While rooted in conceptual art, postmodernism's focus on media spectacle and consumer objects had become too tied to a market-oriented idea of the art world. Artists began revisiting the strategies of earlier artists, particularly the more visceral bodily experience that was an important aspect of conceptual art. The unflinching realness of Emin's bed would not have been possible in the postmodern '80s but it certainly existed in the 1970s when artists like Chris Burden crawled through broken glass (*Through the Night Softly*, 1973), or had himself nailed to the front of a car (*Trans-fixed*, 1974).

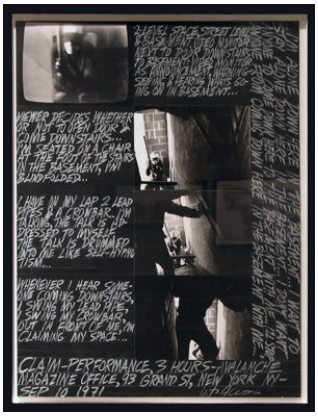


Figure 8.3.46: Vito Acconci, *Claim Performance*, 1971, graphite, pastel and black & white photograph collage mounted on board, 58 x 71 cm

From 1968 to 1971 **Valie Export** toured European cities with a structure made of styrofoam that allowed people to reach inside it and touch her breasts. The artist **Vito Acconci** had himself blindfolded in the basement of a gallery, and armed with metal pipes and a crowbar, would threaten to swing at anyone who came near (*Claim*, 1971). Challenging conventional ideas around artistic creativity, as these artists did, is, in fact, a venerable tradition in modern and contemporary art. Artists continually renew the conditions and parameters of what constitutes art or artistic authorship.

Much like conceptual artists who rejected the medium of painting as too conventional in favor of newer and more experimental forms and ideas, Emin had abandoned painting and even went so far as to destroy many of them. In a famous argument with artist and boyfriend Billy Childish, she referred to his paintings as "stuck" in time. In response, Childish formed a movement called "Stuckism" which promoted painting and creative expression while denouncing Emin's brand of conceptual art. "Stuckism" would prove to be short-lived, but Emin's *My Bed* would become one of the most resonant works of the 1990s.

Additional resources:

Read more about the YBAs at Smarthistory

Tracey Emin's works at Tate Britain

Kiki Smith, *Lying with the Wolf*

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG



Figure 8.3.47: Kiki Smith, *Lying with the Wolf*, 2001, ink and pencil on paper 88 x 73″ (Centre Pompidou, Paris) © Kiki Smith

This delicate but large-scale work on paper, which depicts a female nude reclining intimately alongside a wolf, represents the assimilation of several themes that Kiki Smith has explored throughout her decades-long career. Featuring an act of bonding between human and animal, the piece speaks not only to Smith's fascination with and reverence for the natural world, but also her noted interests in religious narratives and mythology, the history of figuration in western art, and contemporary notions of feminine domesticity, spiritual yearning, and sexual identity.

Lying with the Wolf is one in a short series of works executed between 2000 and 2002 that illustrates women's relationships with animals, drawing from representations found in visual, literary, and oral histories. Smith is most interested in narratives that speak to collectively shared mythologies; these include folk tales, biblical stories and Victorian literature, yet the once-familiar stories are then fragmented and conflated with one another to form new clusters of meaning and association.

Intimate Relationships with Nature



Figure 8.3.48: Kiki Smith, *Rapture*, 2001, bronze, 67-1/4 x 62 x 26-1/2″, edition of 3, © Kiki Smith

Many of Smith's works from this period feature a female protagonist who is based on Little Red Riding Hood as well Sainte Geneviève, the Patron Saint of Paris. Geneviève is herself often associated with Saint Francis of Assisi because of her close relationships with animals and her ability, in particular, to domesticate wolves.

Other works in the series include *Geneviève and the May Wolf*—a bronze sculpture in which a standing female figure calmly embraces the wolf—and *Rapture*, which is perhaps more closely aligned to Red Riding Hood, as it depicts a woman stepping out from the stomach of the recumbent creature.

The pair as depicted in *Lying with the Wolf*, however, seems locked in a more intimate embrace, as the wolf nuzzles affectionately into the nude woman's arms. She wraps herself around the animal's body in a gesture of comforting, her fingers stroking the soft fur beneath its ears and along the side of its stomach. The wolf's wildness is tamed, and both figures seem to nurture one another, floating within the abstract space of the textured paper surface upon which they are delicately drawn. Smith imbues a story that is normally quite violent with a kind of tenderness that is characteristic of her overall aesthetic.

Feminist Approaches to Narrative

It has been suggested by some critics that Smith's reinterpretations of Red Riding Hood and Sainte Geneviève represent a feminist approach to popular folktales. This is supported by her placement of "woman" amidst the natural world, but also, importantly, at a structural level: in the way in which the two narratives are fragmented and combined. Borrowing from divergent sources in order to forge a new storyline, Smith demonstrates the slippery relationship between a visual image and its multiple references, adopting a narrative style indebted to feminist re-writings of history.

As the curator Helaine Posner has explained: "Instead of presenting them in their traditional roles as predator and prey, Smith re-imagined these characters as companions, equals in purpose and scale." The distinction between "predator" and "prey" might be thought of as a metaphor for hierarchies of power in human relationships, which have traditionally been drawn along the lines of gender, race, and class. Because patriarchal societies typically grant more power to men, while requiring women to be submissive or dependent, we can think of this "overturning" in Smith's art as a political statement against such inequalities. The artistic narratives portrayed in her work are ones in which binaries are flipped and opposing qualities are merged; in so doing, Smith asserts a critical feminist position that favors the articulation of multiple meanings.

"Walking Around in a Garden"

"My career has stopped being linear. A couple of years ago, the story line or narrative fell apart…"[1]

As is the case with *Lying with the Wolf*, several of Smith's works integrate a diverse list of themes and motifs that she has accumulated over the course of her career. The artist continuously re-imagines tropes she has used in past works, with the result that her practice does not seem to progress through discrete artistic stages. Rather, she works in cycles and layers; she has described her career as an act of meandering, or "walking around in a garden."

Kiki Smith grew up in a vibrant artistic family; she is the daughter of the sculptor Tony Smith and the opera singer Jane Lawrence Smith. She has spoken fondly of the Victorian house in which she was raised in South Orange, New Jersey, and how it captured her young imagination, as a historical artifact with its own memories and indices to the past. The notion of "home" has been central to her practice, and she likens it to the human body, a theme that is pervasive across her oeuvre. Domesticity, fragility, and the humble materials of craft and folk arts feature strongly in her work.

Abjection and The Body

While Kiki Smith's early work is aligned with the collaborative and activist art scene of the 1980s, she became known for intimate explorations of the human body in the following decade, often through life-sized sculpture that honored the figural tradition in Western art.



Figure 8.3.49: Kiki Smith, *Blood Pool*, 1992, wax, gauze, and pigment, 42 x 24 x 16″, © Kiki Smith

These works emphasized the body's vulnerability and made reference to feminist theories of the "abject," which conceived of the body as a messy, porous, and boundary-less system. *Blood Pool*, for instance, features a small, apparently violated figure, huddled into a fetal position on the floor . Many other works of this period feature bodily fluids or marks of injury.

Mysticism and Mythologies

Throughout the 1990s, Smith would come to embrace her religious upbringing, creating works that are spiritual, ethereal, and markedly more decorative. Celestial motifs and references to the natural world became ubiquitous, although these themes are still deeply connected to the body. As an investigation of the body in its capacity for fertility, reproduction, and nurturing, this turn towards the natural environment would eventually lead Smith to her interest in animals and our connections to them.

Lying with the Wolf is an extension of this yearning to connect the earthly with the spiritual and the personal with the collective.

1. As quoted in Christopher Lyon, "Free Fall: Kiki Smith on Her Art" in *Kiki Smith*, ed. Helaine Posner and Christopher Lyon, New York, NY: The Monacelli Press, Inc: page 37.

Wangechi Mutu, *Preying Mantra*

by DR. SHAWNYA L. HARRIS



Figure 8.3.50: Wangechi Mutu, *Preying Mantra*, 2006, mixed media on mylar (Brooklyn Museum) © Wangechi Mutu, all rights reserved

Using the medium of collage, the artist Wangechi Mutu creates new worlds that re-imagine culture through the realm of fantasy. Mutu was born in Nairobi, Kenya and educated in Europe and the United States. Her art is global in nature and she clearly relishes complicating both Western and non-Western cultural norms, questioning how we see gender, sexuality, and even cultural identity.

Wangechi Mutu's artistic practice includes video, installation, sculpture, and mixed-media collage. One of her recurrent themes concerns the violence of colonial domination in Africa (particularly in her native Kenya). Her images incorporate the female body, specifically an imagined "African" body, subjected to sexism and racism on a global scale.

Sources for Mutu's collages include fragments from fashion magazines, pornography, medical literature or even popular magazines such as National Geographic. Inspiration for her collages can be traced to the early photomontages of the German Dada artist Hannah Höch (below left) and the American artist Romare Bearden (below right). Mutu appreciates Bearden's use of collage—how it emphasizes community and the African American traditions found in jazz, while the spliced images in Höch's photomontages reflect Mutu's interest in disrupting societal convention in art. Mutu creates a space for exploring an informed consciousness about being "African" and female that incorporate these artists' techniques yet develops a new visual vocabulary.



Figure 8.3.50: Left: Hannah Höch, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada Through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany*, collage, mixed media, 1919-1920 (Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin); right: Romare Bearden, *The Calabash*, 1970, collage (Library of Congress)

Preying Mantra centers on female subjectivity, exoticism and the notion of hybridity—both in concept and imagery. Hybridity is a concept often used in postcolonial studies. It describes how mixing the cultures of colonized and the colonizer can produce a third space for newer and often disruptive understanding of cultural identity. Colonialism in Africa, which began in earnest in the nineteenth century, violently wrested power from Africans for the benefit of European nations through the enforcement of strict military and administrative controls. As colonialism waned during the mid-twentieth century, other social and political issues emerged. Mutu's work was shaped by this complex history and by issues such as the rights of women that came to the fore at the end of the century.

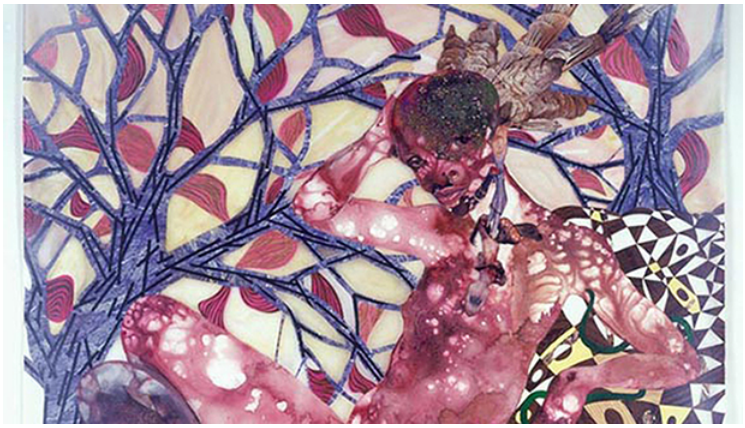


Figure 8.3.51: Wangechi Mutu, *Preying Mantra* (detail), 2006, mixed media on mylar (Brooklyn Museum) © Wangechi Mutu, all rights reserved

In Mutu's *Preying Mantra*, a female creature appears to recline on a geometrically patterned blanket that is sprawled between trees or perhaps on a tree branch. The blanket resembles a Kuba cloth (traditional fabric created by the Kuba people). Legs tightly crossed in front of her, the figure stares suggestively at the viewer with her right hand positioned behind her head, which is surmounted by a cone-like crown. Her relaxed posture is camouflaged by her skin, which appears dappled by sunlight and which mirrors the colors of the tree's leaves. Like the female body, the tree is emblematic of the creation myths found in many cultures, including Mutu's Kikuyu ancestors in Kenya. In her left hand, the figure holds a green serpent that rests on the blanket which fills much of the scene. The serpent, linked with the role of Eve in the biblical creation narrative, provides yet another cultural source for Mutu's protagonist. The tree envelops the female figure, reinforcing links between history and fiction, African and Non-African cultural myths as well as natural versus unnatural phenomena.



Figure 8.3.52: Wangechi Mutu, *Preying Mantra* (detail), 2006, mixed media on mylar (Brooklyn Museum) © Wangechi Mutu, all rights reserved

The title *Preying Mantra*, recalls the praying mantis—an insect that resembles the protagonist in Mutu's collage, with her prominently bent legs. As a carnivorous insect, praying mantises camouflage themselves to match their environment, snaring their prey with their enormous legs. During mating, the female can become a sexual cannibal—eating her submissive mate. Such imagery and its association with natural phenomena creates a primal sensibility. Despite this reference to a real praying mantis, Mutu's "preying mantra" is also vulnerable to our gaze, suggesting that the figure may be a victim that is "preyed" upon by "mantras." Mutu creates a natural, even primitive, fictional environment that entices and disturbs us even as she invites us to explore stereotypes about the African female body as explicitly sexual, dangerous, and aesthetically deformed in relation to Western standards. Given that elements of the collage are assembled from sociocultural documents found in popular literature from the West, the figure may be preying on the viewer's own fears and desires.



Video 8.3.5



Video 8.3.6

Additional resources:

This work at the Brooklyn Museum

Wangechi Mutu on Failure (Art21 Magazine)

Wangechi Mutu (Art21 Blog)

Wangechi Mutu + Santigold – The End of eating Everything – Nasher Museum at Duke, animated video by Mutu

Artist Breakfast With Wangechi Mutu (artnet video)

Wangechi Mutu: A Fantastic Journey (video from the Brooklyn Museum)

Trevor Schoonmaker, *Wangechi Mutu: A Fantastic Journey* (North Carolina: Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, 2013)

Marina Abramović, *The Artist is Present*

by REBECCA TAYLOR



Figure 8.3.53: Marina Abramović sitting with Rebecca Taylor at *The Artist is Present* performance at The Museum of Modern Art, 2010

Transcendence

"Sit silently with the artist for a duration of your choosing"—so the instructions read on a small plaque in the second-floor atrium at The Museum of Modern Art. Behind the plaque, a queue of visitors forms, eager to enter a large square space—demarcated only by tape on the floor—to sit down at a wooden table across from a dark-haired woman in a navy-blue dress that conceals every part of her body save her face and her hands.

The woman is the pioneering artist Marina Abramović, but its likely that few of the people in line have any sense of this woman's indelible impact on contemporary art. As I wait, an anthology of her performances scrolling through my head. Watching her from afar, I look to see the courage and fearlessness in a woman capable of incising a five-pointed star on her own stomach, screaming until she loses consciousness, and living in a gallery for 12 days without food. Strangely, she doesn't seem reckless at all, but peaceful and wise. I then remember she trained with Tibetan Buddhists and has said she's able to transcend the limits of her own body and mind through meditation. She'll need these skills now more than ever as she attempts her longest performance-to-date, sitting at this table for every hour of every day that her retrospective is open at MoMA. No food. No water. No breaks.

My turn

So, I wait for my moment with the artist, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. A young girl is sitting across from Marina and the two seem engaged in a staring contest, though from that distance it's impossible to tell if they're actually making eye contact or simply staring ahead in a daze. Seventy-five minutes later she finally stands up and exits the square, declaring she lost all sense of time and thought it had only been a few minutes. Marina leans forward and closes her eyes, while the next sojourner steps forward and takes the empty seat. Marina sits up and another staring contest commences—this one lasting sixty-seven minutes. This process repeats—ten minutes, fifty-five minutes, twenty minutes, forty-five minutes, etc. Finally, the man in front of me takes the seat and I'm next. More than three hours from when I entered the succession I've seen only six people participate in the performance and more than thirty leave the line in frustration. The nameless, faceless strangers I queued with hours ago are now friends—an artist from

Poughkeepsie, an art history undergrad from Chicago, a nurse from outside Philly—and we share our excitement as our turn approaches. Finally, after nearly four hours, my time has come.

I enter the square and approach the table, immediately noting the heat of the lights and the watchful eyes of the crowds gathered to gawk at the spectacle. I put my purse on the floor and take a seat. While Marina leans forward, I settle into the chair and imagine I'll last about ten minutes before I become either bored or totally uncomfortable. She begins to sit up and I try to prepare myself for the moment she opens her eyes. I have many skills, but sitting still and being silent are not traits I'm known for, so I was afraid: afraid of the judgment implicit in staring, afraid of the silence, afraid I wouldn't have the transformative experience that had captivated those before me, afraid, afraid, afraid. Her lids opened and our eyes locked, not in a stare but in a friendly gaze. For the first few minutes, I thought only about who this woman was—a renegade, a feminist, an inspiration—but quickly realized that those things were more about her persona than the person. I discarded my preconceived notions and expectations and, as soon as I stopped thinking of her as an artist-celebrity, saw the woman behind the legend. We sat absolutely still in deafening silence, exchanging energy, and just being with each other. I've heard it said that couples married for decades can sit in silence and understand one another perfectly, but I'd never imagine that sort of intimacy could be possible between two total strangers. It is.

I could have stayed in that moment for hours but thought of my fellow line-mates, now friends, and decided it would be selfish to bask in this experience any longer. But, could I leave? It felt as rude as leaving a lecture in the middle. How would I leave? Abruptly just wouldn't do, so I said good-bye and thanked her. More than thirty minutes had passed, thirty minutes of epic silence I'll never forget.

Additional Resources:

MoMA exhibition website

"Performance Art Preserved, in the Flesh," *New York Times* article, 2010

Turning Uncle Tom's Cabin upside down, Alison Saar's Topsy

by DR. HALONA NORTON-WESTBROOK, TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART and DR. BETH HARRIS

Jason and the Golden Fleece and the American anti-Slavery novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin combine to upend our own contemporary myths



Additional resources

This sculpture at the museum

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Banality and kitsch

Artists deploy mass-produced images to critique the impact of consumer culture and Modernism's disengagement with the everyday world.

1980 - now

Damien Hirst, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*

by SAL KHAN, DR. BETH HARRIS and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.4.1: Damien Hirst, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*, 1991

Jeff Koons, *Pink Panther*

by DR. TOM FOLLAND



Figure 8.4.1: Jeff Koons, *Pink Panther*, 1988, glazed porcelain, 104.1 x 52 x 48.2 cm (The Museum of Modern Art, New York) (photo: LP, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

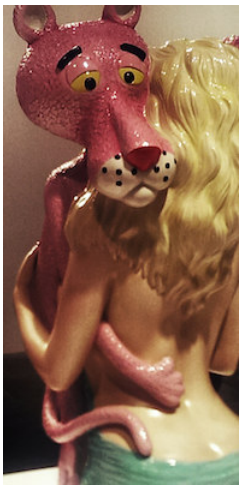


Figure 8.4.2: Jeff Koons, *Pink Panther*, 1988, glazed porcelain, 104.1 x 52 x 48.2 cm (The Museum of Modern Art, New York) (photo: **Jack Zalium**, CC BY-ND 2.0)

Banality

Imagine walking into an art gallery and seeing overgrown toys, or cartoon characters presented as sculpture. If, in 1988, you had wandered into the Sonnabend Gallery on West Broadway in New York City, this is indeed what you would have witnessed: it was an exhibition entitled "Banality" by New York artist Jeff Koons presenting some twenty sculptures in porcelain and polychromed wood. The work certainly strikes as an affront to taste: the sculptures are highly polished and gleaming. The colors—muted pale blue, pink, lavender, green and yellowish gold—seem to belong to the 1950s and 60s. The glossy textures look garish and factory-made, surfaces one associates with inexpensive commercial art. One would almost want to call these sculptures "figurines" were it not for their size. To add to this catalogue of horrors, the artist had farmed out the actual production to German and Italian artisans who made each work in triplicate! "Banality" thus debuted simultaneously in New York, Chicago, and Cologne.

A glazed porcelain statue entitled *Pink Panther* belongs to that body of work. It depicts a smiling, bare-breasted, blond woman scantily clad in a mint-green dress, head tilted back and to the left as if addressing a crowd of onlookers. The figure is based on the 1960s B-list Hollywood star Jayne Mansfield—here she clutches a limp pink panther in her left hand, while her right hand covers an exposed breast. From behind one sees that the pink panther has its head thrown over her shoulder and wears an expression of hapless weariness. It too is a product of Hollywood fantasy—the movie of the same name debuted the cartoon character in 1963. The colors are almost antiquated; do they harken back to the popular culture of a pre-civil rights era as a politically regressive statement of nostalgia? And what about the female figure—posed in a state of deshabille (carelessly and partially undressed)? At a time of increased feminist presence in the still male-dominated art world this could only be perceived as a rearguard move. Or was Koons—a postmodern provocateur like no other—simply parodying male authority as he had done in some of his other work?

Postmodernism: the artist as critic of mass culture

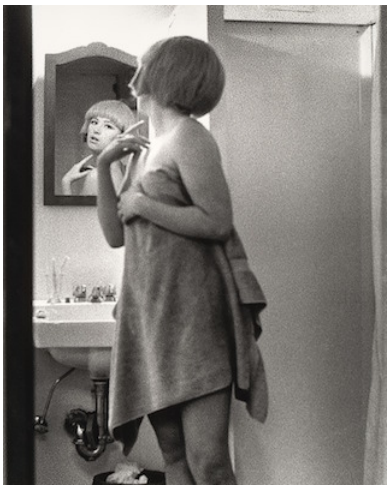


Figure 8.4.3: Cindy Sherman, *Untitled Film Still #2*, 1977, gelatin silver print, 24.1 x 19.2 cm (The Museum of Modern Art, New York)

Provocation is a mainstay of the modernist avant-gardes reaching at least as back as far as when Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* of 1917, an ordinary urinal, was proposed as an artwork ("avant-garde" refers to artists whose work challenges established ideas). But whereas Duchamp eventually accrued near-mythical status, that same critical reception for Koons was not forthcoming—in fact, he would become one of the first artists of this period to achieve a level of success that depended more on the art market than on art criticism. He is still reviled. Only recently a review described Koons as "Duchamp with lots of ostentatious trimmings."[1] It's easy to see why he has continued to provoke: the postmodern 1980s inaugurated the contemporary sense of the artist as a critical and serious interrogator of mass culture and mass media. Cindy Sherman, one of the most prominent artists of that period, made photographs of herself that paraded the clichés of femininity before an audience that consumed critical theory about the constructed nature of reality and the oppressive manipulations of mass media. Her work was understood as a deconstruction (shorthand for the examination and analysis of the elements) of gender stereotypes. Another prominent postmodern artist of the period, Krzysztof Wodcizko, used high-powered projectors to cast politically charged imagery onto corporate façades after dark—imagery that often pointed to economic and social contradictions and prompted public discourse within an ephemeral and often provocative, public space.

Artists—postmodern artists—were supposed to counter the banality of evil that lurked behind public and popular culture, not giddily revel in it as Koons seemed to do. There appeared to be nothing serious about any of the works in the "Banality" exhibition: a life-sized bust of pop icon Michael Jackson and his pet monkey Bubbles; a ribbon-necked pig—especially egregious—in polychromed wood escorted by cherubic youths, two of which are winged. And of course *Pink Panther*, a work that seemed destined to insult rather than inform. It all seemed like kitsch posing as high art.



Figure 8.4.4: Jeff Koons, *Michael Jackson and Bubbles*, 1988, ceramic, glaze and paint, on view at Versailles, 2014 (photo: **Jean-Pierre Dalbéra**, CC BY 2.0)

Kitsch

What is kitsch? The American art critic Clement Greenberg once defined it as the opposite of what a truly progressive, avant-garde modernism embodied. Greenberg advocated for a modern art that was true to its materials, such as the gestural abstractions of New York School artists like Jackson Pollock, who splattered and spilled paint in abstract fashion on unprimed canvas—declaring a direct creative confrontation that was raw and honest. Kitsch, a word of German origin, refers to mass-produced imagery designed to please the broadest possible audience with objects of questionable taste (think of objects and images with popular, sentimental subject matter and style). Postmodern art attacked Greenberg's influential theory of modern art, creating images in direct opposition to modernism. While modernism championed painting, form and originality, postmodernism foregrounded photography, subject matter, and the reproduction, and responded to modernism's search for the profound by presenting the quotidian and banal aspects of experience. Postmodernism grounded the rarified atmosphere of genius that was prevalent in modernism in the politics of everyday life.



Figure 8.4.5: “A Little Boo Boo,” Hummel figurine, porcelain

But postmodernism stopped short of fully embracing kitsch by insisting on a degree of self-aware critical distance. This is where Koons found a fault line that he fully exploited with works like *Pink Panther*. Hummel figurines and other popular collector’s items are the basis for the art in “Banality.” Koons rendered these saccharine and sentimental little figural groupings—cartoonish emblems of childhood innocence—at a life-size scale as an assault upon sincerity but also as an assault upon taste, and it is here that even the most daring of postmodern advocates drew a line in the sand. Like the modernist distinction between art and an everyday object drawn by Greenberg, *Pink Panther* challenged the distinction between an ironic appropriation of a mass-culture object and the object itself (seemingly without critical distance) thereby challenging the whole critical enterprise of postmodernism itself.

1. Jed Perl, “**The Cult of Jeff Koons**,” *The New York Review of Books*, September 25, 2014

Additional resources:

New York Times topic page: Jeff Koons

Jeff Koons (from art21)

“The Cult of Jeff Koons” from the NY Review of Books (2014)

Krzysztof Wodiczko: Projections (documentary video)

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, *Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People)*

by DR. SUZANNE NEWMAN FRICKE



Figure 8.4.5: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, *Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People)*, 1992, oil paint and mixed media, collage, objects, canvas, 152.4 x 431.8 cm (Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia) © Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

A Non-Celebration

As a response to the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in North America in 1992, the artist Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Nation, created a large mixed-media canvas called *Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People)*. *Trade*, part of the series "The Quincentenary Non-Celebration," illustrates historical and contemporary inequities between Native Americans and the United States government.

Trade references the role of trade goods in allegorical stories like the acquisition of the island of Manhattan by Dutch colonists in 1626 from unnamed Native Americans in exchange for goods worth 60 guilders or $24.00. Though more apocryphal than true, this story has become part of American lore, suggesting that Native Americans had been lured off their lands by inexpensive trade goods. The fundamental misunderstanding between the Native and non-Native worlds—especially the notion of private ownership of land—underlies *Trade*. Smith stated that if *Trade* could speak, it might say: "Why won't you consider trading the land we handed over to you for these silly trinkets that so honor us? Sound like a bad deal? Well, that's the deal you gave us."[1]



Figure 8.4.6: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, canoe (detail), *Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People)*, 1992, oil paint and mixed media, collage, objects, canvas, 152.4 x 431.8 cm (Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia) © Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

For *Trade*, Smith layered images, paint, and objects on the surface of the canvas, suggesting layers of history and complexity. Divided into three large panels, the triptych (three part) arrangement is reminiscent of a medieval altarpiece. Smith covered the canvas in collage, with newspaper articles about Native life cut out from her tribal paper *Char-Koosta*, photos, comics, tobacco and gum wrappers, fruit carton labels, ads, and pages from comic books, all of which feature stereotypical images of Native Americans.

She mixed the collaged text with photos of deer, buffalo, and Native men in historic dress holding pipes with feathers in their hair, and an image of Ken Plenty Horses—a character from one of Smith's earlier pieces, the *Paper Dolls for a Post Columbian World with Ensembles Contributed by US Government* from 1991-92.



Figure 8.4.7: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, toys and souvenirs (detail), *Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People)*, 1992, oil paint and mixed media, collage, objects, canvas, 152.4 x 431.8 cm (Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia) © Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

She applied blocks of white, yellow, green, and especially red paint over the layer of collaged materials. The color red had multiple meanings for Smith, referring to her Native heritage as well as to blood, warfare, anger, and sacrifice. With the emphasis on prominent brushstrokes and the dripping blocks of paint, Smith cited the Abstract Expressionist movement from the 1940s and 50s with raw brushstrokes describing deep emotions and social chaos. For a final layer, she painted the outline of an almost life-sized canoe. Canoes were used by Native Americans as well as non-Native explorers and traders in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth century to travel along the waterways of North America. The canoe suggests the possibility of trade and cultural connections—though this empty canoe is stuck, unable to move.



Figure 8.4.8: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, toys and souvenirs (detail), *Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People)*, 1992, oil paint and mixed media, collage, objects, canvas, 152.4 x 431.8 cm (Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia) © Jaune Quick-to-See Smith

Above the canvas, Smith strung a clothesline from which she dangled a variety of Native-themed toys and souvenirs, especially from sports teams with Native American mascots. The items include toy tomahawks, a child's headdress with brightly dyed feathers, Red Man chewing tobacco, a Washington Redskins cap and license plate, a Florida State Seminoles bumper sticker, a Cleveland Indian pennant and cap, an Atlanta Braves license plate, a beaded belt, a toy quiver with an arrow, and a plastic Indian doll. Smith offers these cheap goods in exchange for the lands that were lost, reversing the historic sale of land for trinkets. These items also serve as reminders of how Native life has been commodified, turning Native cultural objects into cheap items sold without a true understanding of what the original meanings were.

The Artist

The artist was born on January 15, 1940, at the St. Ignatius Jesuit Missionary on the Reservation of the Flathead Nation. Raised by her father, a rodeo rider and horse trader, Smith was one of eleven children. Her first name comes from the French word for "yellow" (jaune), a reminder of her French-Cree ancestors. Her middle name "Quick-to-See" was not a reference to her eyesight but was given by her Shoshone grandmother as a sign of her ability to grasp things readily. From an early age Smith wanted to be an artist; as a child, she had herself photographed while dressed as Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Though her father was not literate, education was important to Smith.



Figure 8.4.9: National Bison Range (near St. Ignatius, Flathead Reservation) (photo: **Jaix Chaix**, Check All Home Inspection Corp., CC BY-SA 2.0)

She received a bachelor of arts from Framingham State College in Massachusetts in 1976 in art education rather than in studio art because her instructors told her that no woman could have a career as an artist, though they acknowledged that she was more skilled than the men in her class. In 1980 she received a master of fine arts from the University of New Mexico. She was inspired by both Native and non-Native sources, including petroglyphs, Plains leger art, Diné saddle blankets, early Charles Russell prints of western landscapes, and paintings by twentieth-century artists such as Paul Klee, Joan Miró, Willem DeKooning, Jasper Johns, and especially Kurt Schwitters and Robert Rauschenberg (see image below). Both Schwitters and Rauschenberg brought objects from the quotidian world into their work, such as tickets, cigarette wrappers, and string.



Figure 8.4.10: Robert Rauschenberg, *Canyon*, 1959, oil, pencil, paper, metal, photograph, fabric, wood, canvas, buttons, mirror, taxidermied eagle, cardboard, pillow, paint tube and other materials, 207.6 x 177.8 x 61 cm (The Museum of Modern Art, New York) © 2014 Robert Rauschenberg Foundation

In addition to her work as an artist, Smith has curated over thirty exhibitions to promote and highlight the art of other Native artists. She has also lectured extensively, been an artist-in-residence at numerous universities, and has taught art at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico the only four-year university dedicated to teaching Native youth across North America. In her years as an artist, Smith has received many honors, including an Eitelijorg Fellowship in 2007, a grant from the Joan Mitchell Foundation to create a comprehensive archive of her work, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Women's Caucus for the Arts, the College Art Association's Committee on Women in the Arts award, the 2005 New Mexico Governor's award for excellence in the arts, as well as four honorary doctorate degrees.

Smith's art shares her view of the world, offering her personal perspective as an artist, a Native American, and a woman. Her work creates a dialogue between the art and its viewers and explores issues of Native identity as it is seen by both Native Americans and non-Natives. *Trade (Gifts for Trading Land with White People)* restates the standard narratives of the history of the United States, specifically the desire to expand beyond "sea to shining sea," as encompassed in the ideology of Manifest Destiny (the belief in the destiny of Western expansion), and raises the issue of contemporary inequities that are rooted in colonial experience.

1. Arlene Hirschfelder, ***Artists and Craftspeople, American Indian Lives***, New York: Facts On File, 1994, page 115.

Additional resources:

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

"Smith, Jaune Quick-to-See" in American Indian History Online

Lawrence Abbot, *I Stand in the Center of the Good: Interviews with Contemporary Native American Artists*, University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, 1994.

Carolyn Kastner, *Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: An American Modernist*, University of New Mexico Press: Albuquerque, 2013.

Melanie Herzog, "Building Bridges Across Canada: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith." *School Arts* (October 1992): 31–34.

Tricia Hurst, "Crossing Bridges: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, Helen Hardin, Jean Bales." *Southwest Art*, April 1981, 82–91.

Tricia Hurst, "Jaune Quick-to-See Smith," January 17–March 14, 1993. Norfolk, Virginia: Chrysler Museum, 1993.

Joni L. Murphy, "Beyond Sweetgrass: The Life and Art of Jaune Quick-To-See Smith." Ph.D. dissertation. University of Kansas, 2008.

Michel Tuffery, *Pisupo Lua Afe (Corned Beef 2000)*

by DR. BILLIE LYTHBERG



Figure 8.4.11: Michel Tuffery, *Pisupo Lua Afe (Corned Beef 2000)*, 1994, flattened cans of corned beef (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Collection) ©Michael Tuffery

What can a tin can bull teach us about ecological and population health issues in the Pacific? Michel Tuffery is one of New Zealand's best-known artists of Pacific descent, with links to Samoa, Rarotonga and Tahiti. He majored in printmaking at Dunedin's School of Fine Arts, and describes art quite literally as his first language because he didn't read, write or speak until he was 6 years old. Encouraged instead to express himself through drawing, he now aims artworks like *Pisupo Lua Afe* primarily at children, hoping to engage their curiosity and inspire them to care for both their own health and that of the environment.

Pisupo Lua Afe is one of Tuffery's most iconic works, made from hundreds of flattened corned beef tins, riveted together to form a series of life-sized bulls. Despite evident connections to Pop Art, especially Andy Warhol's celebrations of the humble *Campbell's Soup Cans* (1962), it's impossible to read this work solely in the terms of Western art history. So what is Tuffery trying to tell us?

Pisupo—canned food in the Pacific

Pisupo is the Samoan language version of "pea soup," which was the first canned food introduced into the Pacific Islands. *Pisupo* is now a generic term used to describe the many types of canned food that are eaten in the Islands—including corned beef. Not only is corned beef a favorite food source in the Islands, it has also become a ubiquitous part of the ceremonial gift economy. At weddings and birthdays, and other important life events both in the Islands and in Islander communities in New Zealand, gifts of treasured textiles like fine mats and decorated barkcloths are made alongside food items and cash money. But unlike the Island feast foods gifted at these events—such as pigs and large quantities of root vegetables—canned corned beef is a processed food high in saturated fat, salt and cholesterol (a type of fat that clogs arteries). These are all things that contribute to disproportionately high incidences of diabetes and heart disease in Pacific Island populations as diets formerly high in locally grown fruits and vegetables, seafood, coconut milk and flesh, give way to cheap, imported foodstuffs.

So Tuffery's sculpture is impossible to separate from the ceremonies at which brightly colored tins of corned beef now figure in large quantities. But these links to traditional economic exchanges and population health only tell part of the story. *Pisupo Lua Afe* also critiques serious issues of ecological health and food sovereignty. Tuffery is interested in the introduction of cattle to New Zealand and the Pacific Islands and how they impact negatively on the plants, landscapes and waterways of these countries, as well as how industrialized approaches to farming disrupt traditional food production.



Figure 8.4.12: Michel Tuffery, *Pisupo Lua Afe (Corned Beef 2000)*, 1994, flattened cans of corned beef (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Collection) ©Michael Tuffery

Look at *Pisupo Lua Afe*. It's literally a "tinned bull"—solid, hard-edged and weighty. Whereas a real cow has a visual softness suggested by its movements, eyes and coat, Tuffery's tin cans and rivets—overlapping like large metal scales— better convey the capacity of beef and dairy cattle to destroy fragile island eco-systems. Look closer—single out just one flattened can. Think about all the cans that were emptied to make *Pisupo Lua Afe*. Then think about all the cans that are emptied and discarded in the Pacific Islands each year. Tuffery is gesturing rather obviously towards the challenge of rubbish disposal in Island economies where creative "upcycling" of materials into new objects is often more common than the civic recycling regimes of larger cities and countries (upcycling refers to reusing discarded objects to create a product of a higher value). What use is there for thousands of empty tin cans? And what use are foods that cause ill health, damage the environment, and take up large swathes of land formerly used to grow healthier, indigenous foods? Especially when the Pacific Island nations under Tuffery's scrutiny are recipients of some of the worst products of such agricultural farming: fatty lamb flaps and turkey tails, and tinned corned beef.

Food sovereignty

Food sovereignty (sometimes called food security) is a great lens through which to view the various threads of traditional economic exchanges, population health, environmental degradation and industrialized food production introduced so far. Food sovereignty is the right of a nation and its peoples to decide who controls how, where and by whom their food is to be produced, and what that food will be. For Indigenous peoples in the Pacific, food and the environment are sacred gifts. There cannot be food sovereignty without control over food production and ownership, and without appropriate care of the environment.

Alongside *Pisupo Lua Afe* and his other tin can bulls, Tuffery has produced many artworks that address challenges to food sovereignty and the continued exploitation of Pacific Island resources, including the **taro leaf blight epidemic** in Samoa in 1993, and **drift net fishing** that is depleting fish stocks. For example, he's made fish tin sculptures, like his "tinned bull," which upcycle cans that hold another "staple" food in the Pacific: tinned mackerel. Tuffery made two of these for an exhibition called **Le Folauga**, shown in Auckland, New Zealand in 2007, which are now in the collection of the Auckland War Memorial Museum.



Asiasi [Yellowfin] II (2000), fish cans, copper, aluminium and polyurethane, 60 x 250 x 100 cm (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Collection) ©Michael Tuffery" aria-describedby="caption-attachment-12491" height="336" sizes="(max-width: 629px) 100vw, 629px" src="

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Figure 8.4.13: Michael Tuffery, *Asiasi [Yellowfin] II (2000)*, fish cans, copper, aluminium and polyurethane, 60 x 250 x 100 cm (Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Collection) ©Michael Tuffery

In the exhibition's catalogue he explained:

> ***O le Saosao Lapo'a and Asiasi I reflect on the ironic and irreversible impact that over-fishing and exploitation of the Pacific's natural resources has wrought on the traditional Pacific lifestyle. This includes changing virtually overnight the dietary habits of generations.***
>
> ***Is it co-incidental that significantly increasing health and dietary problems amongst Pacific Islanders has occurred during the same period that their premium fisheries catches are exported? And at the same time locals have experienced explosive growth of canned & other imported products flooding into the Pacific?***

Tuffery states the aims of his works very clearly. His fish tin sculptures are perhaps even more interesting and evocative because they are also functional fish-smokers used to cure and preserve fish. They have been used in this way at his exhibition openings, bringing a smoky, wood- and fish-scented haze to the gallery experience.

Firebreathing bulls?

Tuffery has also brought his "tinned beef" bulls to smoky life in various performative installations throughout the world, by installing fireworks inside their heads to give them the appearance of breathing fire. Mounted on castors with their necks articulated so their heads can be turned, he has staged bullfights with his fire breathing monsters, accompanied by drummers and groups of human performers issuing fierce challenges. But these performances have not been restricted to the sanctuary of the white walled gallery—these were performed outdoors, on city streets, to reach a community that might not otherwise come into the gallery to encounter his work.

Additional resources:

This work at the Museum of New Zealand

Waking up the Objects—Michel Tuffery talks about his practice (video)

Tales from Te Papa: *Pisupo Lua Afe* Michel Tuffery's fish tin sculptures (*Le Folauga*) (video)

Michel Tuffery and Patrice Kaikilekofe's artist performance *Povi tau vaga (The challenge)* 1999

Issue-based Assemblage Sculpture: *Pisupo lua afe (Corned Beef 2000)*, 1994 from the New Zealand Ministry of Education

Jennifer Hay, "*Povi Christlike (Christchurch Bull)* by Michael Tuffery"

Biography of the artist

More on Michael Tuffery from Tautai

Thiebaud, *Ponds and Streams*

by DR. LAUREN PALMOR, FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER

Can the commonplace working farmland of California's Sacramento River Valley be a place of of breathtaking beauty?



Video 8.4.2: Wayne Thiebaud, *Ponds and Streams*, 2001, acrylic on canvas, 182.9 x 152.4 cm (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, ©Wayne Thiebaud), a Seeing America video

Jeff Wall, *A View from an Apartment*

by DR. VIRGINIA B. SPIVEY



Figure 8.4.14: Jeff Wall, *A View from an Apartment*, 2004-05, transparency on lightbox, 1670 x 2440 mm © Jeff Wall, used by permission of the artist, special thanks to Sandy Heller, The Heller Group, LLC (Tate, London)

Jeff Wall's *A View from an Apartment* is a large photographic transparency displayed on an electric light-box. Characteristic of Wall's work, this format offers sharp figures in rich saturated colors, made even more intense by the lights that illuminate the image from behind. At almost 5 ½' x 8', the photograph approaches human scale. It's as though the viewer could simply walk into the scene—or that the women in the image might walk out.

At first glance, this appears to be an ordinary genre scene. The large scale and striking detail draw the viewer closer to examine the image—the modern decor, the half-finished laundry, a cluttered coffee table. One woman walks forward while folding a cloth napkin; another pauses at a magazine page that's momentarily caught her eye. And, in the background, framed by the large picture window, is a panoramic view of Vancouver's harbor just outside.

Photography as Painting

Wall was trained as a painter and art historian and became known in the 1970s alongside artists like Cindy Sherman and Sherrie Levine. Influenced by conceptual art practices, as well as the pervasiveness of film and the mass media, this generation of artists turned to photography as a way to challenge our expectations about images and their meaning, and our assumption that the camera never lies.

A View from an Apartment initially evokes the larger-than-life feel of a film or an advertising billboard; but, in many ways, Wall's photograph has more in common with painting. Its monumental presentation and implicit narrative recall the academic tradition of history painting, where artists idealized their imagery in order to glorify individuals and important events of the past. Moreover, like a painter, Wall carefully composed the photograph to direct our gaze and frame key elements in the scene. The repeated diagonal lines of the television, the shelves above, and the basket below pull our eye to the standing woman. Her forward motion leads us to the sitting area, which, in turn, draws our attention up to the window and the view outside.



Figure 8.4.15: Édouard Manet, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, oil on canvas, 1882, 96 x 130 cm (Courtauld Gallery, London)

Wall's work might also be compared to Realism of the 19th century. Like Édouard Manet, Wall depicts common scenes of modern life, thus elevating contemporary experience to the fine art status of the classical past. Realists like Manet challenged established artistic values by rejecting illusionistic painting techniques of the past. Wall issues a similar critique through his practice to deliberately stage his photographs. In *A View from an Apartment*, the artist gave his model a budget to furnish and live in the apartment, which he then photographed over several months. He used digital editing to combine multiple shots to achieve the final image. This creative process forces us to question the photograph's value as an accurate record of the scene, and effectively demonstrates the artifice inherent to established traditions of art.

The Transparent Window

For all of Wall's careful planning of the interior, the titular view of the harbor most distinguishes *A View from an Apartment*. Framed by the window, the harbor scene contrasts dramatically to the mundanity of life inside. This picture within a picture forces us to examine fundamental questions about art, its ability to represent the world around us, and our own relationship to those surroundings.

Illusionism in traditional art teaches that a painting is like a window on the world. The picture plane dissolves to reveal a distant expanse before us. But, in Wall's work, the photographic image denies such illusionism by presenting an actual landscape, mechanically captured by the artist's camera. It also heightens spatial ambiguity in the work. Here the photograph's planar surface does not dissolve; rather the window is clearly real, evidenced by light reflected from lamps inside the apartment. The transparent window paradoxically calls attention to the solid apartment wall that separates the figures from the outside world, a barrier underscored by the women's obliviousness to the vista the viewer enjoys while standing before the photograph.



Figure 8.4.16: Richard Estes, *Telephone Booths*, 1967, acrylic on masonite, 122 x 175.3 cm (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid)

Wall's use of the apartment view to create a discourse on art's illusionism finds a place within this important recurring theme in art history. Painters, from Diego Velasquez in the 17th century and Henri Matisse in the 20th century raised similar questions by revealing the distance between reality and their representations of the real. In the 1970s, photorealists like Richard Estes drew on photographic images to highlight the ambiguity and formal play found in representational painting. Wall contributes to this on-going tradition through his references to modern cinema, mass advertising, and the role of photography in popular culture. His work reminds us to think twice about the images we see everyday. In the age of Photoshop, Instagram, and digital proliferation, what is real, and what is not, seems always to be in play.

Additional Resources:

This photograph at the Tate

Photographer Jeff Wall's best shot, the Guardian Newspaper

Roberta Smith review of "Jeff Wall: In His Own Words" exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art, The New York Times

Site for "Jeff Wall: In His Own Words" exhibition at The Museum of Modern Art

Stéphane Couturier, *Fenetre, Eastlake Greens, San Diego*

by ELIZABETH GERBER, LACMA and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER

Building the American dream in the California desert.



Video 8.4.3: Stéphane Couturier, *Fenetre, Eastlake Greens, San Diego*, edition 4/8, 2001, dye coupler print, 130.81 x 107.95 x 2.54 cm (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, © Stéphane Couturier)

This painting at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art

The artist's website

Nari Ward, We the People (black version)

by DR. MINDY BESAW, CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.4.4: Nari Ward, We the People (black version), 2015, shoelaces, 8 × 27 feet (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art), a Seeing America video

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8.5: Ritual, spirituality, and transcendence

Ritual, spirituality, and transcendence

Spirituality remains important, but it takes on new forms in the global contemporary era.

1980 - present

Roger Minick, *Woman with Scarf at Inspiration Point, Yosemite National Park*

by ELIZABETH GERBER, LACMA and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.5.1: Roger Minick, *Woman with Scarf at Inspiration Point, Yosemite National Park* (Sightseer series), 1980, dye coupler print, 38.1 x 43.18 cm, ©Roger Minick (Los Angeles County Museum of Art), a *Seeing America* video

Additional resources:

This photograph at LACMA

The artist's website

Mariko Mori, *Pure Land*

by KATRINA KLAASMEYER

Floating on a lotus blossom

Set within a golden landscape, a female figure serenely floats above a lotus blossom while six alien musicians whirl by on bubbly clouds. Her pink robes mirror the predominantly pale orange, yellow and pink of the water, land and sky—firmly embedding her within the tranquil scene. *Pure Land*, a photograph set within glass, is the counterpart of Mori's three-dimensional video installation, *Nirvana*, 1997. *Nirvana* animates the imagery we see in *Pure Land*. Viewed within a darkened room with the aid of three-dimensional glasses, *Nirvana's* audience was limited to a group of 20 people at a time. During the seven minute video, the central female figure would hum and whisper echoed rhythms as if meditating, while the little musicians floated around her. At the conclusion, a fan came on and blew cool, scented air into the audience's faces. Through the integration of sensory elements such as three-dimensional imagery, sound, scent, and the gentle touch of a breeze, combined with the limited viewing audience, *Nirvana* created an immersive, intimate experience. As its photographic counterpart, *Pure Land* captures a moment of this experience, enabling the viewer a longer, perhaps more meditative, relationship with the work.



Figure 8.5.1: Mariko Mori, *Pure Land*, 1996-98, glass with photo interlayer, 305 x 610 x 2.2 cm



Figure 8.5.2: Mariko Mori, *Enlightenment Capsule*, 1996-1998, plastic, solar transmitting device, fiber optic cables, 108 x 83 x 83 inches

Symbolism and spiritual allusions

Every element we see here has significance that may not be apparent at first glance—the serene landscape, with its golden sky, smooth pink land masses, and perfectly still water, is rich with symbolism. *Pure Land* is set during sunrise in the landscape of the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth, called "dead" because the high salinity of its water does not support fish or plant life. In Shinto tradition, salt is used as an agent of purification. Floating in the water is a lotus blossom—symbol of purity and rebirth into paradise. This blossom resembles one in Mori's 1998 sculptural installation, *Enlightenment Capsule* (left), which featured a rainbow-colored acrylic lotus blossom set within a space-age capsule illuminated by sunlight. In both *Enlightenment Capsule* and *Pure Land* Mori blends traditional symbolism with futuristic elements. On the right hand side of the background of *Pure Land*is a fantastical object which resembles a playful futuristic spacecraft with arms. This may be a variation of a **Tibetan stupa**—a sacred Buddhist monument originally used as a burial mound. Through her imaginative reinterpretation of symbols steeped in tradition, the artist creates a timeless setting appropriate for meditation on death, purification, and rebirth.

Immersion

The distant horizon line, combined with the larger island in the foreground that seems to continue into the viewer's space, create a sense of immersion, as if one were present with these fantastical figures. Perhaps this feeling of personal involvement ties in with the title itself, *Pure Land*, which is the paradise of Amida (or Amitabha) Buddha who descends to greet devotees at the moment of their death and takes them back to his "Pure Land of Perfect Bliss."



Figure 8.5.3: Descent of Amitabha and the Heavenly Multitude, Heian period, 12th century, National Treasure (Yushi Hachiman Ko)

Beginning with the eleventh century in Japan, several paintings and sculptures were made on this theme, such as the *Descent of Amida and the Heavenly Multitude* (above). In this type of imagery, Amida Buddha, resting on a lotus blossom and holding his hands in a symbolic gesture known as a mudra, is typically surrounded by celestial attendants in a sea of swirling clouds. These attendants are boddhisattvas, enlightened beings who act out of great compassion to help others achieve enlightenment. In a sculptural example from Byodo-in Temple, 52 boddhisattvas fly on clouds on either side of Amida Buddha (below); some are seated quietly with their hands joined in prayer, some hold a lotus blossom to receive the soul of the deceased, while others are playing musical instruments.



Figure 8.5.4: Jōchō, Amida Buddha, Heian Period, c. 1053, wood covered with wood leaf, 295 cm (Phoenix Hall, Byodo-in, Kyoto)

Oneness and universality



Figure 8.5.5: Mark Mori, *Oneness* , on exhibit in 2007 at the Grand Duke Jean Museum of Modern Art, Luxembourg (MUDAM) (**photo: Mark Weston** , CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

In Mori's version, these celestial attendants are pastel-colored alien figures with large pointy heads and delicate bodies. Each figure plays a different instrument as they float on their light blue bubbly clouds. The two musicians in the foreground are blurred, as if they are flying quickly toward the viewer. These muscians appear again in a later sculptural installation by Mori, *Oneness* , 2003 (left). In this work, the six aliens are given three-dimensional form, complete with soft, flesh-like material. They stand in a circle facing outward as they hold each other's hands. The viewer becomes an active participant in the work — when a person hugs one of the figures, its eyes light up and you feel its heartbeat. As in the Nirvana video installation upon which *Pure Land* is based, Mori seems to want to engage more than just the viewer's sense of sight and for each participant to have a direct experience with the artwork. Perhaps more significantly, *Oneness* is a metaphor for bringing in the outsider, achieved through revealing commonalities of experience. The binding together of seemingly disparate realities is a central theme throughout Mori's work.

Artist as object

Another element typical in Mori's work is for the artist to cast herself in the principle role, and *Pure Land* is no exception. The central female figure is the artist herself, wearing an elaborate costume and headdress, both of her own design. Born in Tokyo in 1967, Mori studied design at Tokyo's Bunka Fashion College and worked part-time as a fashion model, which she originally considered a form of personal creativity. However, she found modeling an inadequate medium in which to express herself fully, so she began to stage elaborate tableaux, taking full creative control of the process, acting as director, producer, set and costume designer, and model. This recalls the practices of other photographers, most notably **Cindy Sherman** , as well as **Yasumasa Morimura**, the Japanese photographer notorious for substituting himself for figures in famous paintings throughout art history.

In the *Pure Land* photograph, Mori's light blue, pupil-less eyes, gauze serenely somewhere beyond our vision. Like the Amida Buddha, she rests above a lotus blossom and holds her right hand in a mudra of blessing and teaching; the circle formed by the index finger and thumb is the sign of the Wheel of Law. In her left hand she holds a *hojyu*, or magical wishing jewel, in the shape of a lotus bud. This figure is inspired by Kichijoten, originally the Indian goddess, Shri Lakshmi, who was eventually incorporated into Buddhism, and typically represents fertility, fortune, and beauty. Here Mori bars comparison with a well-known eighth-century painting of Kichijoten from Yukushi-ji Temple in Nara. Similarities include the serene elegance, softly fluttering gown, and wish-granting jewel. The eighth-century painting depicts the clothing and appearance of an elegant lady of the Chinese Tang Dynasty, and it may have been an object of veneration during the annual New Year event when devotees prayed for happiness and fertility. In this manner, a beautiful, elegant woman was seen to embody the ideas of good fortune and prosperity and became an object of worship.



Figure 8.5.6: Left: Kichijoten from Yukushi-ji Temple in Nara, 8th century, color on hemp, 53 x 31.7 cm; right: Mariko Mori, Pure Land, 1996-98, glass with photo interlayer, 305 x 610 x 2.2 cm

By taking on this ancient persona, Mori dissolves her own identity and is transformed into the elegant Tang lady and goddess of fortune, while simultaneously performing the welcoming role of Amida Buddha. Mori's enlightened self-representation descends to guide the viewer into a "Pure Land of Perfect Bliss" of her own creation. Perhaps more significantly, the artist seeks to lead the viewer into her immersive paradise. In both formats, the multi-sensory video *Nirvana* and purely visual *Pure Land* photograph, the message is clear: enlightenment is for all.

Additional resources:

Mariko Mori at the Tokyo Museum of Contemporary Art

Video — The Artist Project: Mariko Mori (from The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Scott Indriskek, "Mariko Mori wants to bring her nature-loving art to six continents," *Modern Painters* (May 2011)

Visualizing an Endless Universe: Mariko Mori Makes the Cosmos Life-Size

Emily Kame Kngwarreye, *Earth's Creation*

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG

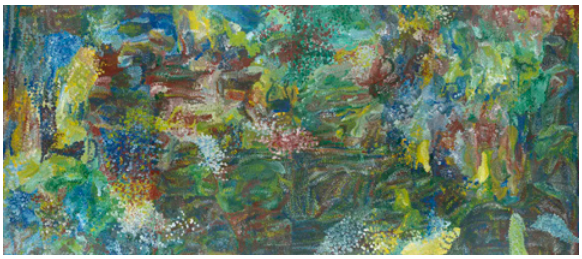


Figure 8.5.7: Emily Kame Kngwarreye, *Earth's Creation*, 1994, synthetic polymer paint on linen mounted on canvas, four panels (private collection)

At nearly twenty feet wide and nine feet high, Emily Kwame Kngwarreye's painting *Earth's Creation* is monumental in its scale and impact, rivaling Abstract Expressionist masterpieces by Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock not only in size but also in its painterly virtuosity (see a photo of it **in a gallery here**, to get a sense of its scale). Patches of bold yellows, greens, reds and blues seem to bloom like lush vegetation over the large canvas. Comprised of gestural, viscous marks, each swath of color traces the movement of the artist's hands and body over the canvas, which would have been laid horizontally as she painted, seated on (or beside) and intimately connected to her art.



Figure 8.5.8: Still from a short video produced by The National Museum of Australia **source**

The work made records at auction when it was sold in 2007 for over $1,000,000—the highest price ever fetched for a work by a female artist in Australia. Yet, just decades earlier, Kngwarreye was virtually unknown to the world outside her small desert community in the Australian country of Alhakere. A self-taught artist who was trained in ceremonial painting, she rose to international prominence only in her eighties, and enjoyed a flourishing career at the end of her life.

Rooted in tradition

Kngwarreye was born around 1910, and spent most of her life in an isolated Anmatyerr community in Central Australia. The area, however, was forcibly occupied by European pastoralist settlers in the 1920s, and the artist, alongside other members of her community, worked on the pastoral property (pastoral refers to the tending of cattle and sheep). In 1976, Aboriginal land rights were legally granted, and she was able, finally, to live independently.

Aboriginal culture has long been intimately connected to the landscape of Australia; inhabited by humans for over 40,000 years, the region is characterized by deserts, grasslands and dramatic arched rock formations. Kngwarreye was an established elder of her community and was trained to create ceremonial sand paintings inspired by her ritual "dreamings,'" as well as to paint decorative motifs on women's bodies as part of a ceremony called *Awelye*. These visual forms were connected to cultural expressions in song, storytelling and dance. While her paintings have never been figural, they remain influenced by the culture in which she grew up as well as the natural environment.

Artistic intervention

In the late 1970s, Kngwayere began to work in the medium of batiks, making works that were purely artistic endeavors for the first time. In 1977, she was a founding participant of the Utopia Women's Batik Group. Her compositions were abstract and featured the motif of repeated dots, acting sometimes as a linear stroke, or elsewhere used to fill large patches of space. A decade later, in 1988, the S.H. Ervin Gallery in Sydney initiated a "Summer Project" that sought to facilitate the creation of Aboriginal art, as well as to establish a market for the genre. Sponsored by the collector Robert Holmes à Court, curators traveled to the Aboriginal homeland of Utopia and delivered acrylic paints and materials. After two weeks they returned to find "abstract and richly expressive" compositions created by many of the artists, and held a group exhibition in Sydney.



Figure 8.5.9: Emily Kame Kngwarreye, *Emu Woman*, 1988–89, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 92.0 x 61.0 cm (The Holmes à Court Collection, Heytesbury)

Kngwarreye's painting *Emu Woman* (above) was selected for the cover of the exhibition catalogue as a gesture of respect for her seniority, as she was the oldest artist from the community. Dominated by rich, earthy tones, the painting—her first ever on canvas–contained references to plants and seeds that featured in her "dreaming" ritual. Against a dark field of charcoal, violet and black, the piece is punctuated with bright marks in tangerine and white hues, which lend the work an electric sense of energy and rhythm.

Her decades-long experience in painting directly on the human body informs the curving swells of dotted marks that comprise the composition.

Critics lauded the piece, and virtually overnight, the artist received international exposure and unprecedented acclaim. The following year, Kngwarreye held her first solo exhibition at Utopia Art Sydney, after which she would be invited to participate in several renowned international exhibitions and biennales.

The “global” turn

The arc of Kngwarreye’s career runs alongside a period of tremendous change in Australia, moving from the end of a phase of colonial settlement through to a more ethical embrace of Aboriginal culture by the nation’s Western population. Yet the period in which she came to prominence also reflects changes taking place in the contemporary art world internationally, as the 1980s and 1990s saw a notable expansion within the mainstream to include non-Western or minority artists.

“Green time”

Earth’s Creation belongs to the “high colorist” phase in Kngwarreye’s work, which is characterized by a loosening of her compositions—which were no longer reliant on pseudo-geometric patterns—and the expansion of her color palette to include a range of tones beyond the familiar clay and ochre hues that dominated her prior works. Still connected to the natural environment, however, these works reference the changing atmospheric character of seasonal cycles. *Earth’s Creation* documents the lushness of the “green time” that follows periods of heavy rain, and makes use of tropical blues, yellows and greens. The piece has often been likened to Claude Monet’s studies of seasonal and temporal change, and given its formidable, room-filling scale, a comparison to the artist’s *Water Lilies* of 1914-26 (MoMA) might be remarkably apt.

Earth’s Creation was created as part of the larger Alhalkere Suite which contains twenty-two panels, and is still considered one of the most virtuosic of Kngwarreye’s immense and prolific artistic output. In the last two weeks of her life, Kngwarreye completed a suite of twenty-four small paintings. These were characterized by extremely broad, milky strokes of jewel-toned hues of blue and rose, and communicate the artist’s long-standing fascination with color and her sophisticated grasp of abstract composition.

Additional resources:

“Utopia: The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye” at the National Museum Australia

Earth’s Creation at the Venice Biennale, Universes-in-Universe

The artist at the National Gallery of Australia

Emily Kame Kngwarreye, The Alhalkere suite from the National Gallery of Australia

Utopia: The Genius of Emily Kame Kngwarreye, review by Chrischona Schmidt

Teacher notes for Emily Kame Kngwarreye: Alhalkere — Paintings from Utopia

Australia 1900-present on the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History

Bruce Nauman, *The True Artist Helps the World by Revealing Mystic Truths*

by JP MCMAHON

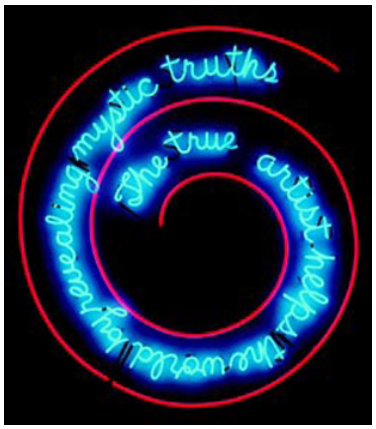


Figure 8.5.10: Bruce Nauman, *The True Artist Helps the World by Revealing Mystic Truths*, 1967, neon and clear glass tubing suspension supports; 149.86 x 139.7 x 5.08 cm (Philadelphia Museum of Art)

Bruce Nauman's neon sign asks a multitude of questions with regard to the ways in which the 20th century conceived both avant-garde art and the role of the artist in society. If earlier European modernists, such as Mondrian, Malevich, and Kandinsky, sought to use art to reveal deep-seated truths about the human condition and the role of the artist in general, then Bruce Nauman's *The True Artist Helps the World by Revealing Mystic Truths* questions such transhistorical and universal statements. With regard to this work, Nauman said:

> ***The most difficult thing about the whole piece for me was the statement. It was a kind of test—like when you say something out loud to see if you believe it. Once written down, I could see that the statement […] was on the one hand a totally silly idea and yet, on the other hand, I believed it. It's true and not true at the same time. It depends on how you interpret it and how seriously you take yourself. For me it's still a very strong thought.***

The medium and the message

By using the mediums of mass culture (neon signs) and of display (he originally hung the sign in his storefront studio), Nauman sought to bring questions normally considered only by the high culture elite, such as the role and function of art and the artist in society, to a wider audience. While early European modernists, such as Picasso, had borrowed widely from popular culture, they rarely displayed their work in the sites of popular culture. For Nauman, both the medium and the message were equally important; thus, by using a form of communication readily understood by all (neon signs had been widespread in modern industrial society) and by placing this message in the public view, Nauman let everyone ask and answer the question.

While it is perhaps the words that stand out most, the symbolism of the spiral (think of Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, 1969), also deserves attention having been used for centuries in European and other civilizations, such as megalithic and Chinese art, both as a symbol of time and of nature itself.

Transcendence?

Theosophy is interesting in this regard and was an important aspect of the early European Avant-garde. In particular, Theosophists believed that all religions are attempts to help humanity to evolve to greater perfection, and that each religion therefore holds a portion of the truth. Through their materials, artists had sought to transform the physical into the spiritual. In this sense, Malevich, Mondrian, and Kandinsky sought to use the material of their art to transcend it: Nauman, and other of his generation, did not.

Process over product

Instead, Nauman's work transgresses many genres of art making in that his work explores the implications of minimalism, conceptual, performance, and process art. In this sense we could call Nauman's art "Postminimalism," a term coined by the art critic Robert Pincus-Witten, in his article "Eva Hesse: Post-Minimalism into Sublime" (*Artforum* 10, number 3, November 1971). Artists such as Nauman, Acconci, and Hesse, favored process instead of product, or rather the investigation over the end result.

However, this is not to say they did not produce objects, such as the neon-sign by Nauman, only that within the presentation of the object, they also retained an examination of the processes that made that specific object.

In this sense, Nauman's neon sign isn't only an object, it's a process, something that continues to make us think about art, artist, and the role that language plays in our conception of both. The words continue to ask this of each beholder who encounters them. Does the artist, the "true artist" really "reveal mystical truths"? Or confined to the specific culture that it was made in? If we are to believe the statement (remember, it is not necessarily Nauman's, he merely borrows it from our shared culture), then we might, for example, recognize Leonardo da Vinci as a Neo-Platonic artist who showed us ultimate and essential truths through painting. On the other hand, if we reject the statement, then we would probably recognize the artist as just another producer of a specific set of objects, that we call "art."

This type of logic and analytical thinking was influenced by Nauman's reading of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). From Wittgenstein, Nauman took the idea that you put forth a proposition/idea in the form of language and then examine its findings, irrespective of its proof or conclusion. Nauman's "language games," his neon-words, his proposition about the nature of art and the artist continue to resonant in today's art world, in particular with regard to the value we place on the artist's actions and findings.

Additional resources:

This work of art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art

Art:21 page about Nauman's *The True Artist Helps the World by Revealing Mystic Truth*

Philadelphia Museum of Art biography of the artist

Smarthistory images for teaching and learning:

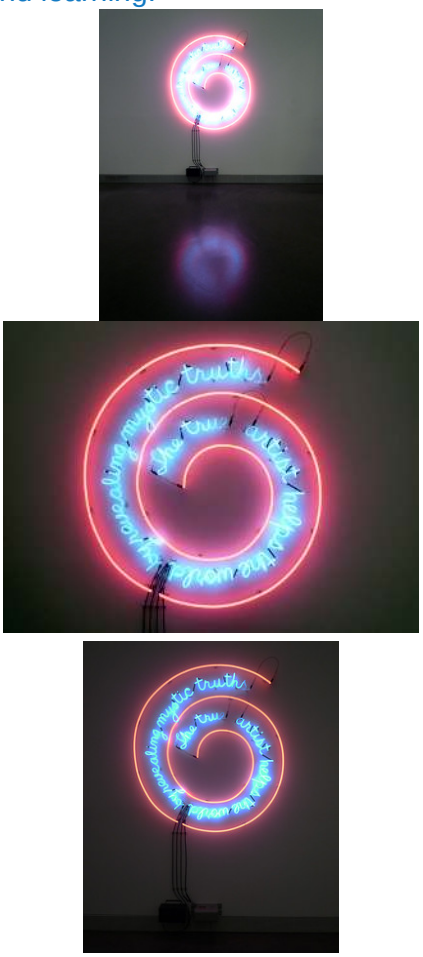


Figure 8.5.11: More Smarthistory images…

Chris Ofili, *The Holy Virgin Mary*

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG



Figure 8.5.12: Chris Ofili, *The Holy Virgin Mary*, 1996, paper collage, oil paint, glitter, polyester resin, map pins & elephant dung on linen, 243.8 x 182.9 cm © Chris Ofili

Sensation

When the personal collection of British advertising executive and art collector Charles Saatchi went on tour in an exhibition called *Sensation* in 1997, viewers should have known to brace themselves for controversy. The show presented a cross-section of shocking work by a brash new generation of "Young British Artists," including, for example, Marcus Harvey's portrait of convicted child-murderer Myra Handley, and pornographic sculptural tableaux by Jake and Dinos Chapman. In London, the museum was picketed from day one, but the media attention eventually ushered in record turnouts.

In October of 1999, *Sensation* opened at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, where it was Chris Ofili's iconic painting, *The Holy Virgin Mary* that incited the most heated debate. Mayor Rudy Giuliani threatened to close the city-funded institution on the grounds that this artwork was offensive to religious viewers. Two months later, the painting, which rests upon two large balls of elephant dung, was desecrated by an elderly visitor who smeared white paint over its surface, claiming that the image was "blasphemous."

At first glance it seems easy to discern why the painting raised a few eyebrows: the inclusion of real shit and collaged pornography might be enough to offend conservative viewers. However, Ofili's work is more nuanced than it appeared to his detractors; the piece reflects on art historical precedents while addressing identity politics, religion and pop culture. To grasp its complexity, one must look beneath the surface—as dazzling and shocking as it may be.

Iconic or iconoclastic?

Set against a shimmering gold background comprised of carefully placed dots of paint and glitter, the central figure in Ofili's painting stares directly at her beholder, with wide eyes and parted lips. Her blue gown flows from the top of her head down to the amorphous base of her body, falling open to reveal a lacquered ball of elephant dung where her breast would be. Collaged images of women's buttocks surround the Virgin; cut from pornographic magazines, they become abstract, almost decorative forms that refuse to signify until confronted up-close. The two balls of dung beneath the canvas are adorned with glittering letters spelling out the work's title.

Formally, the use of gold and the front-facing Virgin link the work to Medieval icons, making the vulgarity of the pornographic images all the more stark. Yet, the artist claims that the sacred and the profane are not always opposed, even in traditional religious art:

> ***As an altar boy, I was confused by the idea of a holy Virgin Mary giving birth to a young boy. Now when I go to the National Gallery and see paintings of the Virgin Mary, I see how sexually charged they are. Mine is simply a hip hop version.***

Race, religion, and representation

It is perhaps Ofili's final statement above that indicates the source of his critics' anxieties. As Carol Becker has explained, Ofili is "transforming the Holy Virgin into an exuberant, folkloric image. (…) probably most controversial of all, he made his own representation of the Virgin, defiant of tradition."[2] The "parody-like African mouth" and exaggerated facial features call attention to racial stereotypes, as well as to the assumed whiteness of biblical figures in Western representations. Ofili's icon asks us to confront the possibility of a black Virgin Mary. Other works express Ofili's interest in black culture more explicitly: paintings like the *Afrodizzia* series and *No Woman No Cry* make references not only to hip-hop and reggae but also to contemporary racial politics.

The triumph of painting

While his works pay homage to iconic black celebrities such as James Brown, Miles Davis, and Muhammad Ali, they are also just as much about the act of painting. With their psychedelic patterning, bright colors and textured surfaces, the images express Ofili's desire to "get as deeply lost as possible in both the process of painting and the painting itself."[3]

From his beginnings, the artist was passionate about the medium, even as painting grew out of favor in the wake of postmodernism. He enrolled at the Chelsea School of Art where he developed an expressionistic style, but his work really started to mature after an oft-mythologized trip to Africa.

Ofili was born in Manchester, England to Nigerian parents. When he was awarded a British Council grant in 1992, however, he ventured not to their home country but to Zimbabwe, in southern Africa. There, he was inspired by the abstract motifs found in San rock painting; these graphic marks found their way into the swirling backgrounds of his later compositions.

In Zimbabwe he also discovered elephant dung, and experimented with using it as an aesthetic medium, sticking it onto the surfaces of his canvases. As he later recalled, "it was a crass way of bringing the landscape into the painting," as well as a nod to modernist art history through the dung's status as a found object.[4]

The following year, back in Europe, Ofili was already at work with his new material. He staged a performance in Berlin and London entitled *Shit Sale*, a nod to the American artist David Hammons' *Bliz-aard Ball Sale* of 1983, and later produced a work on canvas simply titled *Painting with Shit on It*, from which his mature style eventually emerged.

Combining visual pleasure with a conceptual practice

Ofili's work is as formally-motivated as it is political. The artist did not only return to painting, he returned to decoration and visual pleasure, at a time when art was expected to comply with the more cerebral aesthetics of postmodernism. Perhaps his attraction to gaudy bright colors, earthy materials and glittering surfaces, paired with the highly conceptual stakes of his project, reflects another blending of sacred and profane, regarding the conservatism of the art world. By incorporating high and low art forms, historical narratives, religion and pop culture, *The Holy Virgin Mary* represents a deeper inquiry than the spectacle of Sensation would imply.

1. Quoted in Jonathan Jones, "Paradise Reclaimed," *Guardian*, magazine section, 15 June 2002.

2. Carol Becker, "Brooklyn Museum: Messing with the Sacred" in *Chris Ofili*, Rizzoli, 2009, p. 84.

3. Chris Ofili, quoted in Judith Nesbitt "Beginnings" in *Chris Ofili*, London: Tate Publishing, 2010, p. 15.

4. Chris Ofili, "Decorative Beauty was a Taboo Thing", interview with Mario Spinello, *Brilliant! New Art from London*, exh. cat., Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1995, p. 67.

Additional resources:

Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection (Brooklyn Museum)

Ofili at the Saatchi Gallery

Biography of the artist from Grove Art/Tate Modern

San rock art

No Woman, No Cry on the Google Art Project

Clarissa Rizal, *Resilience Robe*

by LILY HOPE AT PORTLAND ART MUSEUM and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.5.2: Clarissa Rizal, Resilience Robe, 2014, merino wool, 64 x 53 inches (Portland Art Museum)

Bill Viola, *The Crossing*

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG

> ***We have to reclaim time itself, wrenching it from the "time is money" maximum efficiency, and make room for it to flow the other way – towards us. We must take time back into ourselves to let our consciousness breathe and our cluttered minds be still and silent. This is what art can do and what museums can be in today's world.***
>
> ***—Bill Viola [1]***



Figure 8.5.13: Bill Viola, *The Crossing*, 1996, video/sound © Bill Viola (photo: **stunned**, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Taking time back

Bill Viola's *The Crossing* is a room-sized video installation that comprises a large two-sided screen onto which a pair of video sequences is simultaneously projected. They each open in the same fashion: a male figure walks slowly towards the camera, his body dramatically lit from above so that it appears to glow against the video's stark-black background. After several minutes he pauses near the foreground and stands still. He faces forward, staring directly into the lens, motionless.

At this point the two scenes diverge; in one, a small fire alights below the figure's feet. It spreads over his legs and torso and eventually engulfs his whole body in flames; yet, he stands calm and completely still as his body is immolated, only moving to raise his arms slightly before his body disappears in an inferno of roaring flames. On the opposite screen, the event transpires not

with fire but with water. Beginning as a light rainfall, the sporadic drops that shower the figure build up to a surging cascade of water until it subsumes him entirely. After the flames and the torrent of water eventually retreat, the figure has vanished entirely from each scene, and the camera witnesses a silent and empty denouement.

Expanded temporal experience



Figure 8.5.14: Bill Viola, *The Crossing*, 1996, video/sound © Bill Viola (image: **SFMOMA**)

The Crossing makes use of Viola's signature manipulation of filmic time. Like many of the artist's recent works, it was shot using high-speed film capable of registering 300 frames per second, thus attaining a much greater level of detail than would be discerned by the naked eye. In postproduction, Viola reduces the speed of playback to an extreme slow motion—further enhancing the level of definition to a dramatic and scrutinizing effect.

However, it is not only an interest in technological experimentation that drives the artist's technical and aesthetic decisions. Viola's use of slow-motion is meant to invite a meditative and contemplative response, one that requires the viewer to concentrate for a longer duration of time and simultaneously to increase his or her own awareness of detail, movement and change. This is consistent with the artist's intent to reignite the longstanding relationship between artistic and spiritual experience. A devoted practitioner of Zen Buddhist meditation, Viola has explained that after "fifty minutes of quiet stillness in a room of solitary individuals"—a description that could, just as easily, reflect a museum-goer's experience of his installations—"time opens up in an unbelievable way." [2]

Religious symbolism



Figure 8.5.15: Shiva as Lord of Dance (Nataraja), Chola period, Indian (Tamil Nadu), c. 11th century, copper alloy, 68.3 cm high (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

The Crossing might be interpreted through the lens of mythology or religious thought, even though the work does not make iconographic or stylistic reference to a particular narrative. Viola has been inspired by a rich variety of spiritual traditions, including Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sufism. Viewers may recall, for instance, the ring of flames that surrounds images of Shiva Nataraja (left) in which he sets in motion the continuous cycles of creation and destruction through his cosmic

dance, or the biblical tales of fire and brimstone, rapture and the Great Floods. Throughout such narratives, the elemental forces of fire and water often symbolize change, redemption, transformation and renewal— common themes in Viola's oeuvre. The artist has similarly made reference to transitions and passages in works such as *The Passing*, a 1991 video made shortly after his mother's death, or *Two Women*, a 2008 piece in which figures slowly move through a translucent and symbolic barrier of water.

Viola's education and artistic practice have long been guided by questions of "how we see, how we hear, and how we come to know the world." [3] The artist grew up in Queens, New York and attended Syracuse University in the late 1960s where he enrolled not only in fine arts classes, but also in a variety of academic subjects ranging from the humanities to the hard sciences. In particular, he was captivated by religious studies, psychology and electrical engineering, interests that are clearly assimilated throughout his oeuvre.

Technological experimentation

As early as the 1970s, Viola was one of the first visual artists to make use of new video technologies. As a student he experimented enthusiastically with new portable recording devices, with which he created short video performances that explored a variety of gestures, sounds and expressions. During the 1970s and 1980s, he was artist-in-residence at a number of media laboratories and television stations, while also serving as an assistant curator at Everson Museum of Art where he was exposed to the work of Nam June Paik and Peter Campus, artists who were early innovators in the emerging field of video art. Eventually, Viola conceived of multi-channel and immersive installations where viewers are surrounded by carefully arranged screens and projections, sometimes displayed within an otherwise pitch-black room.

Sacred space

Between 1974 and 1976, Viola lived in Italy, where religious paintings and sculptures are often displayed in-situ, in the cathedrals for which they were commissioned. The continuing integration of historical art into contemporary public and religious life inspired Viola to design installations that mimicked the forms of devotional paintings, diptychs, predellas and altarpieces—formats that encourage intimate contemplation of religious icons. Later traveling throughout Japan and other parts of East Asia, Viola observed the same active level of engagement with art. In Tokyo, for instance, he witnessed museum visitors placing offerings at the feet of sculptural bodhisattvas or other religious statuary.

For viewers, the experience of viewing Viola's works need not be spiritually inscribed. In many cases, his works appeal to or reflect raw human emotions (the theme of his acclaimed exhibition *The Passions*) or universal life experiences. While *The Crossing* can be interpreted in light of a host of religious associations, the act of "self-annihilation" represented in the figure's disappearance at each conclusion also serves as a metaphor for the destruction of the ego. In the artist's words, this action "becomes a necessary means to transcendence and liberation," [4] especially in the face of life's inevitable unpredictability.

[1] Bill Viola, as quoted in *Buddha Mind in Contemporary Art*, Jacquelynn Baas and Mary Jane Jacob, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 254
[2] Bill Viola, *Buddha Mind*, p. 254.
[3] "Bill Viola Interviewed by John Hanhardt, *Going Forth By Day* (Berlin: Deutsche Guggenheim and New York: Harry N Abrams, Inc, 2005), p. 87.
[4] Bill Viola, as quoted in "Emotions in Extreme Time: Bill Viola's Passions Project," in *The Passions*, John Walsh, ed. (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), p. 53.

Additional resources:

Bill Viola at SFMOMA

Bill Viola – James Cohan Gallery

Bill Viola – the artist's website

Bill Viola, The Passions from the J. Paul Getty Museum

Xu Bing, *Book from the Sky*

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.5.3: Xu Bing, *Book from the Sky*, c. 1987-91, hand-printed books and ceiling and wall scrolls printed from wood letterpress type, ink on paper; each book, open: 18 1/8″ × 20″ / 46 × 51 cm; each of three ceiling scrolls: 38″ × c. 114′ 9-7/8″ / 96.5 × 3500 cm; each wall scroll: 9′ 2-1/4″ × 39 3/8″ / 280 × 100 cm (installation at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2014, collection of the artist) © Xu Bing

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Figure 8.5.16: More Smarthistory Images…

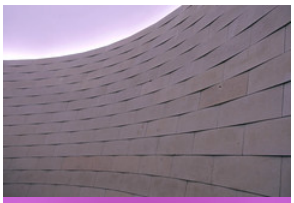
James Turrell, *Skyspace, the way of color*

by DR. BETH HARRIS and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER

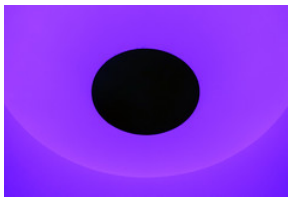
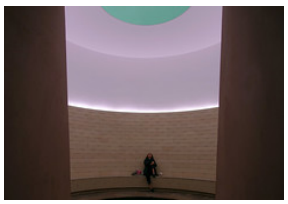


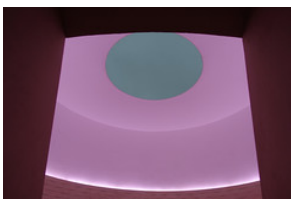
Video 8.5.4: James Turrell, *Skyspace, The Way of Color*, 2009, stone, concrete, stainless steel, and LED lighting 228 x 652 inches © James Turrell (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas). Speakers: Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker

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Figure 8.5.17: More Smarthistory images…

Tenzing Rigdol, *Pin drop silence: Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara*

by DR. SARAH MAGNATTA



Figure 8.5.18: Tenzing Rigdol, *Pin drop silence: Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara*, 2013, ink, pencil, acrylic, and pastel on paper, 232.7 x 124.8 cm (**The Metropolitan Museum of Art**, Gift of Andrew Cohen, in honor of Tenzing Rigdol and Fabio Rossi, 2013) © Tenzing Rigdol

In Tenzing Rigdol's monumental painting, *Pin drop silence: Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara*, we encounter a traditional **Buddhist** deity—though the artwork itself is anything but conventional in form, material, or meaning. Rigdol uses a combination of acrylic paint, pastel, and pieces of manuscript pages assembled on paper to create a complex rendering of a multi-armed, multi-headed deity—over seven feet tall—who emerges between the interlocking edges of a grid-like overlay. Although the main figure is one that is recognizably sacred for **Tibetan** Buddhist practitioners, the work itself constitutes a radical departure from historical precedent, and reflects contemporary questions surrounding exile, activism, and cultural heritage.

Rigdol was born in 1982 in Kathmandu, Nepal. His parents fled Tibet in the late 1960s and worked in Nepal's carpet industry. After training in traditional Tibetan arts, including *thangka* painting (a painting on fabric depicting a Buddhist subject), sand painting, and butter sculpture, the artist turned to contemporary modes of representation. He is one of the first contemporary Tibetan artists to have his work collected by major institutions, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art. By using culturally specific forms in radically new compositions, Rigdol shifts his work's focus away from the spiritual symbolism often associated with Tibetan art, and towards more politically charged content.



Figure 8.5.19: Avalokiteshvara (Bodhisattva & Buddhist Deity) – Sahasrabhujalokeshvara (11 faces, 1000 Hands), 19th century, Eastern Tibet, ground mineral pigment on cotton (**private collection**)

Who is Avalokiteshvara?

In the center of *Pin drop silence* is the Buddhist deity known as Avalokiteshvara (Tibetan: *Chenrezig*). Avalokiteshvara is a *bodhisattva* (an enlightened being who helps others achieve enlightenment) and is the embodiment of compassion. Avalokiteshvara remains a major figure in Buddhist art throughout Asia (he is known as Guanyin in China). The Dalai Lama is viewed as the earthly incarnation of Avalokiteshvara by practitioners, and as such, plays an important role in Tibetan Buddhism.

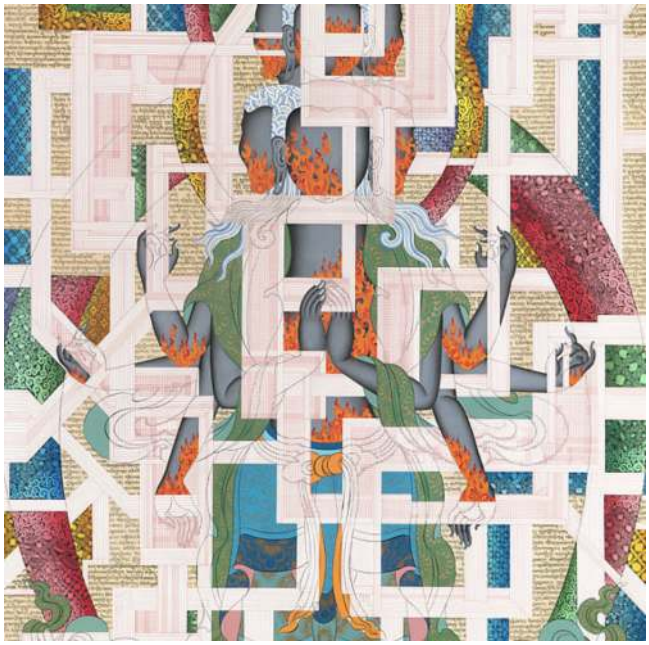


Figure 8.5.20: Tenzing Rigdol, *Pin drop silence: Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara* (detail), 2013, ink, pencil, acrylic, and pastel on paper, 232.7 x 124.8 cm (**The Metropolitan Museum of Art**, Gift of Andrew Cohen, in honor of Tenzing Rigdol and Fabio Rossi, 2013) © Tenzing Rigdol

In *Pin drop silence*, Avalokiteshvara is shown in his eleven-headed form, a reference to his head splitting into several parts in order to more fully observe the world and disseminate compassion. Unlike traditional imagery of Avalokiteshvara, however, none of Rigdol's Avalokiteshvara's heads are given a face. For orthodox Tibetan Buddhist practitioners, this omission is significant; *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* are traditionally drawn with very specific guidelines and gridlines in place, including precise renderings of facial features. Here, Rigdol omits these features and seemingly splits the image into pieces with his use of gridlines.



Figure 8.5.21: Tenzing Rigdol, *Pin drop silence: Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara* (detail), 2013, ink, pencil, acrylic, and pastel on paper, 232.7 x 124.8 cm (**The Metropolitan Museum of Art**, Gift of Andrew Cohen, in honor of Tenzing Rigdol and Fabio Rossi, 2013) © Tenzing Rigdol

Guidelines and Gridlines

In traditional Tibetan Buddhist painting known as *thangka*, gridlines were (and are) used as guides to ensure the proper placement and depiction of *buddhas* (of which there are many, not just the historical **Buddha Shakyamuni**) and *bodhisattvas*. The lines are the first step of the process, and they are ultimately covered by the paint—they function merely as guidelines for the artist. Yet Rigdol makes gridlines a major component of *Pin drop silence*. They divide the image, deconstructing the form of Avalokiteshvara through their presence.

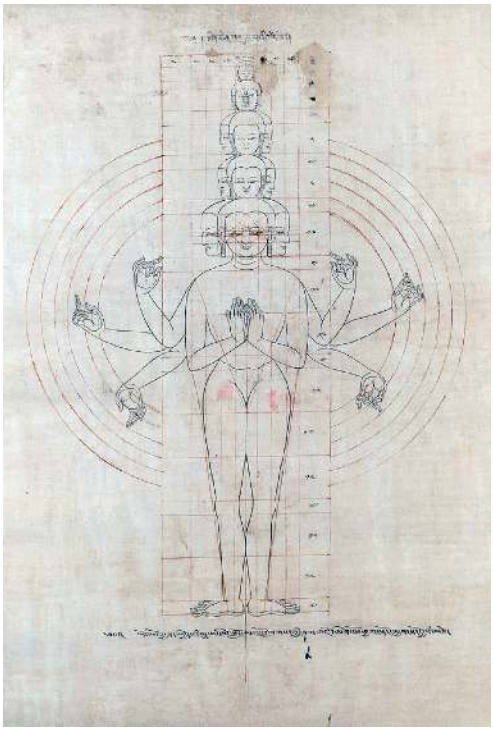


Figure 8.5.22: Traditional use of gridlines, Buddhist (**private collection**)

Rigdol has referenced his early work as a carpet designer in Nepal as an additional point of reference for these gridlines (the design process for carpets uses a matrix as well). Further, some scholars have noted similarities between Rigdol's affinity for grids and lines and those of the modernist **De Stijl** artist **Piet Mondrian**, for whom geometric abstraction held spiritual or utopian value. [1] Rigdol says this about the lines:

> ***Lines are innocent, direct and uncompromising. There is a sense of contentment within the geometric forms. They exert no pressure on me, but instead pull me towards them to look closer. [2]***

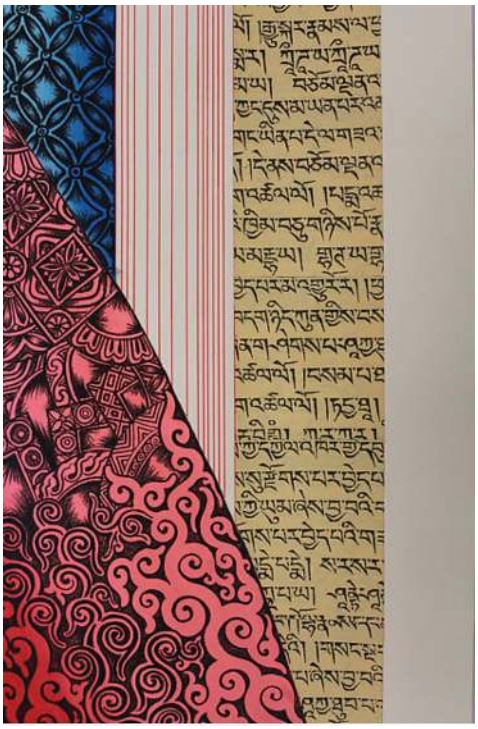


Figure 8.5.23: Tenzing Rigdol, *Pin drop silence: Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara* (detail), 2013, ink, pencil, acrylic, and pastel on paper, 232.7 x 124.8 cm (**The Metropolitan Museum of Art**, Gift of Andrew Cohen, in honor of Tenzing Rigdol and Fabio Rossi, 2013) © Tenzing Rigdol

Replacing the Background



Figure 8.5.24: Detail of Avalokiteshvara, 19th century, Eastern Tibet, ground mineral pigment on cotton (**private collection**)

The gridlines in Rigdol's work are constructed from intersecting fragments of manuscript pages, which hold a personal meaning for the artist. Rigdol's family had been in business as ink manufacturers in Tibet prior to their escape to Nepal in the late 1960s. This ink was used by monasteries to print the Buddhist manuscript pages used by monks, nuns, and lay Buddhist practitioners.

The script on these pages is known as *u-chen*, and is utilized across the Tibetan plateau. (Though the dialects differ across the region, this script can be read by many Tibetans). In traditional Tibetan *thangka*, the backgrounds often incorporated influences from Chinese landscape painting. By "replacing" that landscape with the unifying Tibetan script, Rigdol reimagines "tradition," questioning the role of Chinese landscape painting in the history of Tibetan art.

As he notes:

> ***Historically, the landscape elements in Tibetan thangka painting—the clouds, the rivers and so on—were influenced by Chinese painting. They later got an upgrade in Tibetan art. I have often said, sometimes jokingly and sometimes seriously, that in adopting Chinese style landscapes in their paintings, Tibetan artists of the past were foretelling the colonization of Tibet's land, sky, rivers and mountains by the Chinese. In 1959, when Tibet lost its country, the prophecy was fulfilled. [3]***

In this passage, Rigdol refers to a series of events in the 1950s that established Chinese rule over Tibet. There exist two opposing narratives about this period: the Chinese government and Chinese history books refer to it as the "Peaceful Liberation of Tibet," whereas Tibetans view the period as a devastating takeover of their land by colonizing forces, the "Chinese invasion of Tibet." Although many decades have now passed, there is still great strife in the region (now called the Tibet Autonomous Region, or TAR), resulting in ongoing political protests and efforts to silence dissent.

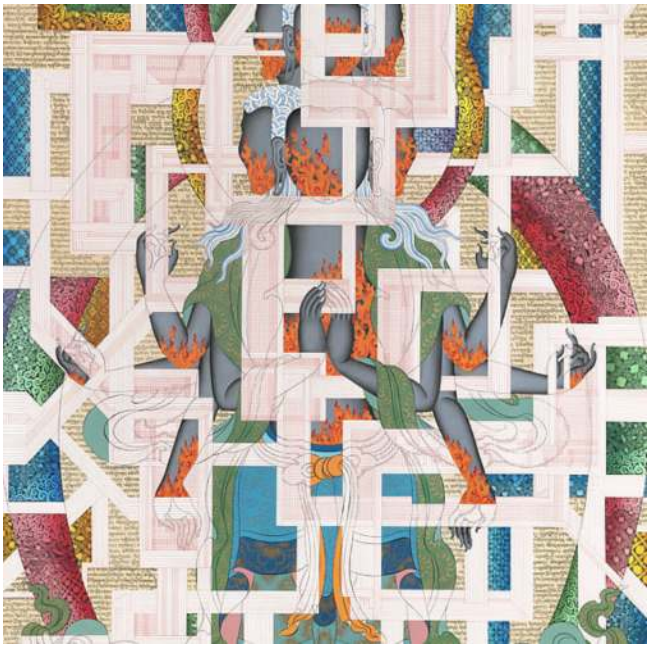


Figure 8.5.25: Tenzing Rigdol, *Pin drop silence: Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara* (detail), 2013, ink, pencil, acrylic, and pastel on paper, 232.7 x 124.8 cm (**The Metropolitan Museum of Art**, Gift of Andrew Cohen, in honor of Tenzing Rigdol and Fabio Rossi, 2013) © Tenzing Rigdol

Representing self-sacrifice



Figure 8.5.26: Tenzing Rigdol, *My World Is in Your Blind Spot* (1 of 5 panels), 2014, silk brocade, scripture, photographs, 72 x 72" (182 x 182 cm each) (image courtesy of Tenzing Rigdol and Rossi & Rossi) © Tenzing Rigdol

Rigdol incorporates flames throughout the body of the deity, a reference to the ongoing self-immolation by Tibetans. Since 2009, 156 Tibetans have publicly protested the rule of the Chinese government by setting themselves on fire, often resulting in death. [4]

Another work by Rigdol, *My World Is in Your Blind Spot*, incorporates these flames. This work is a direct reference to the lack of attention that these devastating protests have had in the international community. *My World Is in Your Blind Spot* is a series of five works that shows *buddhas* in meditative postures, with flames appearing within the contours of their bodies. Rigdol photographed the flames and then cut the images apart before reassembling them, claiming a preference for a "calm" and dignified flame rather than an aggressive flame to honor the sacrifice of so many Tibetans. The casual viewer of Rigdol's work is likely unaware of these protests. While the panels are beautiful to look at, they are devastating to comprehend. This political statement would not be permitted in the Tibet Autonomous Region because of strict censorship imposed by China, instead it was made in exile.

Rigdol is one of many contemporary Tibetan artists who has never set foot in Tibet. In exile communities scattered around the world, artists have established a visible global presence by creating group exhibitions such as *Waves on the Turquoise Lake* (2006), *Traditions Transformed* (2010) and *Anonymous* (2013–2015), all of which showcased work by artists located both in the Tibet Autonomous Region and those working in exile communities. Many of these artists incorporate Buddhist elements in their work, although in some cases this inclusion is more of a nod to a cultural connection than to religious identity (artists may or may not be Buddhist practitioners, and the work in these exhibitions was rarely meant to function in a sacred manner). Yet, the relationship to Tibet is firmly established, as it is in *Pin drop silence: Eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara*.

Notes:

[1] Francesca Gavin, "The Construction of Harmony," *Tenzing Rigdol: Experiment with Forms* exhibition catalog (Rossi & Rossi Ltd., 2009), p. 9.

[2] Gavin, "The Construction of Harmony," p. 9.

[3] Interview of Tenzing Rigdol by Fabio Rossi, 2015 Accessed August, 2018.

[4] The International Campaign for Tibet lists the current number of self-immolations at 156, though the actual number may be higher, "Self-immolation Fact Sheet"

Additional resources:

Kurt Behrendt, "Tibetan Buddhist Art in the Twenty-First Century" (March 12, 2014)

Rossi Rossi

Sarah Magnatta, "Between the Lines," *Tenzing Rigdol: Dialogue*, exhibition catalog (Rossi & Rossi Ltd., 2019).

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8.6: Histories, real and imagined

Histories, real and imagined

Contemporary artists depict the realities and possibilities of the past, often as a commentary on the present.

1980 - present

El Anatsui

El Anatsui, *Untitled*

by DR. PERI KLEMM and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER

The artist transforms metal from alcohol bottles into textiles that represent libations for ancestors.



Video 8.6.1: El Anatsui, *Untitled*, 2009, repurposed printed aluminum, copper, 256.5 × 284.5 × 27.9 cm as installed (Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C.)

Smarthistory images for teaching and learning:



Figure 8.6.1: More Smarthistory images…

El Anatsui, *Old Man's Cloth*

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG

Old Man's Cloth hangs like a large tapestry, but when we look closer, it's easy to become captivated by the small metal fragments that comprise the work in hundreds. Arranged within a shifting grid of stripes and blocks of color, the components form their own internal maps across the surface, melding into vertical gold bands, interlocking black and silver rows, or a deviant red piece floating in a field of black. While *Old Man's Cloth* would have been laid flat during its construction, it is contorted and manipulated during installation, so that the individual metal pieces can catch the light from every angle. This brilliant visual effect makes its humble origins all the more impressive.



Figure 8.6.2: El Anatsui, *Old Man's Cloth*, 2003, aluminum and copper wire, 16′ x 17′ 1″ / 487.7 x 520.7 cm (Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL)

The Medium or the Message?

Old Man's Cloth has been constructed from flattened liquor bottle labels that the artist collects near his home in Southern Nigeria. While critics often write about Anatsui's metal wall hangings using the language of textiles, the labels and bottle caps are typically fastened together with copper wire and attached corner-to-corner. As such, the issue of medium is one of the first to inspire debate amongst viewers—are the wall hangings two-dimensional or three-dimensional? Are they sculptures, even as they hang against the wall like paintings? Are they individual works or immersive installations? Lastly, are they "fine art" or simply an innovative form of "craft"?

Purposefully disregarding the limited categories imposed by Western art history, Anatsui's practice emerges from a more expanded understanding of what art can be that stems from both the radical practices of the late-1960s, and from a vantage point outside of the Western tradition completely. As scholar Susan Vogel has explained, "such categories did not exist in classic African traditions, which made no distinction between art and craft, high art and low."

Anatsui's choice of discarded liquor bottle caps as a medium has as much to do with their formal properties as with their historical associations. As an African artist whose career was forged during the utopia of mid-century African independence movements, his work has always engaged his region's history and culture. The bottle caps, for Anatsui, signify a fraught history of trade between Africa and Europe. As he explained,

Alcohol was one of the commodities brought with [Europeans] to exchange for goods in Africa. Eventually alcohol become one of the items used in the transatlantic slave trade. They made rum in the West Indies, took it to Liverpool, and then it made its way back to Africa. I thought that the bottle caps had a strong reference to the history of Africa.



Figure 8.6.3

The luminescent gold colors also recall the colonial past of Anatsui's home country—modern Ghana was previously a British colony called The Gold Coast until its independence in 1957. The fluid movements of the work's surface remind us of the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, which carried slave-ships and traders between Africa, Europe and the New World. By bestowing his works with titles such as Man's Cloth and Woman's Cloth, Anatsui also makes reference to the significance of textiles in African societies, and their own historical role in trade networks.

Old Man's Cloth was included in one of Anatsui's first exhibitions of hanging metal sculptures. Held at London's October Gallery in 2004, the show was entitled "Gawu," which means "metal cloak" in Ewe. Old Man's Cloth is unique for its uneven and jagged edges as well as the "rough texture" of the recycled labels that are incorporated into the piece.

Modernism in Africa

El Anatsui was born in Ghana in 1944, and was trained in an academic European curriculum. In 1964, when he began his studies, many parts of Africa were experiencing a cultural renaissance associated with decolonization movements. Anatsui himself joined the unofficial "Sankofa" movement, which was invested in unearthing and reclaiming Africa's rich indigenous traditions and assimilating these with the European-influenced aspects of society. His earliest works, for example, included a series of wooden market trays into which he burned designs inspired by African graphic systems and adinkra motifs (symbols widely used by the Akan people of Ghana).

In 1975, Anatsui joined the faculty at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Nsukka was a vibrant creative capital for African artists and writers in the 1970s, many of whom spearheaded the Zaria Rebellion in the early 1960s and revived the traditional art form of uli wall and body painting in their contemporary works.

Anatsui's work differed slightly from that of his colleagues in his insistence on abstraction. In some of his first mature works, he used an electric chainsaw to slash geometric patterns into wood. Though abstract, these works were metaphorically rich; Anatsui chose woods of different colors to represent the diversity of African cultures, while the violence of the chainsaw enacted the ruptures imposed by European imperialist expansion.



Figure 8.6.4: El Anatsui, *Hovor II* (detail), 2004 showing tiny bits of scrap tin, woven pieced together with wire (Photo: Amy M. Youngs, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Critical Reception: African or Contemporary?

When two of Anatsui's metal wall hangings appeared in the 2007 Venice Biennale, they were lauded by the public and swiftly cemented his place as a leading international contemporary artist. He had, in fact, already shown in Venice almost two decades earlier in 1990, when he participated in a small exhibition surveying contemporary African art. During the time that lapsed between the two exhibitions, the art world became more receptive to artists outside of its Western centers, and by 2007, Anatsui could exhibit not only as a representative of the continent, but as an individual artist whose work was significant in its own right.

As such, his work provides an excellent opportunity for discussion about the relationships between artists at the center and at the periphery, and between the West and the Global South. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, for instance, has now acquired two of Anatsui's metal wall hangings, but they are owned by two different curatorial departments: the Arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, and Modern and Contemporary Art. Both were recently on view at the same time, but in separate galleries. Visitors, students, and art historians should continue to ask themselves which designation seems more appropriate, and for what reasons. Should we understand his art as a product of its place, its time, or both? What do we see in Anatsui's work when it is placed among African masks and ritual objects, and how do our impressions change when this work is placed beside contemporary art from around the world?

There are no correct answers to these questions, but they are indicative of the changes that have taken place both in the art world, and in today's increasingly connected society at large.

Smarthistory images for teaching and learning:



Figure 8.6.5: More Smarthistory images…

Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Horn Players*

by DR. JORDANA MOORE SAGGESE



Figure 8.6.6: Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Horn Players*, 1983, acrylic and oilstick on three canvas panels mounted on wood supports, 243.8 x 190.5 cm (The Broad Art Foundation) © The Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat **(zoomable image here)**

Jean-Michel Basquiat's 1983 painting *Horn Players* shows us all the main stylistic features we have come to expect from this renowned American artist. In addition to half-length portraits on the left and right panels of this triptych (a painting consisting of

three joined panels), the artist has included several drawings and words—many of which Basquiat drew and then crossed out. On each panel we also notice large swaths of white paint, which seem to simultaneously highlight the black background and obscure the drawings and/or words beneath. Most notable perhaps is the preponderance of repeated words like "DIZZY," "ORNITHOLOGY," "PREE" and "TEETH" that the artist has scattered across all three panels of this work.

Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie

Despite the seeming disorder of the composition, however, it is clear that the main subjects of *Horn Players* are two famous jazz musicians—the saxophonist Charlie Parker and the trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, who Basquiat has depicted in both linguistic and visual portraits. On the left of the canvas, the artist has drawn the figure of Parker, holding his saxophone which emits several hot pink musical notes and distorted waves of sound. We see Dizzy Gillespie in the right panel, who holds a silent instrument alongside his torso. The words "DOH SHOO DE OBEE" that float to the left of the figure's head call to mind the scat (wordless improvisational) singing Gillespie often performed onstage.

Many of the words Basquiat has written on the canvas relate specifically to Charlie Parker, but they make sense only for those viewers with some knowledge of the musician's life. For example, the literal meaning of "ORNITHOLOGY" is "the study of birds," but this is also the title of a famous composition by Parker, who named the tune (first recorded in 1946) in reference to his own nickname "Bird." The words "PREE" and "CHAN" that we see written above and below the saxophonist's portrait refer to Parker's infant daughter and common-law wife, respectively.

Basquiat and wordplay



Figure 8.6.7: Jean-Michel Basquiat posing next to SAMO graffiti

This kind of wordplay is a characteristic that extends across most of Jean-Michel Basquiat's work. One of the most recognizable features of the artist's more than 2000 paintings and drawings is the overwhelming abundance of written words on the canvas. The art historian Robert Farris Thompson once declared: "It's as if he were dripping letters." Before his success as a painter, Basquiat was famous for writing on the walls of lower Manhattan as a teenager when he and a high school friend, Al Diaz, left cryptic messages in spray paint under the name "SAMO" (an acronym for "Same Old Shit") from 1977 until 1979.

As SAMO, Basquiat and Diaz wrote maxims, jokes, and prophecies in marker and spray paint on subway trains throughout New York City (particularly the "D" train, which ran between downtown Manhattan and Basquiat's home in Brooklyn), as well as on the walls and sidewalks in the SoHo and Tribeca neighborhoods. Many of the locations where SAMO writings were to be found were in close proximity to prominent art galleries. Combined with these strategic positions, phrases like "SAMO AS AN END TO PLAYING ART" or "SAMO FOR THE SO-CALLED AVANT-GARDE" presented the "SAMO" persona as outside the commercial art world and critical of it. In fact, even after relinquishing the SAMO persona and emerging to the art world as Jean-Michel Basquiat, the artist remained an outsider to the mainstream art world, despite his meteoric rise on the art auction block.

"The Black Picasso"

Basquiat went from SAMO"to commercial success at warp speed in the early 1980s. He first exhibited (still under the name SAMO) at the Times Square Show—an exhibition in June 1980 that marked the genesis of the eighties art movement. He was later invited to exhibit in **New York/New Wave**, a group show of sixteen hundred works by 119 artists that opened at P.S. 1 on Valentine's Day. The show was affectionately called "The Armory Show" of the 1980s (the original Armory Show in 1913 was the first large exhibition of international modern art in America).

Almost immediately afterward, the young Basquiat (at this point just 20 years old) was invited to exhibit in his first solo show in Modena, Italy. The gallerist Annina Nosei, who showed more established artists like David Salle and Richard Prince, agreed to represent Basquiat, who had a one-man show at her gallery the next year. That same year, Basquiat had exhibitions in Los Angeles,

Zurich, Rome, and Rotterdam and became the youngest artist invited to participate in Documenta 7 (an international contemporary art exhibition that takes place every five years). By 1983 the average sale price of Basquiat's work had increased by 600 percent, and his popularity (both in the auction house and in popular culture) persists even today. You can buy his images on shirts and hats from popular retail outlets and his large paintings sell at auction for more than $20 million.

Based on his meteoric success, critics referred to Jean-Michel Basquiat as "the black Picasso." The nickname was complicated for Basquiat, who never embraced it, but was nevertheless concerned with his own place within art history. He often relied on textbooks and other sources for his visual material; most biographies of the artist note his reliance on the medical textbook *Gray's Anatomy* (a gift from the artist's mother when Basquiat was hospitalized as a child) for the anatomical drawings and references we see on many of his surfaces. Basquiat also appropriated the work of Leonardo, Edouard Manet, and Pablo Picasso into his own compositions. These appropriations were in part an homage to the great painters Basquiat admired, but they also were a way for Basquiat to rewrite art history and insert himself into the canon.



Figure 8.6.8: Pablo Picasso, *Three Musicians*, 1921, oil on canvas, 200.7 x 222.9 cm (The Museum of Modern Art)

Looking again at *Horn Players*, for example, reveals several connections to Picasso's *Three Musicians*. Basquiat's use of the triptych format—a popular device for the artist in this period—echoes the triple subjects of the Picasso image. The figure of Parker in Basquiat's composition is also reproduced in the same position as the standing figure (playing the clarinet) in Picasso's work.



Figure 8.6.9: Right: Jean-Michel Basquiat, *Horn Players* (detail), 1983, acrylic and oilstick on three canvas panels mounted on wood supports, 243.8 x 190.5 cm (The Broad Art Foundation) © The Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat; left: Pablo Picasso, *Three Musicians* (detail), 1921, oil on canvas, 200.7 x 222.9 cm (The Museum of Modern Art)

The central panel of Basquiat's canvas, which does not show a portrait of an identifiable musician like the other two panels, but instead a distorted head with roughly outlined features, suddenly comes into focus via its comparison with *Three Musicians*. Here Picasso references in paint, his earlier experiments with paper collage especially in rendering the face and head of his central figure, whose jawline dramatically extends beyond what is anatomically possible to create an abstract, bulbous shape. Basquiat's central figure bears a similar protrusion—this time from the top of the head—which he fills in with hatch marks that are suggestive

of the patterning of Picasso's "collaged" paper. Once again, Basquiat seems to be speaking in code. This time, we are being asked not only to draw upon our knowledge of music history but of modern painting to fully understand his work.

Basquiat's musicians

Musicians were a popular subject for Basquiat, who himself played briefly in a noise band called Gray—likely a reference to the *Gray's Anatomy* textbook. Jazz musicians began to appear in the artist's paintings around 1982; references to jazz musicians or recordings appear in more than thirty large-format paintings and twenty works on paper. Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie are the two musicians who appear most frequently, both as figures in the paintings and through linguistic references to their work. The artist painted canvases with figures playing the trumpet, the saxophone, and the drums. He also devoted several canvases to replicating the labels of jazz records or the discographies of musicians.

Many scholars have connected Basquiat's interest in jazz to a larger investment in African American popular culture (for example, he also painted famous African American athletes) but an alternative explanation is that the young Basquiat looked to jazz music for inspiration and for instruction, much in the same way that he looked to the modern masters of painting. Parker, Gillespie, and the other musicians of the bebop era infamously appropriated both the harmonic structures of jazz standards, using them as a structure for their own songs, and repeated similar note patterns across several improvisations. Basquiat used similar techniques of appropriation throughout his career as a painter.

Additional resources:

Basquiat from The Art Story

Sue Coe, Aids won't wait, the enemy is here not in Kuwait

by MONICA ZIMMERMAN, PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video: 8.6.2: Sue Coe, *Aids won't wait, the enemy is here not in Kuwait*, 1990, photo-etching on paper, 23.8 x 32.5 cm (Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, © Sue Coe)

Additional resources:

This work at PAFA

Andrew Sullivan, "Gay Life, Gay Death: The Siege of a Subculture," *The New Republic* (December 17, 1990) (reposting on June 26, 2013)

Thornton Dial, *Blood and Meat: Survival For The World*

by TIMOTHY ANGLIN BURGARD, FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.6.3: Thornton Dial, *Blood and Meat: Survival For The World*, 1992, rope, carpet, copper Wire, metal, canvas scraps, enamel, and splash zone compound on canvas on wood, 165.1 x 241.3 x 27.9 cm (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, ©Thornton Dial), a Seeing America video

Titus Kaphar, *The Cost of Removal*

by LAUREN HAYNES, CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART) and DR. BETH HARRIS

Kaphar takes a violent history and renders it visible in this modified portrait of Andrew Jackson.



Video 8.6.4: Titus Kaphar, *The Cost of Removal*, 2017, oil, canvas, and rusted nails on canvas, 274.3 x 213.4 x 3.8 cm, © Titus Kaphar (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art)

William Kentridge, drawing from *Tide Table (Soho in Deck Chair)*

by JOSH R. ROSE



Figure 8.6.10: William Kentridge, Drawing from *Tide Table (Soho in Deck Chair)*, 2003, charcoal on paper, 81.28 x 121.92 cm (courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, NYC, © William Kentridge)

On the beach, but in a suit

It is a humorously discordant image: a man in a pinstriped suit sits on a deck chair at the beach, ignoring the overcast vista by reading a newspaper. The figure's balding head and newspaper are the brightest highlights against the smooth, rippling surf. South African artist William Kentridge has said the inspiration for this scene was a photograph of his grandfather similarly dressed at a beach near Capetown. The contrast of formal dress and beach setting—while whimsical—also suggests class distinctions and the disconnect between experiencing one's environment and codification as control: rather than watch the tide, the figure (as we come to find out) reads the newspaper's tide table (a chart that shows water heights over time for a particular location). The gulf separating understanding and experience in this drawing resonates in much of Kentridge's imagery and process.

"Successful Failures"

Kentridge was raised by two progressive lawyers in Johannesburg who actively helped disenfranchised South Africans navigate the legal system during the systemic inequalities of apartheid. The harsh racial and socioeconomic conditions in South Africa marked the earliest work Kentridge produced after studying visual art at the Johannesburg Art Foundation and theater at the L'École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq in Paris.

Kentridge's earliest passions were theater and opera (and he has continued working in these areas throughout his career), yet after realizing he was not cut out as an actor, he was "reduced to being an artist." As he has described it, "Every clear decision I have made was wrong. And the only thing that saved me was what I hadn't decided." This deceptively self-deprecating remark adequately describes the intentional openness and mutability of meaning Kentridge has built into his approach.

Process as Performance

The drawing above is the result of a film, *Tide Table*, the ninth film in the series "Drawings For Projection" begun in 1989. These films utilize a unique stop-motion technique: using a 16mm camera, Kentridge photographs each stage of a drawing on one sheet of paper as he continually modifies it through additions and erasures, often leaving ghostly remnants of previous marks on the page. He even periodically appears within the frame, such as by placing a new sheet in front of the camera when the previous drawing/scene is finished.



Figure 8.6.11: William Kentridge, Drawing from *Tide Table*, 2003 © William Kentridge

The resulting work of art is generally comprised of two elements: an animated film and a series of drawings. Unlike traditional animation, which is painstakingly planned and comprised of thousands of single images each denoting a fraction of a second, Kentridge's films develop organically without any preparatory planning like storyboards, relying more on a stream-of-consciousness approach that strives for something between random chance and conscious premeditation. Kentridge associates this with the concept of "fortuna," in which his imagery and narrative are influenced by objects in his environment or ideas and motions that seem intrinsically related to—but independent of—the themes and narrative being tackled at the time. The relationship might be comparable to that of authors noting how their characters do something unexpected in the course of writing a novel. There is a performative quality to Kentridge's process, predicated by the spontaneity he fosters, his own appearances in the frame, and the film itself as a time-based record of his drawing process.

The Traces Always Remain

Kentridge's drawings for his films are often regarded as palimpsests. A palimpset is the word for a manuscript where the original text has been erased and overwritten (a practice common before paper was available and when parchment was expensive). In Kentridge's work, the sheet of paper becomes the locus for layer upon layer of images that evolve and shift, where the earlier states of the drawing exist only through traces intentionally left on the paper. In the film, these traces help intensify the movement of his figures, but also visually remark upon the process as a physical interaction of charcoal and eraser on paper.

The palimpsest quality to Kentridge's approach is one that many critics and historians have associated with his reaction to growing up during a turbulent and shifting period in South African history. Apartheid, legalized racial discrimination, dominated South African governance and society from 1948 until 1994. One way Kentridge has made overt reference to the atrocities of apartheid in his "Drawings for Projection" series is through the one pre-determined facet of these narratives: an established "cast" featuring the wealthy white real-estate developer and industrialist Soho Eckstein. Eckstein represents the authoritative oppressors ruling over black South Africans.



Figure 8.6.12: William Kentridge, Drawing for the film *Monument*, 1990 © William Kentridge

In the 1990 film *Monument*, for example, Eckstein unveils a heroic monument showing a black worker struggling to carry a load of pristine marble objects. An ostensibly commemorative sculpture to the efforts of South Africans is revealed later to be an actual living person, not a sculpture. Racial discrimination is starkly reduced to the contrast between the "sculpted" worker's body and the white classically-styled load he bears.

In the 1991 film, *Mine*, a similar contrast is presented between Eckstein's white bed coverings and tray as he enjoys coffee, and the grueling, dank conditions of the mines that Eckstein owns. The two are linked visually by the downward action of the French-press coffee maker that becomes the elevator within the mines. Such contrasts seem intentionally provocative, both formally and thematically. Yet Kentridge admits that the decision to have the coffee plunger become the elevator shaft was another example of fortuna, inspired simply from the fact he had that type of coffee maker in his studio that day.



Figure 8.6.13: William Kentridge, Drawing for the film *Mine*, 1991 © William Kentridge

A critical event linked to the legal dissolution of apartheid in the 1990s was the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Commission was a five year investigation into the crimes and human rights abuses committed under apartheid from 1960 until May 10, 1994. The results of the investigation, broadcast on South African television, were intended to bring to light crimes committed and the breadth of the structure of racism and disenfranchisement.

Although Kentridge's process was established several years before the Commission, scholars like Jessica Dubow and Ruth Rosengarten have linked the palimpsest quality of Kentridge's "Drawings for Projection" with the contradictory nature of the Commission: although the broadcasts intended to reveal atrocities, they also established that the harrowing acts revealed were firmly "in the past" and therefore not reflective of the dawn of a post-apartheid South Africa. Dubow and Rosengarten suggest that Kentridge's palimpsest technique is reminiscent of the Commission's attempts to show—but also remove—traces of apartheid and that Kentridge's "finished" drawings similarly do not fully reveal everything that went into making them. The documentation of every stage of the drawing is only seen in the animated film, hence the reason the drawings and the films are intrinsically related and should not be separated.

Tide Table

The disconnect between documentation and direct experience seen in the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is also central to the drawing of Soho Eckstein sitting at the beach in a business suit. In the films he created after 1994, Kentridge presents Soho as a man whose life has fallen apart: between inexplicable health issues, violent nightmares, and the loss of his fortune, Kentridge portrays Eckstein's struggles in post-apartheid South Africa. Throughout Tide Table the artist provides a subtext that reflects upon youth, as a choir on the beach sings and a young boy dances and leaps in the surf. Often this occurs around Eckstein, as he sits in the deck chair, seeming to prefer the analytical table of tide flows in the newspaper and, in a later scene, pointedly placing the newspaper over his head to sleep (see above).

These images reinforce Eckstein's character as one who is more comfortable at a remove from human connection and the natural world, a portrayal that is common to many of the films in the series.

Eckstein's actions in *Tide Table* evoke a sense of loss for the comforts and advantages the character had during apartheid. Still, there is a glimmer of hope. Ultimately Eckstein observes those around him; he gets up, and playfully throws a rock into the water.

Additional Resources:

The artist discussing his 2003 film, *Tide Table* (SFMOMA)

The artist discusses his process (SFMOMA)

This film at SFMOMA

Interview with the artist

Kentridge Wikipedia entry

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice

by DR. RENÉE ATER

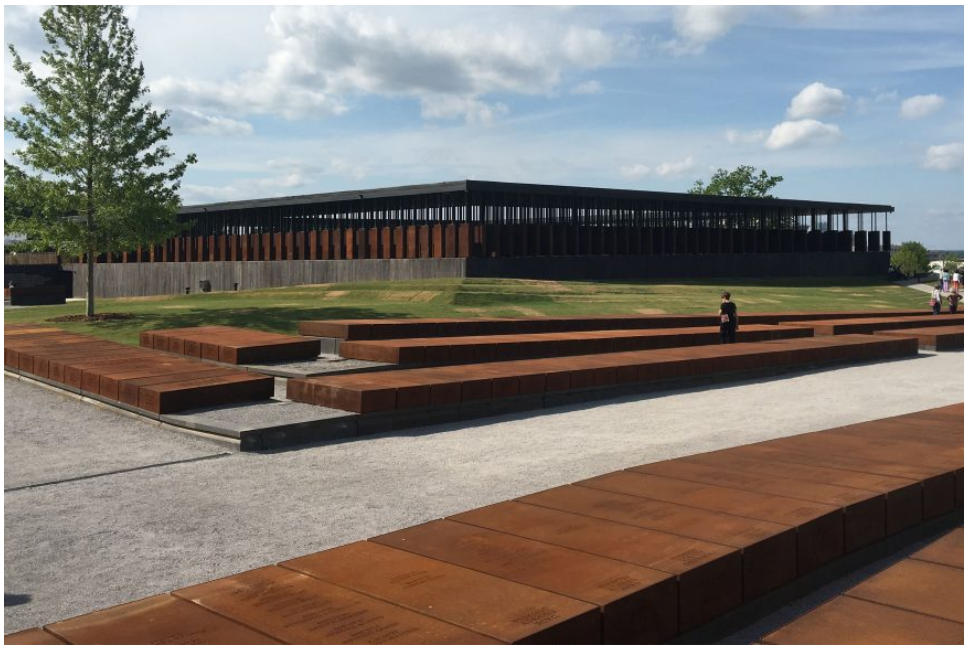


Figure 8.6.14: The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: **Shawn Calhoun**, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Located in Montgomery, Alabama, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice is the first monument to commemorate the over 4,000 African Americans who were lynched in the United States between 1877 and 1950. The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) envisioned and realized the memorial as "a sacred space for truth-telling and reflection about racial terror in America and its legacy."



Figure 8.6.15: Meta Warrick Fuller, *In Memory of Mary Turner: As a Silent Protest Against Mob Violence*, 1919, painted plaster (Museum of African American History, Boston & Nantucket)

While writing my dissertation on the sculpture of Meta Warrick Fuller, I investigated the history of lynching in the United States. My research was motivated by the fact that Fuller had created a small painted plaster to honor the memory of Mary Turner, a pregnant woman who was lynched in Brooks County, Georgia, in 1918. I was interested to see if Turner was identified in the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, which I discovered she was. I also was deeply curious as to how EJI would handle the

visual representation of trauma and violence. At the end of April 2018, I flew to Atlanta, rented a car, and drove through the Georgia and Alabama countryside to Montgomery to participate in the opening ceremonies and the two-day social justice conference.



Figure 8.6.16: The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, opened 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: **Soniakapadia**, CC BY-SA 4.0)

Sited on six acres of land, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice is an arresting and emotionally powerful memorial to lynching victims. EJI with MASS Design Group conceived the memorial as a sober and sacred site where people can gather and reflect on America's history of slavery, lynching, and racial inequality. EJI believes that such a monument will allow for national reconciliation and redemption.



Figure 8.6.17: Peace and Justice Memorial Garden, The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: Dr. Renée Ater)

Peace and Justice Memorial Garden

The memorial includes multiple components: a garden, four sculpture groupings, explanatory texts and quotations, and a temple-like structure with hanging rectangular boxes made of corten steel. Visitors first encounter the Peace and Justice Memorial Garden before entering the long hallway of the main entrance. Within the garden are native plantings of flowers and shrubs and the so-called "Memory Wall: Strength," a brick arched wall from the Montgomery Theater, built in 1860, which enslaved masons

constructed. The garden is intended as a contemplative space as well as a place to acknowledge past and present African American laborers in Montgomery. From the garden, a serpentine pathway leads to the entrance of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

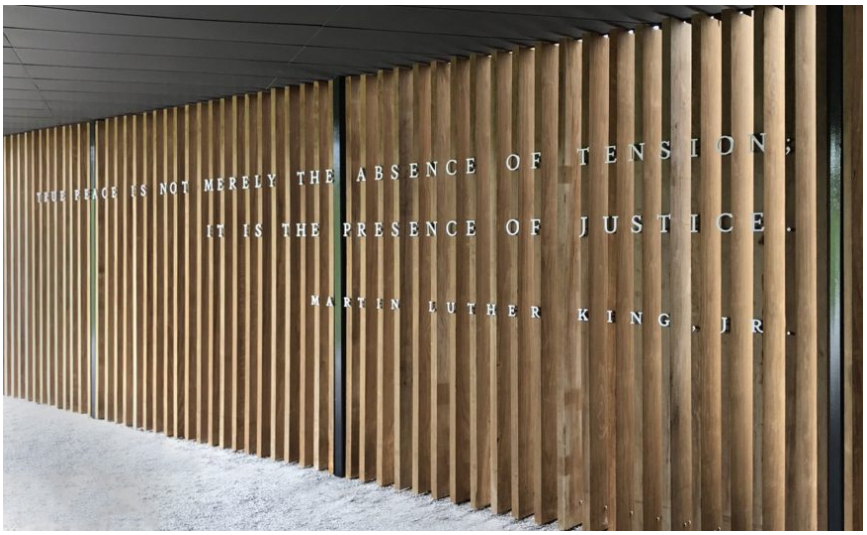


Figure 8.6.18: Entrance, National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: Dr. Renée Ater)

Telling the story of slavery and lynching

A quotation from Martin Luther King Jr. greets you as you enter the memorial. Placed along a wooden slat wall, it reads: "True peace is not merely the absence of tension, it is the presence of justice." This quotation frames the meaning of the memorial and the overall social activist and reparative justice mission of EJI. EJI is "committed to ending mass incarceration and excessive punishment in the United States, to challenging racial and economic injustice, and to protecting basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society." The memorial space flows in one direction, with visitors passing King's remarks to begin a slow climb up the gently sloped landscape to the main building of the memorial.



Figure 8.6.19: Informational plaque in the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: **Judson McCranie**, CC BY-SA 3.0)

Four large grey plaques with white lettering are attached to the concrete wall along the pathway. Evenly spaced, these texts outline a history of the transatlantic slave trade and the rise of violence in the post-Civil War period; Reconstruction and the rise of convict leasing in the South; racial terror lynching in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries; and the justifications that white Americans gave for lynching African American men and women. The texts use direct, concise language to describe the difficult historical facts of slavery and racial terror lynching.



Figure 8.6.20: Kwame Akoto-Bamfo, *Nkyinkyim Installation*, 2018, National Memorial for Peace and Justice, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: **Michael Delli Carpini**, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Monument to the transatlantic slave trade

In front of the first plaque, the artist Kwame Akoto-Bamfo created a cast concrete, multi-figure, stand-alone monument to the transatlantic slave trade. Entitled *Nkyinkyim Installation*, this work presents seven semi-nude Africans who are enchained for the harrowing journey from the interior to the coast for transportation across the Atlantic. Based on the **slavery memorial in Stone Town, Zanzibar, Tanzania**, Akoto-Bamfo's memorial evokes the horror of slavery through the figures anguished expressions; chained necks and manacled hands and feet; and simulated slashed backs. The most sorrowful of these depictions is of a chained young mother holding a screaming baby as she reaches across to an older standing male figure.



Figure 8.6.21: Memorial Square, National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: **Michael Delli Carpini**, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Sacred space dedicated to lynching victims

The memorial structure suggests the form of a temple with a large peristyle. At the center of the temple-like memorial is an open space, “Memorial Square,” reached by a series of aggregate concrete steps. The grassy knoll represents spaces such as town squares and courthouse lawns used for the public spectacle of lynching. Inside the memorial, over 800 rectangular corten steel boxes, six feet in height, hang by steel poles from the ceiling at even intervals. Each of these hanging forms represents a county in the United States where a lynching took place. Names of lynching victims and the dates of their murders are laser cut into the surfaces of the boxes.



Figure 8.6.22: National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: Dr. Renée Ater)

On the interior of the memorial structure, you begin on even ground, your body parallel to the coffin-like forms. If you choose, you can lean into the monument and even trace a finger across the cutout letters or feel the uneven surface quality. As you descend into the memorial, the corten steel boxes rise high above, suspended in the air and no longer within your bodily space. These rusted stele evoke the image of black bodies hanging from trees.

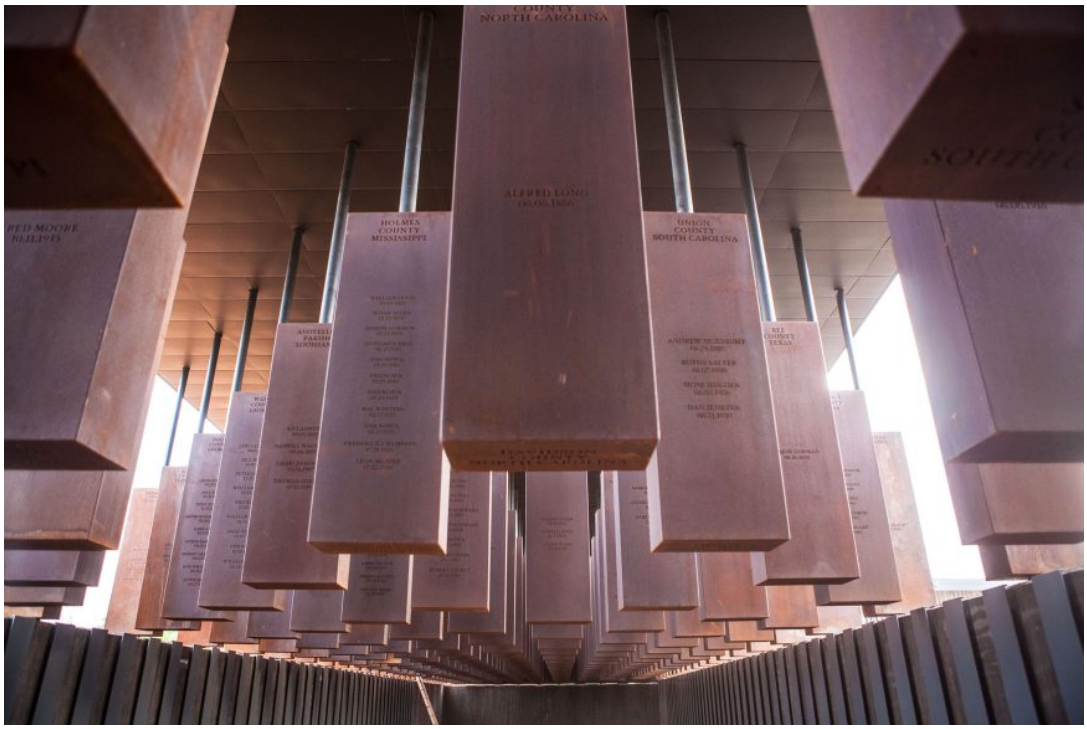


Figure 8.6.23: Memorial Corridor, National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: Soniakapadia, CC BY-SA 4.0)

Along the third section of the memorial, bands of text panels in grey with white lettering identify the awful justifications for racial terror lynching including accusations of inappropriate conduct with white women, speaking out against lynching, and not showing

deference to whites. After reading these difficult texts, you encounter a message of reconciliation.

> ***For the hanged and beaten.***
> ***For the shot, drowned, and burned.***
> ***For the tortured, tormented, and terrorized.***
> ***For those abandoned by the Rule of Law.***
>
> ***We will remember.***
>
> ***With hope because hopelessness is the enemy of justice.***
> ***With courage because peace requires bravery.***
> ***With persistence because justice is a constant struggle.***
> ***With faith because we shall overcome.***

This text asserts unequivocally the power of this memorial to act as a remembrance device and as a space where the horror and trauma of lynching is framed in the context of peace.

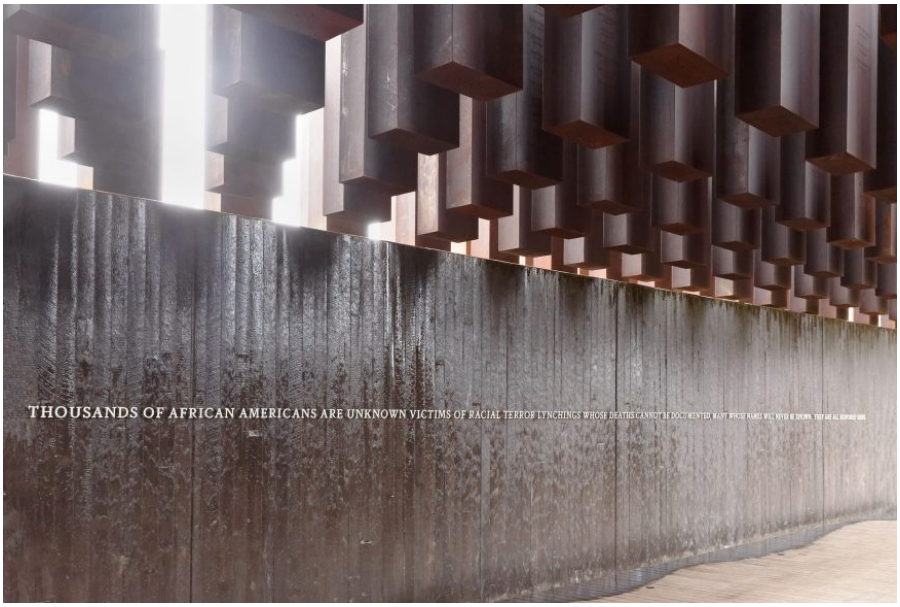


Figure 8.6.24: Wall with flowing water, National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: **Judson McCranie**, CC BY-SA 3.0)

Nearby, water flows down the final long wall of the memorial. Metal lettering asserts that all victims of lynching now will be remembered. “Thousands of African Americans are unknown victims of racial terror lynchings whose deaths cannot be documented, many whose names will never be known. They are all honored here.” The slow sound of water cascading down the wall allows space for contemplation, as you are able to sit along rough-hewn seating across from the water feature.

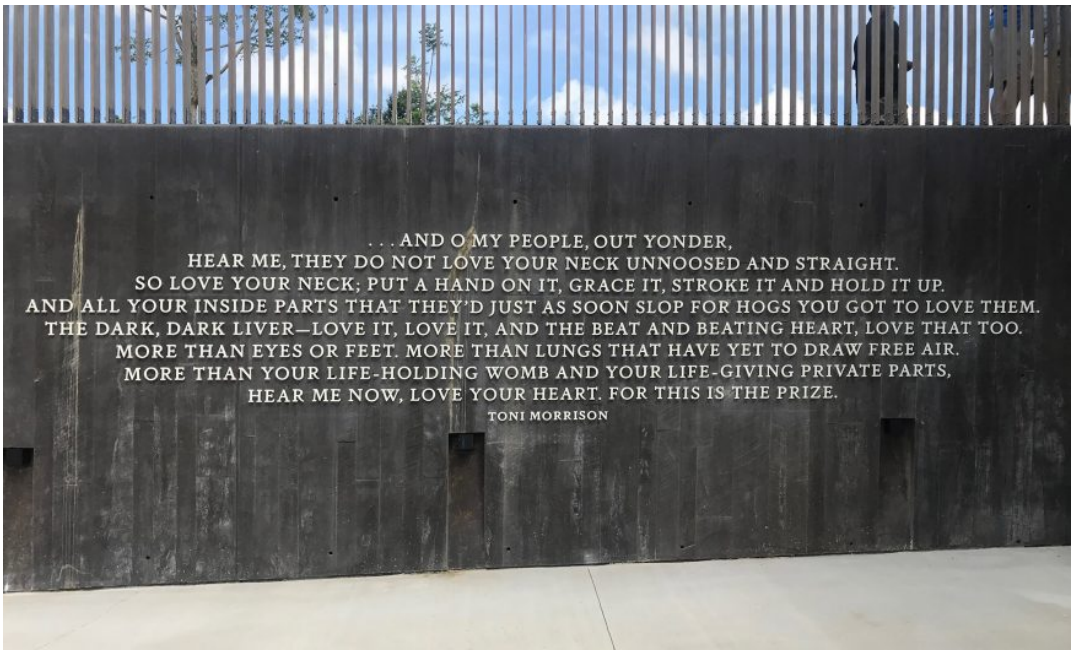


Figure 8.6.25: National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: **Michael Delli Carpini,** CC BY-NC 2.0)

When you exit the memorial to the surrounding park, you encounter a final quotation from Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* that stresses the power of love.

> ***And O my people, out yonder, hear me, they do not love your neck unnoosed and straight. So love your neck; put a hand on it, grace it, stroke it and hold it up. And all your inside parts that they'd just as soon slop for hogs, you got to love them. The dark, dark liver—love it, love it, and the beat and beating heart, love that too. More than eyes or feet. More than lungs that have yet to draw free air. More than your life-holding womb and your life-giving private parts, hear me now, love your heart. For this is the prize.***



Figure 8.6.26: Duplicate monuments, National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: Dr. Renée Ater)

Duplicate monuments

In the park, MASS and EJI included a field of duplicate monuments. Rather than hang from a roof, the corten steel boxes now serve as cenotaphs lying flat on the ground in long rows. They are waiting to be claimed and installed in the counties they represent. For EJI, the duplicate monuments serve as "a report" as to which counties have confronted the difficult history of lynching and which have chosen to not deal with such a painful legacy. EJI believes this process of claiming the duplicate monuments will "change the built environment of the Deep South and beyond to more honestly reflect our history."



Figure 8.6.27: Left: Ida B. Wells Memorial Grove; right: Dana King, *Guided by Justice*, 2018. National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photos: Dr. Renée Ater)

Sculpture in the park

Three additional groups of sculpture are integrated into the park. The Ida B. Wells Memorial Grove honors the early twentieth-century anti-lynching activist and writer. It contains over forty black granite cylinders of various heights that visitors can sit on and reflect. In *Guided by Justice*, Dana King created three life-size bronze statues of black women dressed in coats as they "walk" on the pathway. These three statues of women at various stages of life symbolize the women arrested in 1955 for challenging racial segregation on Montgomery's public buses.



Figure 8.6.28: Hank Willis Thomas, *Raise Up*, 2016, National Memorial for Peace and Justice, 2018, Montgomery, Alabama (photo: Dr. Renée Ater)

The final sculpture is by Hank Willis Thomas and represents systemized police violence directed towards African American men. *Raise Up* is a long horizontal, free-standing concrete wall with ten bronze portraits of black men shown from the neck up with their

hands raised above their bald heads. These monuments with Akoto-Bamfo's multi-figure statue of enslaved persons underscore the main themes of the memorial and of EJI's work: slavery, lynching, segregation/resistance, and mass incarceration.

Elizabeth Alexander's "Invocation"

As visitors exit the National Memorial to Peace and Justice, they encounter the haunting lines of the poet Elizabeth Alexander's "Invocation." In the lines of her poem, Alexander asserts that the African American victims of racial terror lynching will not be forgotten, nor lost in the telling of U.S. history. Each name—"a holy word"— is forever etched on this memorial and into the nation's collective memory.

> ***The wind brings your names.***
> ***We will never dissever you names***
> ***nor your shadows beneath each branch and tree.***
>
> ***The truth comes in on the wind, is carried by water.***
> ***There is such a thing as the truth. Tell us***
> ***how you got over. Say, Soul look back in wonder.***
>
> ***Your names were never lost,***
> ***each name a holy word.***
> ***The rocks cry out—***
>
> ***call out each name to sanctify this place.***
> ***Sounds in human voices, silver and soil,***
> ***a moan, a sorrow song,***
>
> ***a keen, a cackle, harmony,***
> ***a hymnal, handbook, chart,***
> ***a sacred text, a stomp, an exhortation.***
>
> ***Ancestors, you will find us still in cages,***
> ***despised and disciplined.***
> ***You will find us still mis-named.***
>
> ***Here you will find us despite.***
> ***You will not find us extinct.***
> ***You will find us here memoried and storied.***
>
> ***You will find us here mighty.***
> ***You will find us here divine.***
> ***You will find us where you left us, but not as you left us.***
>
> ***Here you endure and are luminous.***
> ***You are not lost to us.***
> ***The wind carries sorrows, sighs, and shouts.***
>
> ***The wind brings everything. Nothing is not lost.***

Additional Resources:

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice on Equal Justice Initiative website

MASS Design group page on their design for the memorial

Julie Buckner Armstrong, *Mary Turner and the Memory of Lynching* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2011).

Fritzhugh Brundage, *Under Sentence of Death: Lynching in the South* (Durham, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997.)

Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*

by TINA RIVERS RYAN



Figure 8.6.29: Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, 1995, fifty-one channel video installation (including one closed-circuit television feed), custom electronics, neon lighting, steel and wood; color, sound, approx. 15 x 40 x 4′ (Smithsonian American Art Museum) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

Getting on the "Electronic Super Highway"

In 1974, artist Nam June Paik submitted a report to the Art Program of the Rockefeller Foundation, one of the first organizations to support artists working with new media, including television and video. Entitled "Media Planning for the Post Industrial Society—The 21st Century is now only 26 years away," the report argued that media technologies would become increasingly prevalent in American society, and should be used to address pressing social problems, such as racial segregation, the modernization of the economy, and environmental pollution. Presciently, Paik's report forecasted the emergence of what he called a "broadband communication network"—or "electronic super highway"—comprising not only television and video, but also "audio cassettes, telex, data pooling, continental satellites, micro-fiches, private microwaves and eventually, fiber optics on laser frequencies." By the 1990s, Paik's concept of an information "superhighway" had become associated with a new "world wide web" of electronic communication then emerging—just as he had predicted.

From Music to Fluxus

Paik was well-positioned to understand how media technologies were evolving: in the 1960s he was one of the very first people to use televisual technologies as an artistic medium, earning him the title of "father" of video art. Born in Seoul in 1932, Paik studied composition while attending college in Tokyo; he eventually travelled to Germany, where he hoped to encounter the leading composers of the day. He met John Cage in 1958, and soon became involved with the avant-garde Fluxus group, led by Cage's student George Maciunas. Explain Fluxus.

Following the example of Cage's oeuvre, many of Paik's Fluxus works undermined accepted notions of musical composition or performance. This same irreverent spirit informed his use of television, to which he turned his attention in 1963 in his first one-man gallery show, "Exposition of Music—Electronic Television," at the Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal, Germany. Here, Paik became the

first artist to exhibit what would later become known as “video art” by scattering television sets across the floor of a room, thereby shifting our attention from the content on the screens to the sculptural forms of the sets.

The father of video art



Figure 8.6.30: Nam June Paik, *Magnet TV*, 1965, modified black-and-white television set and magnet (Smithsonian American Art Museum) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

Paik moved to New York in 1964, where he came into contact with the downtown art scene. In 1965, he began collaborating with cellist Charlotte Moorman, who would wear and perform Paik’s TV sculptures for many years; he also had a one-man show at the 57th Street Galeria Bonino, in which he exhibited modified or “prepared” television sets that upset the traditional TV-watching experience. One example is *Magnet TV*, in which an industrial magnet is placed on top of the TV set, distorting the broadcast image into abstract patterns of light.

According to an oft-cited story, on October 4th of that same year, Paik purchased the first commercially-available portable video system in America, the Sony Portapak, and immediately used it to record the arrival of Pope Paul VI at St. Patrick’s Cathedral. Later that night, Paik showed the tape at the Café au Go Go in Greenwich Village, ushering in a new mode of video art based not on the subversion or distortion of television broadcasts, but on the possibilities of videotape. The evolution of these tendencies into a new movement was announced by a 1969 group show, “TV as a Creative Medium.” Held at the Howard Wise Gallery in New York, the show included one of Paik’s interactive TVs, and also premiered another one of his collaborations with Moorman.

TV as a Creative Medium

For Paik and other early adopters of video, this new artistic medium was well-suited to the speed of our increasingly electronic modern lives. It allowed artists to create moving images more quickly than recording on film (which required time for negatives to be developed), and unlike film, video could be edited in “real-time,” using devices that altered the video’s electronic signals. (Ever the pioneer, Paik created his own video synthesizer with engineer Shuya Abe in 1969.) Furthermore, because the image recorded by the video camera could be transmitted to and viewed almost instantaneously on a monitor, people could see themselves “live” on a TV screen, and even interact with their own TV image, in a process known as “feedback.” In the years to come, the participatory nature of TV would be redefined by two-way cable networks, while the advent of global satellite broadcasts made TV a medium of instant global communication.



Figure 8.6.31: Nam June Paik, *TV Garden*, 1974 (image shows 2000 version), video installation with color television sets and live plants (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

As television continued to evolve from the late 1960s onward, Paik explored ways to disrupt it from both inside and outside of the institutional frameworks of galleries, museums, and emerging experimental TV labs. His major works from this period include *TV Garden* (1974), a sculptural installation of TV sets scattered among live plants in a museum (image above), and *Good Morning, Mr. Orwell* (1984), a broadcast program that coordinated live feeds from around the world via satellite. In these and other projects, Paik's goal was to reflect upon how we interact with technology, and to imagine new ways of doing so. The many retrospectives of his work in recent decades, including one organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum in 2012, speak to the increasing relevance of his ideas for contemporary art.

The nation electric



Figure 8.6.32: Nam June Paik, *V-yramid* (detail), 1982, video installation, color, sound, with forty television sets (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York) (photo: **Mark B. Schlemmer**, CC BY 2.0) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

By the 1980s, Paik was building enormous, free-standing structures comprising dozens or even hundreds of TV screens, often organized into iconic shapes, as in the giant pyramid of *V-yramid* (1982). For the German Pavilion at the 1993 Venice Biennale, Paik produced a series of works about the relationship between Eastern and Western cultures, framed through the lens of Marco Polo; along with Hans Haacke, another artist representing Germany, Paik was awarded the prestigious Golden Lion. One of the works, *Electronic Superhighway*, was a towering bank of TVs that simultaneously screened multiple video clips (including one of John Cage) from a wide variety of sources. Two years later, Paik revisited this work in *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, placing over 300 TV screens into the overall formation of a map of the United States outlined in colored neon lights (see image at the top of the page and the detail below). Roughly forty feet long and fifteen feet high, the work is a monumental record of the physical and also cultural contours of America: within each state, the screens display video clips that resonate with that state's unique popular mythology. For example, Iowa (where each presidential election cycle begins) plays old news footage of various candidates, while Kansas presents the *Wizard of Oz*.



Figure 8.6.33: Detail, Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, 1995, fifty-one channel video installation (including one closed-circuit television feed), custom electronics, neon lighting, steel and wood; color, sound, approx. 15 x 40 x 4′ (Smithsonian American Art Museum) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

The states are firmly defined, but also linked, by the network of neon lights, which echoes the network of interstate "superhighways" that economically and culturally unified the continental U.S. in the 1950s. However, whereas the highways facilitated the transportation of people and goods from coast to coast, the neon lights suggest that what unifies us now is not so much transportation, but electronic communication. Thanks to the screens of televisions and of the home computers that became popular in the 1990s, as well as the cables of the internet (which transmit information as light), most of us can access the same information at anytime and from any place. *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, which has been housed at the Smithsonian American Art Museum since 2002, has therefore become an icon of America in the information age.

While Paik's work is generally described as celebrating the fact that the "electronic superhighway" allows us to communicate with and understand each other across traditional boundaries, this particular work also can be read as posing some difficult questions about how that technology is impacting culture. For example, the physical scale of the work and number of simultaneous clips makes it difficult to absorb any details, resulting in what we now call "information overload," and the visual tension between the static brightness of the neons and the dynamic brightness of the screens points to a similar tension between national and local frames of reference.

Additional resources:

Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Nam June Paik, bio and collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Nam June Paik, *TV Garden* at the Guggenheim

Nam June Paik from the National Endowment for the Arts

Nam June Paik archive at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Nam June Paik from the Asia Society

Melissa Chiu and Michelle Yun, eds., *Nam June Paik: Becoming Robot* (New York: Asia Society Museum, 2014).

John G. Hanhardt and Ken Hakuta, *Nam June Paik: Global Visionary* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian American Art Museum, 2012).

John G. Hanhardt and Jon Ippolito, *The Worlds of Nam June Paik* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2000).

Sigmar Polke, *Watchtower* series

by KATRINA KLAASMEYER

In the early 1980s, Sigmar Polke returned to painting. The ever-evolving artist had spent the previous decade experimenting with photography, inspired perhaps by his extensive travels through Asia and Australia. His interest in photography centered on the chemical processes of the darkroom and their potential for unpredictable results. Like his earlier *rasterbilder* (works that exposed the raster-dot technique of printing, such as *Bunnies*), Polke continued to delight in exposing the artistic process. As he began to use unconventional materials and chemicals across various media, viewers could see the artwork literally developing and changing in front of their eyes. These experiments have earned him the designation of alchemist—the ancient practitioner of magic, altering substances at the most fundamental levels.

Alchemy in painting



Figure 8.6.34: Sigmar Polke, *Watchtower,* 1984, synthetic polymer paints and dry pigment on patterned fabric, 9′ 10″ x 7′ 4 1/2″ (The Museum of Modern Art) © 2015 Estate of Sigmar Polke

We can see Polke's play with alchemy in the series of five works centered on the watchtower theme completed from 1984-1988. Taken as a whole, the watchtower series consistently presents a tenuous balance between imagery that evokes both the ominous and the everyday.

In *Watchtower* (1984), we see the watchtower clearly with its distinctive white outline against the darker background fabrics. Gestural swirls of yellow paint add to the dreamlike haziness of the image. Two styles of textile have been used: on the left, a repetitive geometric pattern similar to a basketweave; on the right, large stylized flowers of yellow, red, and purple. These fabrics are nothing special—in fact, their very banality is what appealed to the artist. Rather than use the sanctified canvas of high art, Polke has instead chosen "bargain-bin" consumer textiles. Polke's use of these textiles alludes to a subtle type of alchemy: the transformation of a simple material widely available into the foundation for the genius of artistic expression. Through his manipulation, the fabric previously worth only dollars upon the yard has now transmuted into an artwork worth millions.

Polke's alchemical practices are most apparent in *Watchtower II* (1984-85, **Carnegie Museum of Art**) where he used silver oxide to create a ghost-like, hazy outline, resulting in a muted image. From certain angles, the watchtower is barely visible. We see another variant on this theme in *Watchtower with Geese* (1987-88, **Art Institute of Chicago**). Polke has prominently placed a gaggle of geese atop a fabric printed with beach umbrellas and sunglasses. In this context, the function of the watchtower becomes ambiguous. The fabric alludes to the beach, thereby suggesting this symbol could be a lifeguard tower, whereas the geese allude to hunting, providing yet another possibility for the tower—a hunter's blind. Indeed, the original German title *Hochsitz* translates literally to "perch" (as in a high vantage point) and typically refers to the hunter's blind, an elevated seat used in the German countryside as a lookout for hunting fowl. Ambiguity, banality, alchemical transformations—with these recurrent themes present in this series, Polke is consistent in his inconsistency.

Art after Auschwitz

Without question, the central symbol in this series evokes the horrific realities of concentration camps, the Nazi past, and government surveillance in a divided nation. As Germany struggled with reunification in the 1980s, the military watchtowers continued to stand, near the wall separating the communist East from the democratic West. For some Germans, these towers were part of everyday reality. By layering the watchtower symbol within the banal imagery of the preprinted textiles, Polke is symbolizing a layering of consciousness, disparate realities within a divided nation. Many artists have confronted these themes of postwar reality and the healing of wide-spread cultural trauma, most notably Joseph Beuys in his shamanistic workings with felt and fat, and Anselm Kiefer's massive canvases exploring history and myth.

Polke addressed the issues of surveillance and slaughter in this watchtower series, as well as in his ominous painting *Camp* (1982, **Museum of Fine Arts, Boston**), where the viewer is placed within a black mist set between two inwardly curving fences of barbed wire against a dark yellow sky. In these paintings, Polke does not diminish or attempt to hide the horrific realities of these symbols, yet he enshrouds them in dark uncertainties. The ghost-like haziness and mysterious mist are unpredictable and unbounded, forcing a shifting of perspective. Polke does not wish to erase the past, but perhaps something so complex can only be approached through the magic of alchemy, with its transformative powers and limitless potential.

Additional Resources:

Watchtower at the Museum of Modern Art

Watchtower II at the Carnegie Museum of Art

Watchtower with Geese at the Art Institute Chicago

Artist's biography at Tate

Polke on the the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History

What's in a map? Jaune Quick-To-See Smith's *State Names*

by DR. ANNE SHOWALTER and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.6.5: Dr. Anne Showalter and Dr. Beth Harris discuss Jaune Quick-To-See Smith's *State Names (*2000) at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

What's in a map? With *State Names*, the Native American artist Jaune Quick-To-See Smith suggests that thinking about our history in a different way, helps us rethink our present.

Additional resources

State Names at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Jaune Quick-To-See Smith's artist website

Artist interview with Jaune Quick-To-See Smith (The Smithsonian American Art Museum)

Smarthistory images for teaching and learning:



Figure 8.6.35: More Smarthistory images…

Wendy Red Star, *1880 Crow Peace Delegation*

by WENDY RED STAR AT PORTLAND ART MUSEUM and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.6.6: Wendy Red Star, *1880 Crow Peace Delegation: Peelatchiwaaxpáash/Medicine Crow (Raven), Peelatchixaaliash/Old Crow (Raven), Déaxitchish/Pretty Eagle, Bia Eélisaash/Large Stomach Woman (Pregnant Woman) aka Two Belly,*

Alaxchiiaahush/Many War Achievements or Plenty Coups aka Chíilaphuchissaaleesh/Buffalo Bull Facing The Wind, 2014, 10 inket prints and red ink on paper, 16 15/16 x 11 15/16 inches (each) © Wendy Red Star (Portland Art Museum)

Gerhard Richter

Gerhard Richter, The Cage Paintings (1-6)

by GERHARD RICHTER STUDIO



Video 8.6.7: Robert Storr talks about Gerhard Richter's Cage paintings.

Gerhard Richter, *Uncle Rudi*

by DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Figure 8.6.36: Gerhard Richter, *Uncle Rudi*, 1965, oil on canvas, 87 x 50 cm (Lidice Gallery, Lidice, Czech Republic) used with permission of the Gerhard Richter studio

"I can't see it…is it me?" I watched a young woman step closer to the canvas titled, *Uncle Rudi*. She was now physically closer and she was looking hard, but the image kept its distance.

Refusing Style

Meaning in Gerhard Richter's art can also keep its distance. The elusiveness of meaning is, in some ways, a central subject of Richter's art. Since the early 1950s, Richter has painted a huge number of subjects in wildly conflicting styles. For most artists, one style emerges and evolves slowly, almost imperceptibly, over the course of their career. This is because artists often continue to work through problems that remain relevant and perhaps, because they achieve a degree of recognition and the market then demands that style. In other words, collectors often want what is known. Artists who abandon their signature style do so at some risk to future sales. Still, some artists do push in startlingly new directions. Willem de Kooning abandoned abstraction for the figure against the advice of his dealer, and Pablo Picasso famously pursued opposing styles simultaneously—think of his volumetric, even bloated Neoclassicism compared to the collages where he pressed flat every volume in sight.

The Impossibility of Meaning

During Richter's long career, he has produced art in an unprecedented number of conflicting styles starting with the propagandistic Social Realist art he made as a student at the Dresden Art Academy in Communist East Germany. After his move in 1961 to Düsseldorf in the West (via Berlin—the wall was begun the same year), he co-founded a German variant of Pop art which he, somewhat jokingly, termed Capitalist Realism. Since then he has painted high-pitched realism (sometimes blurred just enough to soften the image, or sometimes wiped or scraped beyond all recognition) and produced representations of abstraction (as opposed to abstraction itself). He has explored many of the most pressing visual issues of our time, the relationship of photography to painting, memory and the image, art's role in the representation of war and politics, and perhaps most importantly, the impossibility of fixed meaning.

Image and Ideology

Richter was born in Dresden, Germany on the eve of the Second World War. His two uncles were killed in the war and his father served, but survived. His schizophrenic aunt, Marianne, was murdered by the Nazis as part of their drive to euthanize the sick. Less than a week after his thirteenth birthday, Richter heard some 3,600 British and American planes drop more than half-a-million bombs on Dresden (he then lived just outside the city). 25,000 people were killed in these raids and the Soviets would quickly occupy Eastern Germany. Unlike the idealized, classicized nudes that Adolf Hitler had promulgated, the young Richter was taught Social Realism at the Dresden academy, a celebration of the heroism of communist workers. Once in the West, Richter found that the relationship between image and ideology reversed yet again. Here, images in advertising and popular culture celebrated material wealth and the culture of capitalism. Under the Nazis, under the Soviets, and in the West, Richter saw art used to express political ideology. His art, while deeply concerned with politics and morality, rejects the very possibility of answers, even of the idea that we can know.

Uncle Rudi

Uncle Rudi, the painting the woman had stepped closer to see, is painted in the grays of a black and white photograph. It is small and has the intimacy of a family snapshot. We see a young man smiling proudly and awkwardly. He is clearly self-conscious as he poses in his new uniform. One has the sense that a moment before he was talking to the person behind the camera, likely a friend or family member. Rudi would die fighting soon after the photograph that is the basis for this painting was taken. This is the artist's uncle, the man his grandmother favored and the adult the young Richter was to model himself after. But nothing in this painting is clear. Not the relationship between the artist and his uncle, not the tension between Rudi's innocent awkwardness and his participation in Nazi violence, not even in the relationship between the photograph and Richter's painting. The artist has drawn a dry brush across the wet surface of the nearly finished painting, and by doing this, he obscures the clarity of the photograph, denying us the easy certainty we expect. Richter reminds us that *Uncle Rudi*, like all images, promise and then fail to bring us closer to the people, things or places represented.

Additional Resources:

Uncle Rudi in the artist's website

Uncle Rudi at the Lidice Memorial Museum

Video of Richter painting

Gerhard Richter, *Betty*

by SAL KHAN and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.6.8: Gerhard Richter, *Betty*, 1988, oil on canvas, 102 x 72cm (Saint Louis Art Museum)

Gerhard Richter, *September*

by GERHARD RICHTER STUDIO



Video 8.6.9: Robert Storr talks about Gerhard Richter's *September*, 2005, oil on canvas, 52 cm x 72 cm (Museum of Modern Art, New York)

Superman, World War II, and Japanese-American experience

by DR. SARAH NEWMAN, SMITHSONIAN AMERICAN ART MUSEUM and DR. BETH HARRIS

Superman makes an appearance in what looks (at first sight) like a Japanese print.



Video 8.6.10: Roger Shimomura, *Diary: December 12, 1941*, 1980, acrylic on canvas, 127.6 x 152.4 cm (Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of the artist, © Roger Shimomura). A conversation with Dr. Sarah Newman, James Dicke Curator of Contemporary Art, Smithsonian American Art Museum, and Dr. Beth Harris.

This Seeing America video was made possible by a generous grant from the Terra Foundation and the Alice L. Walton Foundation.

Go deeper:

This work at The Smithsonian American Art Museum

Shimomura's website

Learn more about the role of Superman and other comic book heroes during World War II

Listen to actor and activist George Takei speak about his experiences as a child in an internment camp during World War II

Explore primary sources on the Japanese internment camps of the 1940s

Explore more primary sources on the Japanese internment camps of the 1940s

Learn more about Japanese culture and *ukiyo-e* prints in this online exhibition

Shimomura's *Diary* – American Experience in the Classroom (The Smithsonian American Art Museum)

An American Diary: Artist talk with Roger Shimomura (The Smithsonian American Art Museum)

Smithsonian Learning Lab collection on Japanese American Internment, Propaganda, and Superheroes

Sebastião Salgado's Kuwait

by EVE SCHILLO, LACMA and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.6.11: Sebastião Salgado's *Kuwait*, 1991, gelatin silver print, 45.24 × 30.1 cm (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, gift of Gary Sato, AC1998.162.1, ©Sebastião Salgado), a Seeing America video, speakers: Eve Schillo, Assistant Curator, Wallis Annenberg Photography Department, Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Steven Zucker

Kehinde Wiley, *Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps*

by DR. GAYLE CLEMANS



Figure 8.6.37: Kehinde Wiley, *Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps*, 2005, oil paint on canvas, 274.3 x 274.3 cm (108 x 108 in) (Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York) © Kehinde Wiley

Confronting Art History

In this large painting, Kehinde Wiley, an African-American artist, strategically re-creates a French masterpiece from two hundred years before but with key differences. This act of appropriation reveals issues about the tradition of portraiture and all that it implies about power and privilege. Wiley asks us to think about the biases of the art historical canon (the set of works that are regarded as "masterpieces"), representation in pop culture, and issues of race and gender. Here, Wiley replaces the original white subject—the French general-turned-emperor Napoleon Bonaparte (below)—with an anonymous black man whom Wiley approached on the street as part of his "street-casting process." Although Wiley does occasionally create paintings on commission, he typically asks everyday people of color to sit for photographs, which he then transforms into paintings. Along the way, he talks with those sitters, gathering their thoughts about what they should wear, how they might pose, and which historical paintings to reference.

Napoleon Leading the Army is a clear spin-off of Jacques-Louis David's painting of 1800-01 (below), which was commissioned by Charles IV, the King of Spain, to commemorate Napoleon's victorious military campaign against the Austrians. The original portrait smacks of propaganda. Napoleon, in fact, did not pose for the original painting nor did he lead his troops over the mountains into Austria. He sent his soldiers ahead on foot and followed a few days later, riding on a mule.

Choosing Symbolic Details



Figure 8.6.38: Left: Jacques-Louis David, *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*, 1803 version, oil on canvas 275 × 232 cm (Österreichische Galerie Belvedere); right: Kehinde Wiley, *Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps*, 2005, oil paint on canvas, 274.3 x 274.3 cm (108 x 108 in) (Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York)

Wiley calls attention to ideas about authority and historical representation, keeping many original elements and making significant alterations. The royal blue coat of the original makes an appearance (peeking out from the young man's camouflage shirt), as does the gold-encased sword (held in place by a red strap). But Wiley's subject wears an outfit that is completely contemporary and reflective of a culture notorious for flashy imagery and larger than life figures: hip hop culture. This young man wears camouflage fatigues, Timberland work boots, and a bandana—conjuring up militaristic associations with the original painting and with the violence of contemporary urban America, particularly as experienced by young black men. The subject of Wiley's painting reveals his tattoos and wears red wristbands from the Starter sportswear company, details that add to the sense that this is a real individual living in the early 21st century.

Instead of the naturalistic setting of David's painting, Wiley has inserted a decorative, unrealistic backdrop reminiscent of luxurious French fabric. This background, along with the high-keyed colors, and ornate frame (complete with faux family shields and the artist's self-portrait at the top) call attention to the artificiality and pompousness of image-making.



Figure 8.6.39: Sperm (detail), Kehinde Wiley, *Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps*, 2005, oil paint on canvas, 274.3 x 274.3 cm (108 x 108 in) (Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York) (photo: Gayle Clemans)

The background is also infused with tiny paintings of sperm—Wiley's way of poking fun at the highly charged masculinity and propagation of gendered identity that are involved in the Western tradition of portraiture. This particular subgenre of portraiture—the equestrian portrait—is particularly infused with the lineage of male power. From classical Rome to post-revolutionary France, political and military leaders on horseback have evoked and perpetuated social norms of masculine might and control (for example, this equestrian portrait of the **Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius**).

Through his demonstration of extraordinary painting skill and his use of famous portraits, Wiley could be seen as wryly placing himself in line with the history of great master painters. Here, for example, he has signed and dated the painting just as David did, painting his name and the date in Roman numerals onto the band around the horse's chest. Wiley makes another reference to

lineage in the foreground where he retains the original painting's rocky surface and the carved names of illustrious leaders who led troops over the Alps: NAPOLEON, HANNIBAL, and KAROLUS MAGNUS (Charlemagne). But Wiley also includes the name WILLIAMS—another insistence on including ordinary people of color who are often left out of systems of representation and glorification. Not only is Williams a common African-American surname, it hints at the imposition of Anglo names on black people who were brought by force from Africa and stripped of their own histories.

About the Artist

Kehinde Wiley (American, born 1977) attracted media and art world attention almost immediately after earning his MFA from Yale University in 2001. He was an artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem and has been included in many significant group and solo exhibitions. Wiley now employs studio assistants who participate in his "street-casting" process and in the various stages of painting and sculpture fabrication. In addition to large-scale paintings, Wiley has created stained glass, painted altarpieces, and cast bronze sculptures, all of which examine of art history, race, gender, and the power of representation.

Additional Resources:

Gayle Clemans, "The Stunning and Subversive Pageantry of Artist Kehinde Wiley," *The Seattle Times*, February 16, 2016.

Shahrazad A. Shareef, "The Power of Decor: Kehinde Wiley's Interventions into the Construction of Black Masculine Identity" (UMI Dissertations Publishing, 2010).

Roberta Smith, "Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic at the Brooklyn Museum," *New York Times*, February 19, 2015.

Eugenie Tsai, ed., *Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic* (Brooklyn, New York: Brooklyn Museum, 2015).

History and deception: Kenseth Armstead's *Surrender Yorktown 1781*

by KENSETH ARMSTEAD and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.6.12: Kenseth Armstead and Steven Zucker discuss Kenseth's *Surrender Yorktown 1781* (2013) at the **Newark Museum**

How can we begin to correct the lies of history? Artist Kenseth Armstead suggests a poetic solution.

Additional resources

Kenseth Armstead's artist website

The American Revolution: A World War, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

Smarthistory images for teaching and learning:

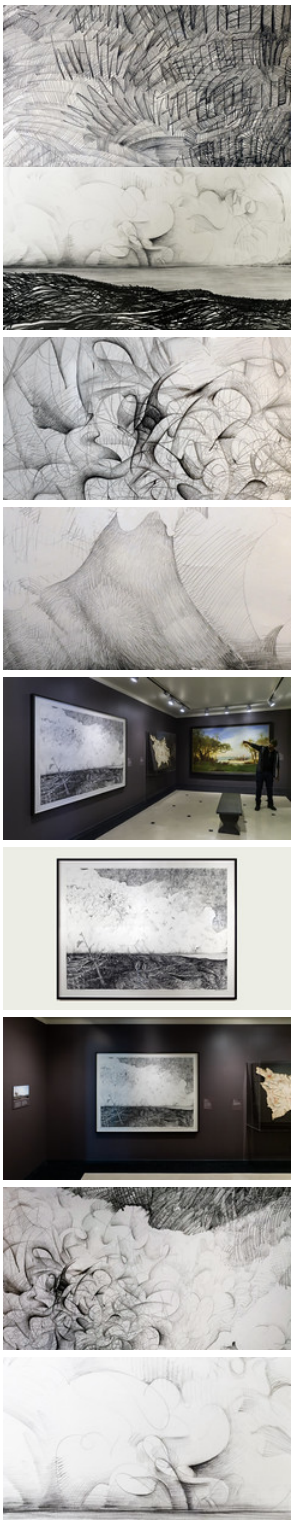


Figure 8.6.40: More Smarthistory images…

Maya Lin's Silver Upper White River

by ALEJO BENEDETTI, CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER



Video 8.6.13: Maya Lin, *Silver Upper White River*, 2015, recycled silver, 332.7 x 609.6 x 1 cm (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, © Maya Lin) Speakers: Alejo Benedetti, Assistant Curator, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, and Steven Zucker, a Seeing America video

Additional resources

This sculpture at Crystal Bridges

What Is Missing?

Maya Lin, *Folding the Chesapeake*, at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Maya Lin, Pin River-Yangtze at the United States Embassy in Beijing

Courtney Leonard, *ARTIFICE Ellipse*, 2016

by COURTNEY M. LEONARD and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.6.14: A conversation with Courtney M. Leonard and Beth Harris in front of Courtney Leonard's *ARTIFICE Ellipse | Log: 18-3*, coiled micaceous clay with glaze, 5 3/8 x 15 x 7 inches (Newark Museum of Art) © Courtney M. Leonard

Additional resources:

This work of art at the Newark Museum

The artist's website

Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds, *Native Hosts (Arkansas)*

by DR. MINDY BESAW, CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART and DR. BETH HARRIS



Video 8.6.15: Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds, *Native Hosts (Arkansas)*, 2018, aluminum sign, series of seven, 46.7 x 92.5 cm (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, ©Hock E Aye VI Edgar Heap of Birds), a Seeing America video Speakers: Dr. Mindy Besaw, Curator of American Art, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, and Dr. Beth Harris

Additional resources

This work at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

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9: Sculpture and Installation

Drawing and painting both fall into the category of two-dimensional art; sculpture is three-dimensional in that it has height, width, and depth. It has **mass**, one of the elements of art. We include in the sculptural section other types of art that may not obviously belong to either category – installation art is one of those. Artists sometimes create entire environments in a museum or gallery – or elsewhere – that the viewer is intended to experience corporally (with their bodies) and sometimes with all of the senses. Another group of artists create work out of nature itself. Land artists like Robert Smithson made both the material of the natural world like water, soil and rocks their medium, but also made ideas and concepts like entropy the subject of the work. We will look at examples of three-dimensional artwork in this section.

Methods

Carving

Carving uses the *subtractive* process to cut away areas from a larger mass, and is the oldest method used for three-dimensional work. Traditionally stone and wood were the most common materials because they were readily available and extremely durable. Contemporary materials include foam, plastics and glass. Using chisels and other sharp tools, artists carve away material until the ultimate form of the work is achieved.

The Moai massive stone sculptures carved by the Rapa Nui people on Easter Island in Polynesia between the years 1250 and 1500.[1] These figures were positioned to face inland and are thought to have represented the guardian ancestors/deities that watched over the island and its people. The process of carving such large figures and transporting and placing them was a feat for these early peoples not unlike the creation of Stonehenge in England or the Olmec heads of ancient Mexico.



Easter Island Statues, photo by Hhooper1, CC-SA Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Generic license

In another example, you can see the high degree of relief carved from an original wood block in this mask from the Pacific Northwest Coast Kwakwaka' wakw culture. The mask was used in winter ceremonies where animals were said to take human form.

It's extraordinary for masks to personify a natural event. This and other mythic figure masks are used in ritual and ceremony dances. The broad areas of paint give a heightened sense of character to this mask.



Adam Collins, ‘Supernatural Mask’

Michelangelo’s masterpiece, *David*, from 1501 is carved from a single block of marble, finished and polished to embody an idealized form which was a testament to human aesthetic brilliance.



Michelangelo, ‘David’, 1501, marble, 17’ high. Galleria dell’Accademia, Florence

Three Types of Carved Sculpture

We think of carved sculpture as falling into three basic types: **in-the-round**, **high relief**, and **low (bas) relief**. Michelangelo’s *David* above is an example of sculpture in-the-round. This is fairly easy to spot as one can actually walk all around the sculpture and it is finished on all sides. High relief sculpture is usually a decorative addition to another object, often architecture.



Nicola Pisano, The Nativity and Annunciation to the Shepherds, 1255-60, Pulpit in the Baptistery, marble joanbanjo

High relief sculpture is characterized by figures or elements that are significantly raised off the surface from which they are carved, but still remain attached. You can see very dark shadows around the figures in high relief – note the black shadows around the urn on the bottom of the sculpture above.

Low relief, too, is most often seen on architecture. In low, or bas as in the French term, relief, few very dark shadows are seen.



Lid of the Sarcophagus of Palenque – Temple of Inscriptions – Palenque, 692 CE PD The carving on the lid of Pakal's sarcophagus, or coffin, is carved in a uniformly shallow relief. The shadows are not pronounced

Casting

The **additive** method of casting has been in use for over five thousand years. It's a manufacturing process by which a liquid material is usually poured into a mold, which contains a hollow cavity of the desired shape, and then allowed to solidify. One traditional method of bronze casting frequently used today is the lost wax process. Modern casting materials are usually metals but can be various *cold setting* materials that cure after mixing two or more components together; examples are epoxy, concrete, plaster, and clay. Casting is most often used for making complex shapes that would be otherwise difficult or uneconomical to make by other methods. It's a labor-intensive process that today allows for the creation of multiples from an original object (similar to the medium of printmaking), each of which is extremely durable and exactly like its predecessor. In the ancient world the mold would of necessity be destroyed once the sculpture had been cast. Today molds are made from materials that can be reused, but a mold is usually destroyed after the desired number of castings has been made. Traditionally, bronze statues were placed atop pedestals to signify the importance of the figure depicted. A statue of William Seward (below), the U. S. Secretary of State under Abraham Lincoln and who negotiated the purchase of the Alaska territories, is set nearly eight feet high so viewers must look up at him. Standing next to the globe, he holds a roll of plans in his left hand. We generally refer to these kinds of commemorative likenesses as "statues" while figures in other contexts are usually called "sculpture."



Richard Brooks, 'William Seward', bronze on stone pedestal, c. 1909. Photo from Chris Gildow

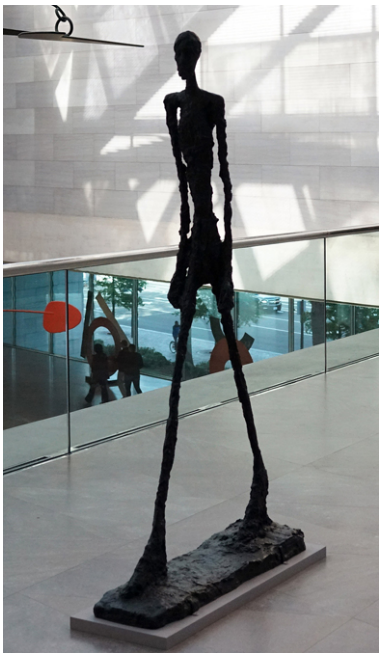
More contemporary bronze cast sculptures reflect their subjects through different cultural perspectives. The statue of rock guitarist Jimi Hendrix is set on the ground, his figure cast as if performing on stage. He's on both of his knees, head thrown back, eyes shut and mouth open in mid wail. His bell-bottom pants, frilly shirt unbuttoned halfway, necklace and headband give us a snapshot of 1960's rock culture but also engage us with the subject at our level.



David Herrera, ‘Jimi Hendrix’, Daryl Smith, 1996, bronze. Broadway and Pine, Seattle. Photo from Chris Gildow

Modeling

Modeling is a method that can be both additive and subtractive. The artist uses modeling to build up form with clay, plaster or other soft material that can be pushed, pulled, pinched, carved or poured into place. The material then hardens into the finished work. Larger sculptures created with this method make use of an **armature**, an underlying structure of wire that sets the physical shape of the work. Although modeling is primarily an additive process, artists often do remove material in the process. Modeling a form is often a preliminary step in the casting method. In 2010, Swiss artist Alberto Giacometti’s *Walking Man* (c. 1955), a bronze sculpture first modeled in clay, set a record for the highest price ever paid for a work of art at auction. Here you see another version of that sculpture belonging to the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. Giacometti was known for his elongated **abstract** figures. One of his inspirations was Etruscan art which we will look at in a later section.



Alberto Giacometti, Walking Man II (1/6), 1960, bronze, 188.5 × 27.9 × 110.7 cm (National Gallery of Art), photo by Steven Zucker, taken on October 22, 2016, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

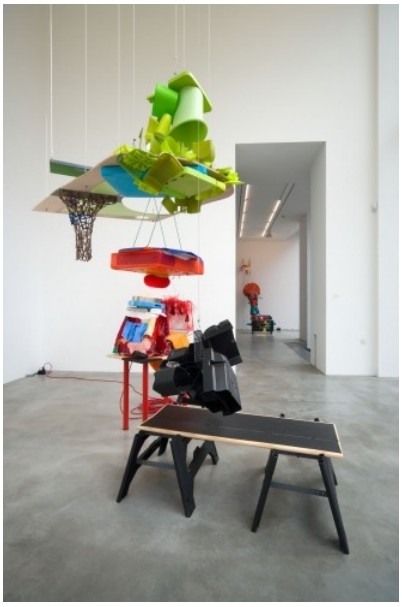
This Mayan Woman and Child were modeled from clay and then fired to create a ceramic figure. It may have been polychromed (painted with 2 or more colors).



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Construction/Assemblage

Construction, or **assemblage**, uses found, manufactured or altered objects to build form. Artists weld, glue, bolt and wire individual pieces together to create a new and unique form. Duchamp's Readymades are the historical predecessors for this type of work, as are Rauschenberg's Combines from the 1950's. Contemporary artists bring not only form but theory to their work in this technique. Our example here is Jessica Stockholder.



Jessica Stockholder, Untitled, 2006. Green plastic parts, black plastic parts, cushion, wooden element, red metal legs, fabric, cable, gray shelf, crocheted yarn, red skein of yarn, red electric cord, incandescent light fixture, tulle, various hardware and plastic parts, and acrylic paint. 9' 6" x 9' 7". Image used courtesy MITCHELL-INNES & NASH, New York, and with permission of the artist. Not to be reproduced for commercial purposes or altered in any way from the original

Stockholder is originally from Seattle; her pieces are created from objects that individually might be overlooked, or seen only as utilitarian. Stockholder is drawn to the potential in these objects through color and form. She also relates her structures to the physical human body and our own interaction with objects in space. We have discussed the emotional implications of color in the viewers' reaction to art. Stockholder has written that this is one of her concerns as well: "Color evokes feeling; I am not sure why, but I do know that it does. I work with color, form and composition exploring the links between emotive and thoughtful response. My works provide an opportunity to reify internal mind/feeling space. For a moment the abstract insubstantial nature of feeling/thoughts can be experienced as external and embodied by material." From the artist's website: https://jessicastockholder.info/about/

Both playful and ironic, Stockholder's pieces are accessible and visually stimulating; they are an excellent example of the art of assemblage.

Sculptor Debra Butterfield transforms throw away objects into abstract sculptures of horses with scrap metal, wood and other found objects. Sometimes she also casts these constructions in bronze, but the original form made of various materials is assembled.

Frequently she uses reclaimed materials to create the sculpture. Riot, a work from 1990 is made of pieces of found metal assembled into the final shape.



Riot (1990), steel sculpture by Deborah Butterfield. Photo taken at the Delaware Art Museum in February 2017. CC Attribution 2.0 Fair Use

Louise Nevelson is another American artist who used cut and shaped pieces of wood, gluing and nailing them together to form fantastic, complex compositions. Painted a single tone, (usually black or white), her sculptures are graphic, textural facades of shapes, patterns and shadow.

Traditional African masks often combine different materials. The elaborate Kanaga Mask from Mali uses wood, fibers, animal hide and pigment to construct an other worldly visage that changes from human to animal and back again. You can see the example from the Met in New York at this url: https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/315061

Movement

Some modern and contemporary sculptures incorporate movement, light and sound. **Kinetic** sculptures use ambient air currents or motors allowing them to move, changing in form as the viewer stands in place. The artist Alexander Calder is famous for his mobiles, whimsical, abstract works that are intricately balanced to move at the slightest wisp of air, while the sculptures of Jean Tinguely are contraption-like and, similar to Nevelson's and Butterfield's works, constructed of scraps often found in garbage dumps. His motorized works exhibit a mechanical aesthetic as they whir, rock and generate noises. Tinguely's most famous work, '*Homage to New York*', ran in the sculpture garden at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1960 as part of a performance by the artist. After several minutes, the work exploded and caught fire, as it was supposed to do. The New York City fire department, however, was not amused.



Alexander Calder, Mobile, Photo by Manuelarosi, CC BY-SA 3.0

The idea of generating sound as part of three-dimensional works has been utilized for hundreds of years, traditionally in musical instruments that carry a spiritual reference. Contemporary artists use sound to heighten the effect of sculpture or to direct recorded narratives. The cast bronze fountain by George Tsutakawa (below) uses water flow to produce a soft rushing sound. In this instance the sculpture also attracts the viewer by the motion of the water: a clear, fluid addition to an otherwise hard abstract surface.



Tom Magliery, 'Fountain', George Tsutakawa, bronze, running water. City of Seattle

Doug Hollis's *A Sound Garden* from 1982 creates sounds from hollow metal tubes atop grid like structures rising above the ground. In weather vane fashion, the tubes swing into the wind and resonate to specific pitch. The sound extends the aesthetic value of the work to include the sense of hearing and, together with the metal construction, creates a mechanical and psychological basis for the work. There is a video of the work here:

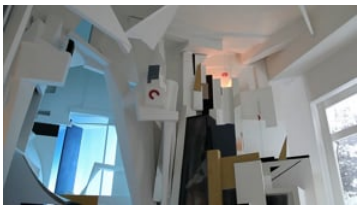
Modern Variations of Three-Dimensional Media

Dan Flavin is one of the first artists to explore the possibilities of light as a sculptural medium. Since the 1960s his work has incorporated fluorescent bulbs of different colors and in various arrangements. Moreover, he takes advantage of the wall space the light is projected onto, literally blurring the line between traditional sculpture and the more complex medium of **installation**.

Installation Art

Installation art utilizes multiple objects, often from various mediums, and takes up entire spaces. It uses a space and everything in it as the work of art, and is experienced by your entire body. It can be generic or site specific. Because of their relative complexity, installations can address aesthetic and narrative ideas on a larger scale than traditional sculpture. Its genesis can be traced to the Dada movement, ascendant after World War I and which predicated a new aesthetic by its unconventional nature and ridicule of established tastes and styles. Sculpture came off the pedestal and began to transform entire rooms into works or art. Kurt Schwitters' *Merzbau*, begun in 1923, transforms his apartment into an abstract, claustrophobic space that is at once part sculpture and architecture. With installation art the viewer is surrounded by and can become part of the work itself.

Here is a video on Vimeo of the reconstruction of the *Merzbau* at the Berkeley Art Museum in 2011:



A Vimeo element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://boisestate.pressbooks.pub/arthistory/?p=233

British artist Rachel Whiteread's installation *Embankment* from 2005 fills an entire exhibition hall with **casts** made from various sized boxes. At first appearance a snowy mountain landscape navigated by the viewer is actually a gigantic nod to the idea of boxes as receptacles of memory towering above and stacked around them, squeezing them towards the center of the room. Whiteread uses epoxy and other polymers to cast her sculpture. This installation would qualify as both cast sculpture and installation art. Whiteread's work often deals with memory and loss.



Fin Fahey, 'Embankment', Rachel Whiteread, 2005

Ilya Kabakov mixes together a narrative of political propaganda, humor and mundane existence in his installation *The Man Who Flew Into Space From His Apartment* from 1984. What we see is the remains of a small apartment plastered with Soviet era posters, a small bed and the makeshift slingshot a man uses to escape the drudgery of his life within the system. A gaping hole in the roof and his shoes on the floor are evidence enough that he made it into space. See a slide presentation of this work at: https://www.wikiart.org/en/ilya-kabakov/the-man-who-flew-into-space-from-his-apartment-1984

Performance Art

Performance art goes a step further, involving the artist as part of the work itself. Some performance artworks are interactive, involving the viewer too. The nature of the medium is in its ability to use live performance in the same context as static works of art: to enhance our understanding of artistic experience. Similar to installation works, performance art had its first manifestations during the Dada art movement, when live performances included poetry, visual art and music, often going on at the same time.

The German artist Joseph Beuys was instrumental in introducing performance art as a legitimate medium in the post World War II artistic milieu. *I Like America and America Likes Me* from 1974 finds Beuys co-existing with a coyote for a week in the Rene

Block Gallery in New York City. The artist is protected from the animal by a felt blanket and a shepherd's staff. Performance art, like installation, challenges the viewer to reexamine the artistic experience from a new level.



Joseph Beuys, I Like America and America Likes Me, 1974, performance. Photo from WikiArt, last edit Feb. 28, 2017 by xennex, Fair Use

In the 1960's Allen Kaprow's *Happenings* invited viewers to be the participants. These events, sometimes rehearsed and other times improvised begin to erase the line between the artist and the audience. Yoko Ono's '*Cut Piece*' from 1965 specifically invites members of the audience to interact with her on stage. You can watch the Maysle brothers' video of a portion of this event on Youtube:

This same idea – using the artist's body as subject, is evident in the performance art of Marina Abramovic. In *The Artist is Present* she sits quietly as individual visitors sit across the table from her, exchanging silent glances and stares.

Today we see a new form of performance art happen unexpectedly around us in the form of **Flash Mobs**: groups of people who gather in public spaces to collaborate in short, seemingly spontaneous events that entertain and surprise passersby. Many flash mobs are arranged in advance through the use of social media. Many examples of flash mob performance are uploaded to Youtube and other video sharing sites.

Decorative Arts

Craft

Craft requires the specific skilled use of tools in creating works or art. These tools can take many forms: words, construction tools, a camera, a paintbrush or even a voice. Traditional studio crafts include ceramics, metal and woodworking, weaving and the glass arts. Crafts are distinguished by a high degree of workmanship and finish. Traditional crafts have their roots in utilitarian purposes: furniture, utensils and other everyday accoutrements that are designed for specific uses, and reflect the adage that "form follows function". But human creativity goes beyond simple function to include the aesthetic realm, entered through the doors of embellishment, decoration and an intuitive sense of design. Artists use all of the elements and principles found in other artforms in the objects we see below.

In the first example below, the smooth simple lines of a '*Tulip Chair*' were designed by Eero Saarinen as an exercise in clarifying form. When it was made its futuristic use of curved lines and artificial materials were seen as emblematic of the "space age." In another example, a staircase crafted in the Shaker style takes on an elegant form that mirrors the organic spiral shape representing the 'golden ratio.'



Saarinen Tulpanstolen, photo by Holger Ellgaard. CC BY-SA 3.0



Shaker style staircase, Pleasant Hill, Kentucky. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, April 1963, National Parks Service. PD-USGov-Interior-HABS

Utility is not the sole purpose of craft. Persian carpets and European tapestries were also utilitarian objects, but the craftsmanship shown in the pattern and design gives them a separate aesthetic value. The decorative element is visually stimulating, as if the artisan uses the objectas simply a vehicle for his or her own creative imagination. Other textile arts like quilting have become recognized as aesthetic objects in their own right. It might be noted that many of the objects that have been dismissed as merely “craft” were traditionally made by women. It’s only with the feminist movement that those objects have been recognized as art.

Even a small tobacco bag from the Native American Sioux culture (below) becomes a work of art with its intricate beaded patterns and floral designs.



Sioux Quilled Pipe Bag ca.1870, decorated with rare cocoon imagery. Photo by Pierre Fabre. PD_US

The craftsmanship in glass making is one of the most demanding. Working with an extremely fragile medium presents unique challenges. Challenges aside, the delicate nature of glass gives it exceptional visual presence. A blown glass urn dated to first century Rome is an example. The fact that it has survived the ages intact is testament to its ultimate strength and beauty.



Cinerary Urn, Roman. C. 1st century CE, blown glass. National Archaeological Museum, Spain. Photo Luis Garcia Zaqarbal. CC SA-SH 3.0

Louis Comfort Tiffany introduced many styles of decorative glass between the late 19th and first part of the 20th centuries. His stained glass window '*The Holy City*' in Baltimore Maryland has intricate details in illustrations influenced by the Art Nouveau style popular at the turn of the 19th century.



Dragonfly shade, designed probably by Clara Driscoll for Tiffany Studios pre-1906, 22 in. (55.9 cm) diam.; library base, designed pre-1906. New-York Historical Society, Gift of Dr. Egon Neustadt, N84.110 http://behindthescenes.nyhistory.org...thomas-edison/

The artist Dale Chihuly has redefined the traditional craft of glass making over the last forty years, moving it towards the mainstream of fine art with single objects and large scale installations involving hundreds of individual pieces.



Taken by Adrian Pingstone in June 2005 and released to the public domain. A glass sculpture “The Sun” at the “Gardens of Glass” exhibition in Kew Gardens, London, England. The piece is 13 feet (4 metres) high and made from 1000 separate glass objects. The sculptor is Dale Chihuly. PD-US

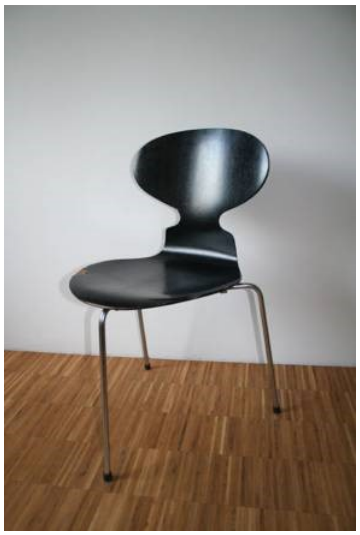
Product Design

The dictum “form follows function” represents an organic approach to three-dimensional design. The products and devices we use everyday continue to serve the same functions but change in styles. This constant realignment in basic form reflects modern aesthetic considerations and, on a larger scale, become artifacts of the popular culture of a given time period.

The two examples below illustrate this idea. Like Tiffany glass, the chair designed by Henry van de Velde in 1895 reflects the Art Nouveau style in its wood construction with organic, stylized lines and curvilinear form. In comparison, the ‘*Ant Chair*‘ from 1952 retains the basic functional form with more modern design using a triangular leg configuration of tubular steel and a single piece of laminated wood veneer, the cut out shape suggesting the form of a black ant.



Chair, Henry van de Velde, 1895, wood, woven fiber. Photo by Chris73, CC SA-SH



Arkines, ‘Ant Chair’, Arne Jacobsen,1952, steel and wood

The Most Sculpted Form

The human figure has been the most often reproduced in art. Even modern art with its abstracted forms used the human form most often as its material. There are a few conventions over time that you should be aware of in the depiction of human beings which have varied widely from period to period and from country to country.

Contrapposto

Earlier civilizations like the Egyptians developed a schematic representation of the human form. It never varied for thousands of years (with one exception we will examine in our study of the period) and this was because it was considered to be the most appropriate and necessary form. The figures were rigid and idealized – note the kneecap on Menkaure – but the single foot forward is thought to have been meant to represent life.



King Menkaure and Queen, Egypt, reign of Menkaure, 2490-2472 BCE

In 1866 an excavation on the Greek Acropolis unearthed a sculpture that would be profoundly influential in the history of art.[2] Kritios Boy, so-called, is most likely the image of a young hero created around 480 BCE. Found in pieces and reassembled, this sculpture exhibits the stance of an actual human being which has come to be called **contrapposto**, or counterbalance.



Kritios Boy, c. 480 BCE, marble, Acropolis Museum, Athens

A contrapposto stance is characterized by a standing figure with the weight on one leg, one hip elevated, and the other bent. More exaggerated contrapposto can involve straight and bent arms and a counterbalance of hips and shoulders. There is usually a pronounced “S” curve down the central axis of a figure in extreme contrapposto.



Polykleitos, Doryphoros (Spear Bearer), bronze original c. 440 BCE, Roman copy in marble



Michelangelo, Dying Slave, 1513-16, marble. CC-BY-SA

Michelangelo’s sculpture, originally meant for the tomb of Pope Julius II, exhibits the kind of exaggerated contrapposto that suggests sleep, death or languor.

There are many objects that fit into the category of sculpture, and others – although not strictly sculpture – that are three-dimensional and valued as aesthetic objects. Sometimes it is useful to think about the objects that surround us and look for similar aesthetic qualities in them. We will see how the same impulses to create can be seen in most of the things humans make and even humble objects can be satisfying if the elements and principles are taken into consideration in their making.

1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moai. Accessed August 15, 2018.
2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kritios_Boy

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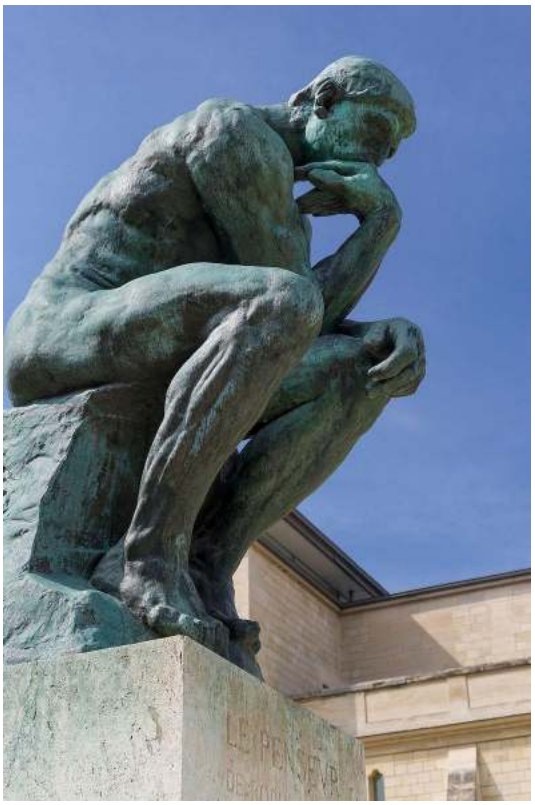
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9.1: Sculptures

Sculptor	Country	Usual Medium
Auguste Rodin	France	Bronze
Henry Moore	England	Bronze, cast fiberglass
Alexander Calder	United States	Metal
Ellen Neel	Canada	Wood
Gaston Lachaise	United States	Bronze
Isamu Noguchi	United States	Steel
George Segal	United States	Bronze
Käthy Kollwitz	Germany	Bronze
Elizabeth Catlett	United States	Bronze
Maya Lin	United States	Granite
Louise Bourgeois	France, United States	Multimedia

Modern sculpture brought about a considerable change in art as it deviated from the classical forms, leaving artists to explore and diverge from the Renaissance period. Many of the early 20th century modern sculptors were able to create as they desired and experiment, redefining sculpture, instilling the freedom to use modern materials and modern ideologies of design. Modern sculpture is considered to have started with the work of the French sculptor, **Auguste Rodin** (1840-1917). Opting to forgo the traditional, classical themes of allegory or mythology, Rodin shaped the human body with exceptional realism, physicality, and personality.

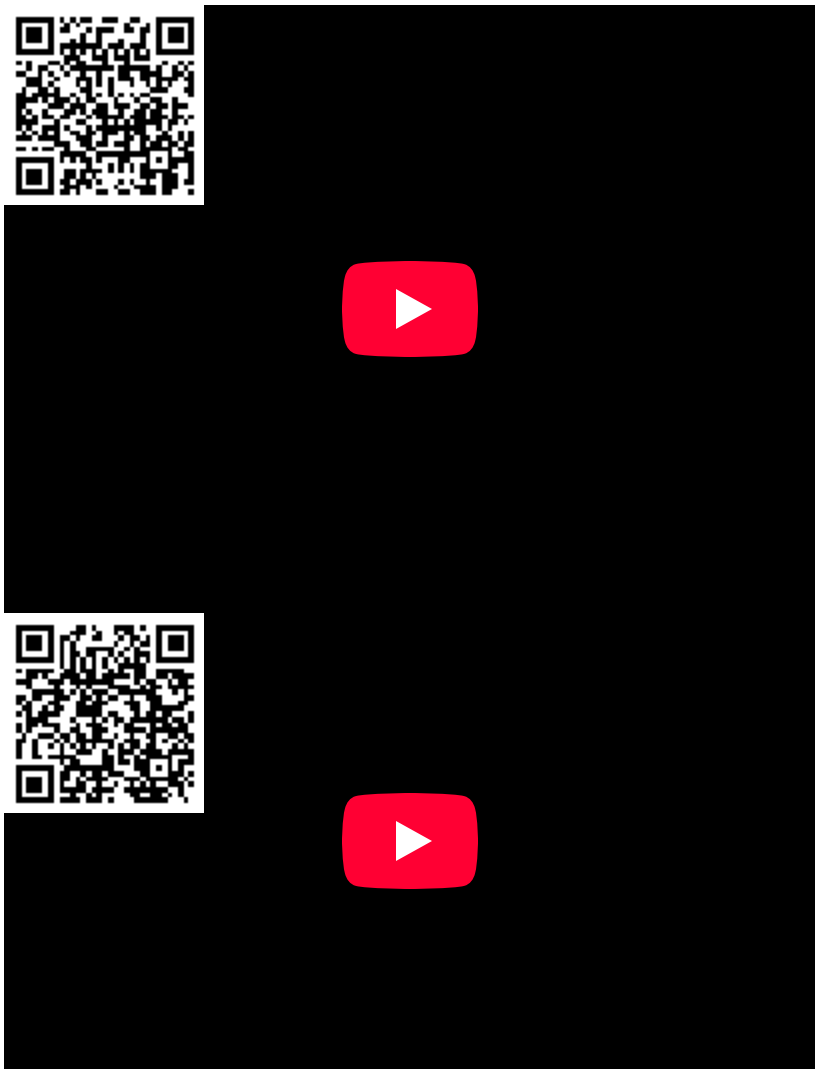
The Thinker (13.23) was perhaps Rodin's most famous work, known around the world as the classic symbol of a man deep in thought. The work is a nude male figure sitting on a rock cast from bronze about 186 centimeters high. The raw muscular body is portrayed with his head lowered onto his hand, struggling to comprehend the human condition, trying to understand how thought and reason impact the world. Twenty-eight full-size bronze castings are located in museums around the world. The *Burghers of Calais* (13.24) was based on the long war between England and France, the burghers surrendering and expecting death. Their feet are oversized as though still wanting to be anchored in this world, their hats removed, and ropes hung from their necks. The lives of the bronze figures illustrated in the emotional sculpture were eventually spared.



13.23 *The Thinker*



13.24 *Burghers of Calais*



A semi-abstract English sculptor and artist **Henry Spencer Moore** (1898 –1986) created monumental bronze sculptures located around the world, designated as public works of art. *Draped Seated Figure* (13.26) is a whimsical, bronze abstracted human form of a woman in a reclining position. Moore was greatly influenced by the *Chac Mool* (13.25) stone at Chichen Itza on the Yucatan Peninsula. The reclining figure was a common theme in many of Moore's work and became more stylized, as demonstrated in the fiberglass version *Reclining Figure* (13.27).



13.25 *Chac Mool*



13.26 *Draped Seated Figure*



13.27 *Reclining Figure*

> *"My whole theory about art is the disparity that exists between form, masses, and movement."* [1]



13.28 *Konigstrasse*



13.29 *Big Crinkly*

Using modern materials like painted sheet metal and metal rods, the American artist **Alexander Calder** (1898 –1976), who was initially trained as an engineer, was the originator of the kinetic mobile. Responding only to air currents, the mobiles were delicately balanced or suspended, creating movable sculptures (13.28), (13.29). Caldor's bold use of color in his sculptures and engineering requirements for balance give his art a unique appearance. Some of his mobiles made a sound, others moved in the wind, and several were large static sculptures (13.30).



13.30 *Grand Rapids Calder*

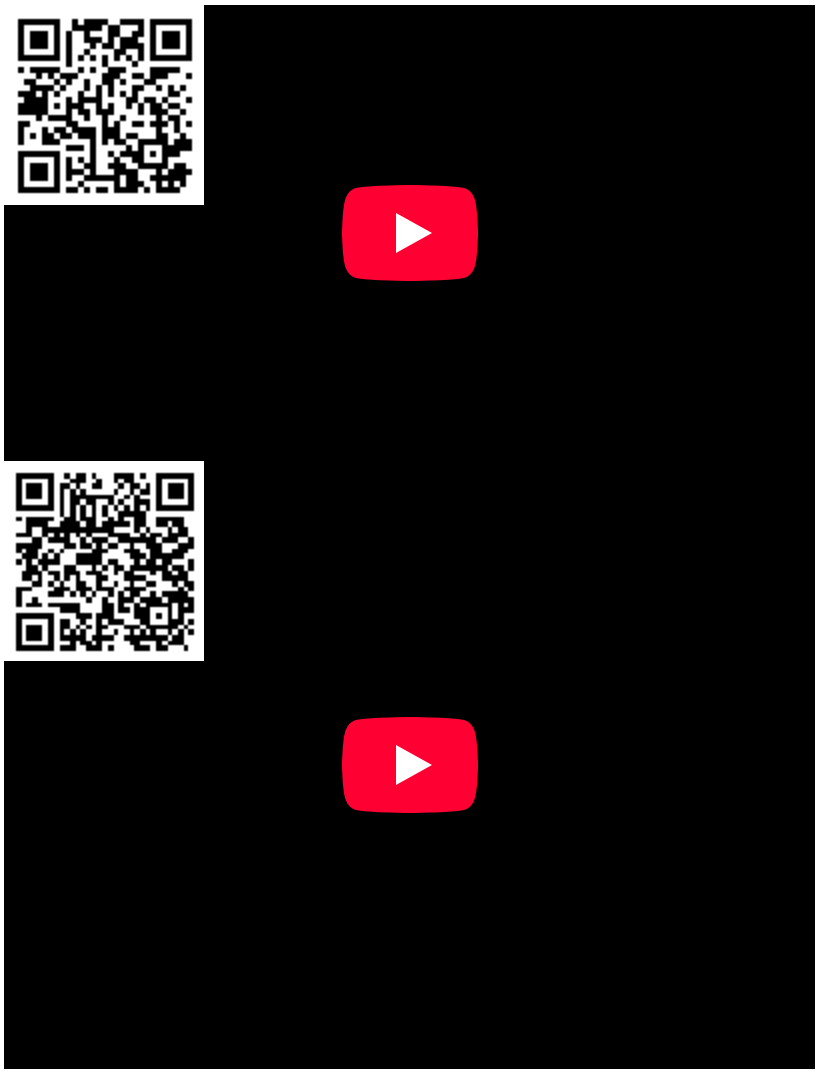


The first known woman to carve totem poles professionally was sculptor **Ellen Neel** (1916–1966), a Kwakwaka'wakw artist from British Columbia. Learning Northwest carving from her maternal grandfather, she started out carving small totems to sell, becoming successful enough to carve larger poles. Art of the Kwakwaka'wakw is similar to other northwestern art, but deeper cuts are made in the wood on the totem. Paint is used to emphasize a figure or motif, and the addition of beaks and wings for pieces on the front and sides, protrude outward, giving the sense of a flying bird.



13.31 Top of the totem pole

Neel probably used western red cedar for the more towering totems, an abundant and sizeable tree in the American Northwest. Yellow cedar trees were generally used for smaller projects. Totem poles were placed outside the house and used to display information about the family, while other totem poles might be used as welcome poles, memorial poles, or shaming poles. Each of the symbols, carvings, and paintings had particular meaning. The top of the pole displays the broadly curved eagle's beak (13.31), a raven would have a straight beak, the beaver incised with large front teeth. The figures carved on the pole (13.32) were intertwined, connected by symbolic meanings. Some of Neel's totem poles are displayed in Stanley Park as well as museums.



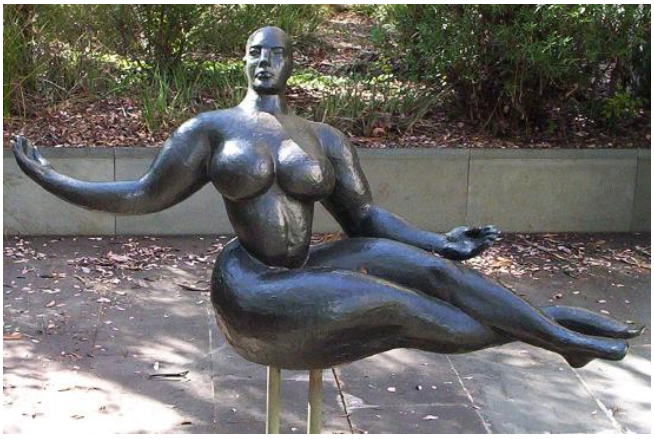


13.32 Totem pole

Gaston Lachaise (1882-1935) was an American sculptor in the early modernist period of the 20th century. Educated in his native France, he fell in love with a woman, followed her to the United States, and adoringly used that love to define his concepts of a female statue. Created in 1932 out of bronze, the sculpture *Standing Woman* (13.33), is a voluptuous nude woman who became his signature piece. Influenced in American values by his wife, he redefined the female nude into an influential figure and pushed the boundaries, innovating the definition of the female body. Her right foot steps out, the hip forward in traditional contrapposto stance with her hands on her hips, commanding the space. *Floating Figure*(13.34) also portrays the strength of the figure, sitting at ease with her legs crossed, her hand gesturing as though proving her thoughts.

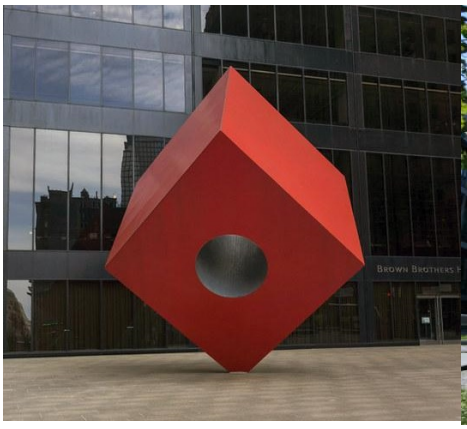


13.33 *Standing Woman*

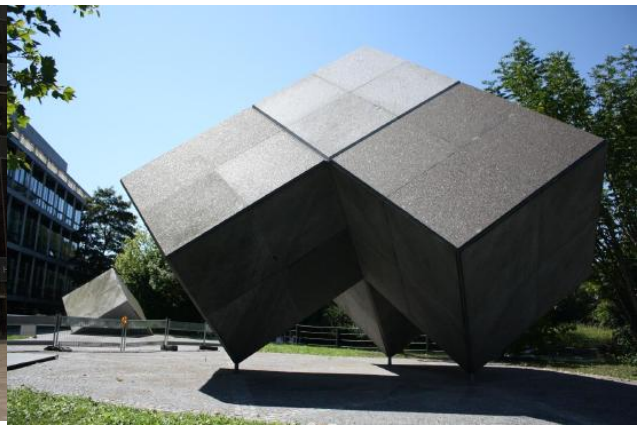


13.34 *Floating Woman*

Isamu Noguchi (1904 –1988) was a prominent Japanese-American artist who began his career sculpting busts, then turned to abstract art in the 1930s before he was voluntarily interned at the Poston Camp in 1942 — continuing his designs and drawings while in the camp he returned to New York City after the war. *The Red Cube* (13.35) is a three-dimensional parallelogram, not a cube. The cube is made of steel and designed to collaborate with the horizontal and vertical definition of the surrounding buildings, the cube sited on the diagonal, appearing to be rolling. *Zwillingsplastik* (13.36) is made in two parts, the small part that seems to support the more significant section, the missing area equaling the smaller part, giving the sculpture a floating feeling.



13.35 *The Red Cube*



13.36 *Zwillingsplastik*

George Segal (1924 – 2000) was an American painter and sculptor associated with the Pop Art movement. Segal is best known for his life-size sculptures cast from plaster bandages. Segal would wrap a model in plaster, remove the hardened forms, and put them back together to form a hollow impression of the model. Using the rough texture of the plaster bandages to his advantage, he would cast the final form in bronze.

Segal did not place his figures on pedestals or in the center of a square, and he placed them in real-life situations demonstrated in *Depression Bread Line* (13.37). The men's clothing and their posture indicate their dire situations while waiting in line for bread. He cast the bronze statues from plaster to give a worn look to the men's clothes, enhancing the look of destitution. The *Holocaust Memorial* (13.38) in San Francisco, the corpses strewn on the ground, the one emaciated survivor standing at the fence. Segal created the sculpture in bronze patinated in white, adding to the impact of the scene.



13.37 Depression Bread Line



13.38 Holocaust Memorial

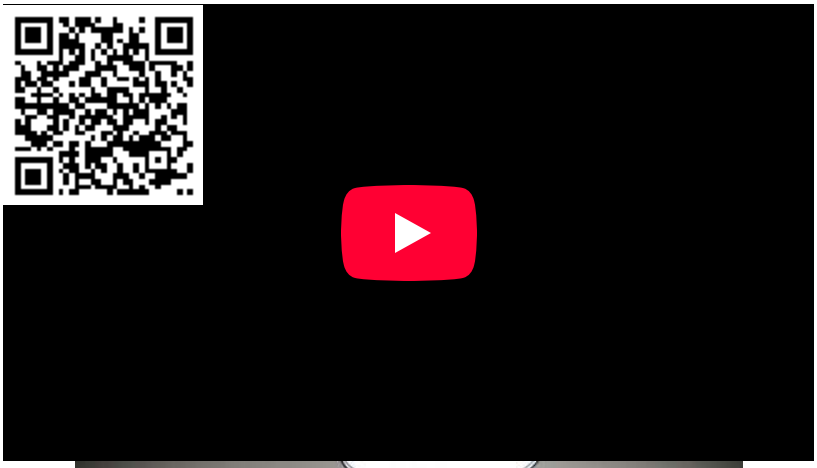


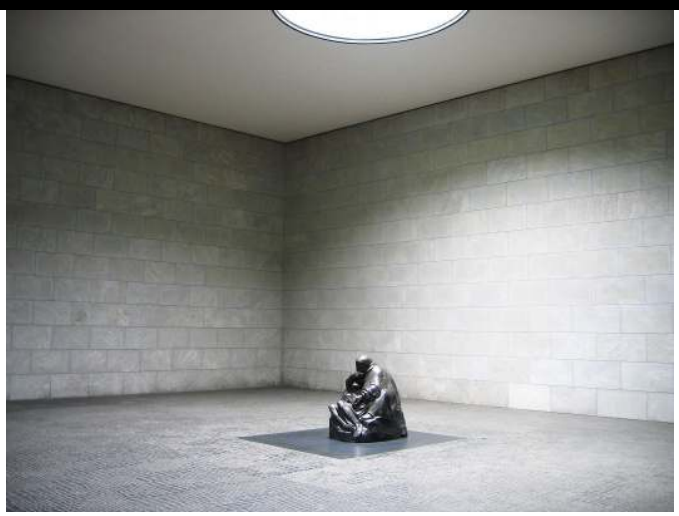
Modern sculptures demonstrate our need to understand the world, especially in the complex modern and ever-changing world, and **Käthe Kollwitz** (1867 - 1945), a German artist, created a body of work portraying eloquent, yet complex accounts of human life, especially about the tragedy of war. Using multiple mediums, including etching, woodcut, drawing, painting, and sculpting, she reproduced the emotions of war.

The death of Kollwitz's son drove her to create the memorial *Mother with Her Dead Son* (13.39) for him. Similar to the Pieta, Kollwitz positioned her son lying between her knees while she cradled his body. Her face shows a reflection of her pain, the loss of her son in the war. The statue is positioned in the center of a large room (13.40) creating a feeling of isolation which only enhanced the emotions of suffering and sadness. The bronze memorial is a tribute to all the victims of war and tyranny.



13.39 *Mother with Her Dead Son*





13.40 Installation of sculpture

Elizabeth Catlett (1915-2012) was an American artist who knew from an early age she wanted to be an artist, attending Howard University. She also lived in Mexico and was influenced by the art of Rivera and Kahlo and created abstract prints and sculptures

focusing on the experiences of minority women who toiled in difficult, low paying jobs. Her sculptures were formed into busts and standing figures, including those of *Mahalia Jackson* (13.41) and *Stepping Out*(13.42), the woman ready to step out for the evening.



13.41 *Mahalia Jackson*



13.42 *Stepping Out*



13.43 Vietnam Memorial

Maya Lin (born 1959) was a university student studying architecture when she submitted her design for a nationwide competition for concepts of a new memorial to Vietnam veterans. Her design was very unusual and unlike the general tradition of memorial tributes. She proposed to build a V-shaped wall of granite, with the names of every soldier who was killed or still missing, inscribed in the wall. The wall sloped below ground level (13.43) as viewed from the air, the long walkway along the highly polished wall (13.44). The new, controversial wall, has become an accepted and essential tribute to the veterans of the contentious war, attended by many to visit a fallen soldier (13.45), lay flowers or hang flags. The wall designed by Lin became a model for new and unusual memorials and sculptures. The Civil Rights Memorial (13.46) in Alabama was also designed by Lin using the deep, dark granite and inscribing the tributes into the sides.



13.44 Wall at memorial



13.45 Soldier reads names



13.46 *Civil Rights Memorial*, Alabama



Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010) was born in Paris and learned drawing by helping in her parents' tapestry business. When she married and moved to New York, she initially focused on painting and prints before working with sculptures. One of her significant themes for sculptures was the spider (13.47). She sculpted multiple sizes of spiders from immense outdoor images to small intimate statues, all using different materials. She considered spiders to be fierce yet fragile in design and the fragility is reflected in the irregular, thin legs of the spider sculptures, standing awkwardly in position.



13.47 *Spider*

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9.1.1: History and Methods

Overview

Three-dimensional works of art: Have height, width, and depth. A two-dimensional object is a shape; a three-dimensional object is called a form.

Venus of Willendorf

Sculpture is any artwork made by the manipulation of materials resulting in a three-dimensional object. The sculpted figure of the Venus of Berekhat Ram, discovered in the Middle East in 1981, dates to 230,000 years BCE. It is the oldest example of artwork known. The crudely carved stone figure will fit in the palm of your hand. Its name derives from the similarity in form with so-called female fertility figures found throughout Europe, some of which date to 25,000 years ago. For example, the form of the *Venus of Willendorf* below shows remarkable skill in its carving, including arms draped over exaggerated breasts, an extended abdomen and elaborate patterning on the head, indicating either a braided hairstyle or type of woven cap. Just as remarkable, the figure has no facial detail to indicate identity. The meaning behind these figures is difficult to put into context because of the lack of any written record about them or other supporting materials.



Venus of Willendorf, c.25,000 BCE. Natural History Museum, Vienna. Image in the public domain

Approaches to Three Dimensions in Sculpture

Freestanding or Sculpture in the Round

- Sculpture can be **freestanding or sculpture in the round**, where the viewer can walk completely around the work to see it from all sides.
- The *Rape of a Sabine by* Giambologna is a freestanding sculpture is designed to be seen from all sides.
- It forms a spiral that draws the viewer around its changing planes.



Giambologna, *Rape of a Sabine*, 1582. Gesso, height 13’8”. Galleria dell’Accademia, Florence, Italy. "'Abduction of the Sabine women' (1583) by Giambologna (Jean de Boulogne, Douai 1529-Florence 1608) - Loggia della Signoria in Florence" by Carlo Raso is marked with Public Domain Mark 1.0.

Relief, Bas-Relief, High Relief

- Sculptures can be created in **relief,** where the primary form’s surface is raised above the surrounding material, such as the image on a coin.
- *Dying Lioness* relief was found in the North Palace of King Ashurbanipal in Mesopotamia.



Dying Lioness, limestone relief from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal, Nineveh, Assyrian period, *c*. 650 BCE. British Museum, London, England. "Lion Hunts of Ashurbanipal, dying lioness" by profzucker is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

- **Bas-relief** (*bas* means “low” in French) refers to a shallow extension of the image from its surroundings

- **High relief** is where the most prominent elements of the composition are undercut and rendered in more than half in the round against the background.
- Rich, animated bas-relief sculpture exists at the Banteay Srei temple near Angor Wat, Cambodia. Here humans and mythic figures combine in depictions from ancient Hindu stories.



Bas-relief sculpture at the temple Banteay Srei, Angor, Cambodia. Tenth century. Sandstone. Image in the public domain.

Methods of Sculpture

- Subtractive
- Additive

Subtractive

A sculptor uses a tool to carve, drill, chisel, chip, whittle, or saw away unwanted material.

Carving

- The most ancient works of art that still exist were made using subtractive methods
- Most were made of stone or ivory
- Worked by chipping, carving, sanding, and polishing
- Mt. Rushmore is one of largest and most famous sculpted portraits
- Borglum searched for a mountain with the right kind of carving stone
- Mostly carved by miners using dynamite
- It shows the image of four US Presidents



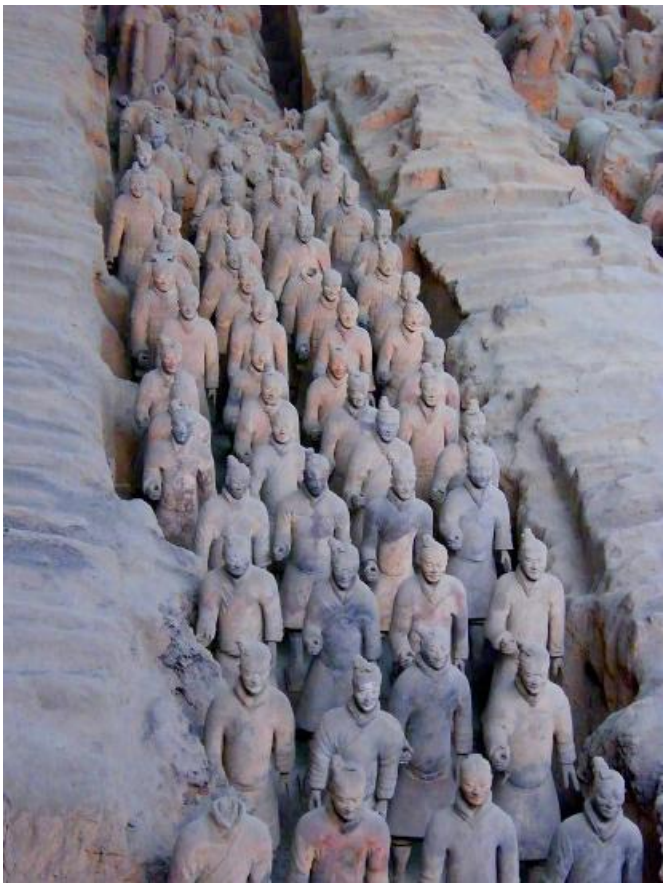
"Mt Rushmore" by cm195902 is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Additive

Additive is processes of modeling, casting, or constructing in which sculptors add material to make the final artwork

Modeling

- Modeling is an additive process; the artist builds up the work by adding material
- Clay or wax is in this category.
- In March 1974, a group of peasants digging a well in drought-parched Shaanxi province in northwest China unearthed fragments of a clay figure—the first evidence of what would turn out to be one of the greatest archaeological discovery of modern times.[2]



The 1974 discovery of buried vaults at Xi'an filled with thousands of terra cotta (Terra-cotta is baked clay) warriors stunned the world. O. Louis Mazzatenta / NGS Image Collection. "Terra Cotta Soldiers" by Stanley Zimny is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0.

Casting

- This process involves adding a liquid or pliable material to a mold
- First, a model of the final sculpture is made; this is used to make a mold into which a casting liquid is poured
- When it hardens, the result is a detailed replica of the original model [1]
- Donatello's landmark work – and one of the greatest sculptural works of the early Renaissance – was his bronze statue of David. This work signals the return of the nude sculpture in the round figure, and because it was the first such work like this in over a thousand years, it is one of the most important works in the history of western art. [3]
- For further information; Read **Donatello, *David*,** by **DR. HEATHER GRAHAM**



Donatello, David, c. 1440-1460, bronze. "Donatello's David - plaster replica, V&A, right" by ketrin1407 is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Other Mediums of Sculpture

Earthworks, assemblage, ready-mades, kinetic sculptures, and installation

Earthworks

- This type of art uses the surface of the Earth as material
- The best-known modern earthwork is Robert Smithson's (1938–1973) *Spiral Jetty* in the Great Salt Lake in Utah
- The coiled artwork was made using 6,550 tons of rock and dirt, sourced from dump trucks, to pave a spiraling roadbed out into the salt lake
- The artwork drowns and then rises with a new encrustation of salt crystals [1]



Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, 1970 (Great Salt Lake, Utah) (photo: Gianfranco Gorgoni) ©Holt-Smithson Foundation

Assemblage

- A three-dimensional work of art made from combinations of materials including found objects or non-traditional art materials.[4]
- To create this sculpture, Nevelson stacked boxes against a wall and filled each compartment with found wooden scraps including moldings, dowels, spindles, and furniture parts. She then covered the entire assemblage with black paint, both

unifying the composition and obscuring the individual objects. She once explained her fascination with the color black: "It wasn't a negation of color. It was an acceptance. Because black encompasses all colors." The towering geometric construction plays with flatness and recession, straight lines and curves, overlaps and vacancies. [5]



Louise Nevelson, Big Black (1963). "Louise Nevelson, Big Black (1963)" by smallcurio is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Readymades

- The term readymade was first used by French artist Marcel Duchamp to describe the works of art he made from manufactured objects. It has since often been applied more generally to artworks by other artists made in this way [6]
- There are three rules for readymade artworks; 1-The choice of object is itself a creative act. 2-By canceling the ‘useful’ function of an object, it becomes art. 3-The presentation and the addition of a title to the object have given it ‘a new thought’, a new meaning. [6]



Marcel Duchamp, Fountain, 1917. "Marcel Duchamp, Fountain" by profzucker is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Kinetic Sculpture

- Sculpture that moves is called kinetic sculpture
- Alexander Calder's monumental mobile moves solely on the air currents in the National Gallery of Art East Building's Central Court. The sculptor originally intended the work to have a motor, but the use of advanced, lightweight materials made this unnecessary. [7]
- For more information "WHO IS ALEXANDER CALDER?" by Tate Museum.



"Black Spray (1956) - Alexander Calder (1898 - 1976)" by pedrosimoes7 is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Installation Art

Installation art utilizes multiple objects, often from various mediums, and takes up entire spaces. It can be generic or site-specific. Because of their relative complexity, installations can address aesthetic and narrative ideas on a larger scale than traditional sculpture. Its genesis can be traced to the Dada movement, ascendant after World War I and which predicated a new aesthetic by its unconventional nature and ridicule of established tastes and styles. Sculpture came off the pedestal and began to transform entire rooms into works of art. With installation art, the viewer is surrounded by and can become part of the work itself.

Dan Flavin

- Dan Flavin is one of the first artists to explore the possibilities of light as a sculptural medium.
- Since the 1960s his work has incorporated fluorescent bulbs of different colors and in various arrangements.
- Moreover, he takes advantage of the wall space the light is projected onto, literally blurring the line between traditional sculpture and the more complex medium of installation.



Dan Flavin, *untitled*, 1970. Installation view, David Zwirner, Paris, 2019. "dan flavin" by Dean Hochman is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Sarah Sze

- Sarah Sze is an American artist widely recognized for challenging the boundaries of painting, installation, and architecture.
- Sze's sculptural practice ranges from slight gestures discovered in hidden spaces to expansive installations that scale walls and colonize architectures.
- *Triple Point (Pendulum)* was first exhibited at the 55th Venice Biennale, where Sze represented the United States in 2013. The title is borrowed from the term “the triple point of water,” a reference to the state at which water can coexist simultaneously in three forms: steam, ice, and liquid. Gathering the objects from the world around us, Sze creates a sculpture in a state of flux, hovering between many forms at once. [10]
- Sarah Sze's Triple Point (Pendulum). 2013 at MoMA

Rachel Whiteread

- British artist Rachel Whiteread’s installation Embankment from 2005 fills an entire exhibition hall with casts made from various sized boxes.
- At first appearance a snowy mountain landscape navigated by the viewer is actually a gigantic nod to the idea of boxes as receptacles of memory towering above and stacked around them, squeezing them towards the center of the room.



Rachel Whiteread, Embankment, 2005. Source: Wikipedia, licensed through Creative Commons

Olafur Eliasson

- Olafur Eliasson (Icelandic: ; born 5 February 1967) is an Icelandic–Danish artist known for sculptured and large-scale installation art employing elemental materials such as light, water, and air temperature to enhance the viewer's experience.



Light Installations / Art about global warming, Art created in 2003, Art in London, community, Light and Space, Olafur Eliasson, Tate Modern, Turbine Hall

Sources

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9.1.2: Noel Harding, The Elevated Wetlands

by **DR. MARK CHEETHAM**

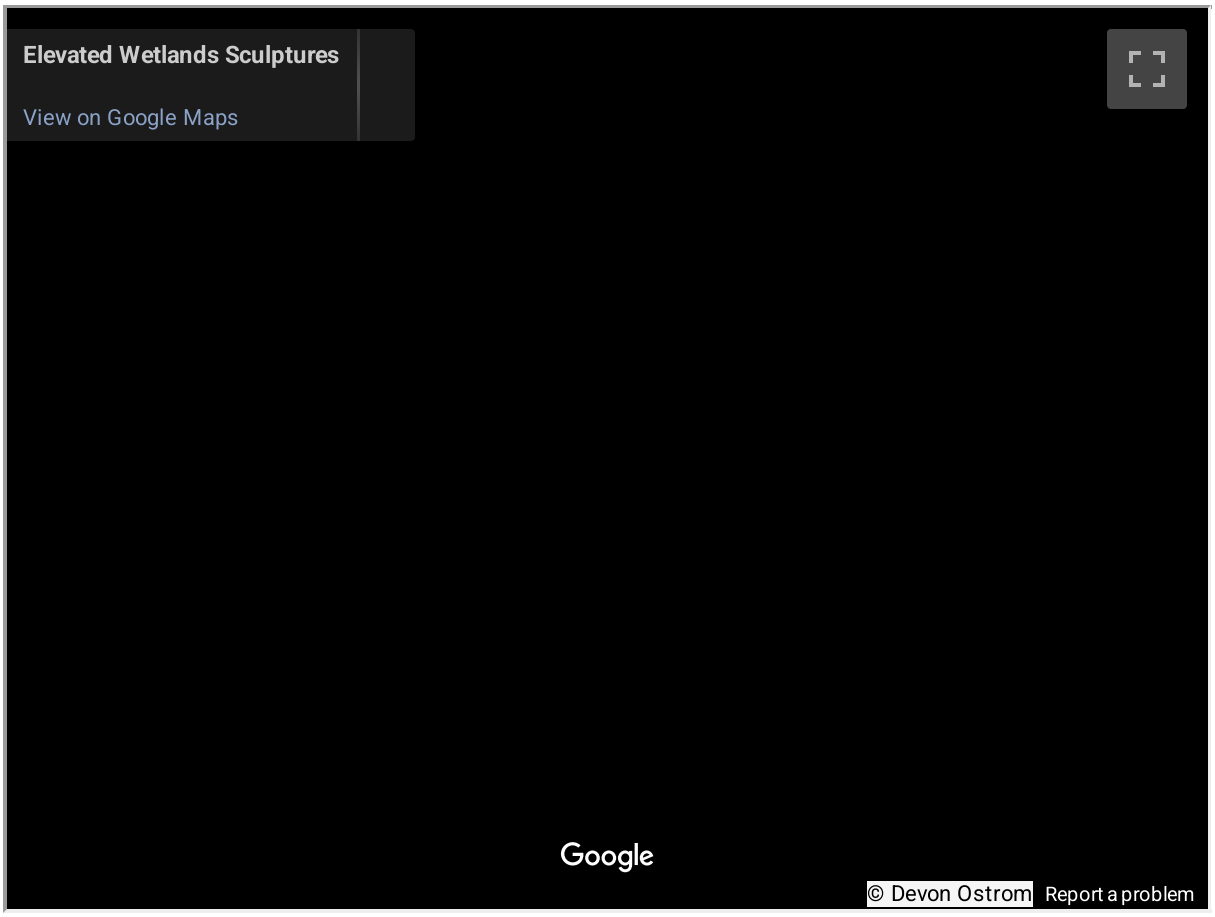
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Figure 9.1.2.1: Six sculptures made of expanded polystyrene foam, acrylic stucco coating, solar powered irrigation system, recycled plastic soil structure, native plants, and water from the Don River. Commissioned by the Canadian Plastics Industry Association in cooperation with the City of Toronto. The sculptures were officially inaugurated October 1, 1998. Noel Harding, *The Elevated Wetlands*, 1997–98, Taylor Creek Park, Toronto (photo: Mark Cheetham)

Six elephantine shapes stand—or do they graze?—in two groups, one on either side of one of Canada's busiest highways, the Don Valley Parkway in Toronto. [1] The grey forms are gigantic (approximately 2–3 meters); they seem alive and unperturbed by the traffic, yet also like creatures from a prehistoric past. Visually intriguing, the artwork becomes even more compelling the more one knows about its innovative creation—it is largely made from forms of plastic—and its environmental purpose.



Where and why

The Elevated Wetlands stands in Taylor Creek Park, an oasis of wetlands in the expansive Don Valley, named for the once heavily polluted Don River that runs through the east part of Toronto and into Lake Ontario. Named Wonscotanach in Anishnaabemowin (also called the Ojibwe language), this glaciated valley registers layers of environmental and human history, from the course of the river and its tributaries and still-thriving original plants, to traces of Indigenous settlements more than 5,000 years old and the nineteenth-century mills and brickworks that helped to build the infrastructure of North America's third largest urban area. Completed in 1998 by well-known Toronto artist Noel Harding in collaboration with landscape architect Neil Hadley, the work was the result of extensive civic planning, local consultation, and partnership with the plastics industry. [2]



Figure 9.1.2.2: Noel Harding, *The Elevated Wetlands*, 1997–98, Taylor Creek Park, Toronto (photo: Robert Taylor, CC BY 2.0)

Functioning eco art

The Elevated Wetlands is one of the first and most enduringly effective pieces of eco art in Canada. *Elevated Wetlands* is a working water filtration system. Water from the adjacent wetlands is steadily pumped to the top of the chain of sculptures by Solar Voltaic systems (solar panels attached adorably to the backsides of some of the “elephants”). Gravity then takes the water through a simple filtration system. Treated waste from plastic bottles, automobile plastics, and shredded consumer plastics cooperates with local wetland flora atop each form to absorb and filter chemicals and other contaminants. A much cleaner sample of stream water is then returned to the soil beside the Don River. An affirmative example of the potential “green” collaboration between industry, art, and civic planning, the sculptural group is also clearly art because it is so unusual and more than strictly functional. The plastic sculptural structures topped with plants interact with one another organically, as groups of animals often do. Nose to tail, they are intimate, tactile, and purposeful. Most of all, the groups strike one as playful.



Figure 9.1.2.3: Noel Harding, *The Elevated Wetlands*, 1997–98, Taylor Creek Park, Toronto (photo: End User, CC BY-ND 2.0)

Questions raised: practicality and/versus aesthetics in eco art

Pioneering in its sculptural presence and its green agenda, *The Elevated Wetlands* continues to serve as a unique water filtration apparatus, an example of collaboration and an aesthetically captivating installation. As plastic becomes more and more of an environmental burden in the present, the work not only suggests but also puts sustainability into practice. Or does it? The sculptures do function, but slowly. Alone, they cannot significantly purify the Don wetlands, nor were they intended to. Harding was not providing a water filtration prototype that would then populate similarly polluted areas at scale in the way that we see power-generating windmills in some locales. *The Elevated Wetlands* is practical—ameliorative—in a symbolic way. As eco art, the work raises issues and demonstrates solutions. If it were strictly practical, it would no longer be art. Yet *The Elevated Wetlands* continues to pose environmental questions in part because—hurtling past it on the highway or admiring it close up—most people don't register the forms as "art" at all. Its environmental message sneaks up on the viewer.



Figure 9.1.2.4: Helen and Newton Harrison, 2009 installation view of Global Warming: Greenhouse Britain, 2006–09 (ronald feldman gallery)

The Elevated Wetlands is familiar to many in Toronto, but its international importance has been overlooked. Delivering what many today want from eco art—aesthetically engaging art that carries a clear environmentalist message—it is an early example of the environmentally sensitive art which artists were increasingly taking up in the USA and Europe, beginning in the 1990s. In presenting sustainability rather than providing habitat restoration on a large scale, *The Elevated Wetlands* can be compared with the eco art projects of Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison, which began in the 1970s and continue. The Harrisons describe themselves as "historians, diplomats, ecologists, investigators, emissaries and art activists." [3] Though not a functioning work in Harding's sense, their ***Greenhouse Britain***, for example, was a large-scale and multi-platform artwork that demonstrated the effects of accelerating planetary warming on the coastlines of the UK.



Figure 9.1.2.5: Hans Haacke, *Rhine Water Purification Plant*, 1972, glass and acrylic containers, pump, polluted Rhine water, tubing, filters, chemicals and goldfish, dimensions variable (Paula Cooper Gallery, New York, and Hans Haacke)

Another fruitful comparison with Harding's work is Hans Haacke's *Rhine Water Purification Plant*. Downstream from the Krefeld sewage treatment plant, he collected still-polluted water, which he purified so that goldfish could survive in the large water tank central to his installation. More politically motivated than *The Elevated Wetlands*—the artist was calling out the water treatment company, which was a donor to the art museum—Haacke's cleansing apparatus was installed indoors for two months at the Museum Haus Lange in Krefeld, Germany.

Eco art and public art

These three works have a strong aesthetic impact and also ask what eco art can be and do *as art*. A notable difference between *The Elevated Wetlands* and many other eco artworks, however, is that Harding's work is also a prominent and permanent piece of public art. It does not filter or control its audiences in the way that museum exhibits inevitably do. *The Elevated Wetlands* was designed to be and remains part of the elaborate web of civic, technological, and aesthetic discussions and controversies that uniquely attend public art. As public art, it continues to pose environmental questions to a broad range of people through an unusual and laudable combination of ecological insight, technological savvy, and whimsy. It is a work for its immediate locale, for the past of this environment and its peoples, and for the future of the planet.

Notes:

[1] Jennifer Bonnell, “Writing the Environmental History of Toronto’s Don Valley Parkway,” ***NiCHE*, November 14, 2011.**

[2] Shawn Micaleff, “**Remembering artist and urban innovator Noel Harding’s legacy**.” *Toronto Star*, June 18, 2016.

[3] **The Harrison Studio**

Open Art Histories

This essay is brought to you through a partnership with Open Art Histories.

Additional resources:

A Companion to Public Art, ed. Cher Krause Knight and Harriet F. Senie (UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2016).

Mark A. Cheetham, *Landscape into Eco Art: Articulations of Nature since the ‘60s* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2018).

Andrew Patrizio, *The Ecological Eye: Assembling an Ecocritical Art History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019).

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9.2: Sculpture (1950-1999)

Introduction

By the 1960s, the concept of sculptures had changed, and the trend towards abstract and figurative was firmly in place, as traditional ideas were rejected. New materials were available, and sculptors began to experiment with them. During this period, they also brought more sophistication to creating and manufacturing sculptures, especially oversized images. Sculptors no longer made a single figure out of marble or bronze and using multiple materials involved additional people beyond the artist. Projects, particularly outdoors, became collaborative efforts with landscape designers and site architects. Site-specific and environmental works on a grand scale were pioneered during this period. The landscape was the basis for the sculpture for some artists, and works were integrated into existing environments.

Materials were important choices for each artist based on technology and the placement in an environment. Those sculptors using metal needed a broad expanse of space and technology to cast or weld the metal. Other sculptors who made large works in factories required trucks and oversized cranes to transport and install their work. Some artists found materials in the environment to create a natural work, while others transformed natural elements with unnatural materials. Some art was permanently installed in this period, while others were temporary and responsive to natural forces. Artists in this section include:

- Xu Bing (1955-)
- Nam June Paik (1932-2006)
- Katsura Funakoshi (1951-)
- Ruth Asawa (1926-2013)
- Heri Dono (1960-)
- Isamu Noguchi (1904 –1988)
- Lee Ufan (1936-)
- Huang Yong Ping (1954-2019)

Xu Bing

Xu Bing (1955-) was born in Chongqing and spent his childhood in Beijing, where his father taught at Peking University. Xu was sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution for the re-education program. After Mao Zedong died and his revolution ended, Xu returned to Beijing and received his master's degree in fine arts. As part of the Tiananmen Square protests 1989, political pressure caused Xu and others to move to the United States. Xu had focused on printmaking in China, supporting the ideals of Social Realism predominant at the time. In the United States, he used printmaking concepts to create his incredible installations. Xu liked to communicate through language and demonstrate how easy it is to manipulate the meanings of words. His work uses both traditional and experimental ideas in printmaking and book construction.

Xu made *Book from the Sky*, composed of four books displayed in parts so the viewer is immersed in the sculpture. Parts are on the floor (11.2.1), the ceiling, and the wall (11.2.2). The books are filled with four thousand characters Xu invented. He wanted to demonstrate how words and writing look authentic; however, words can also be deceiving and distorted. Xu made the strokes for each character appear to be accurate until they were examined closely. He based the font style on the style first seen in the Song Dynasty and later standardized by the Ming Dynasty, morphing them into original characters (11.2.3). He carved each character from pear wood to make each piece movable type and had the work printed in one of the few traditional print factories remaining in China.



Figure 9.2.1: *Book from the Sky* (floor) (hand-printed books and ceiling and wall scrolls printed from wood letterpress type; ink on paper, ca.1987-1991) (profzucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

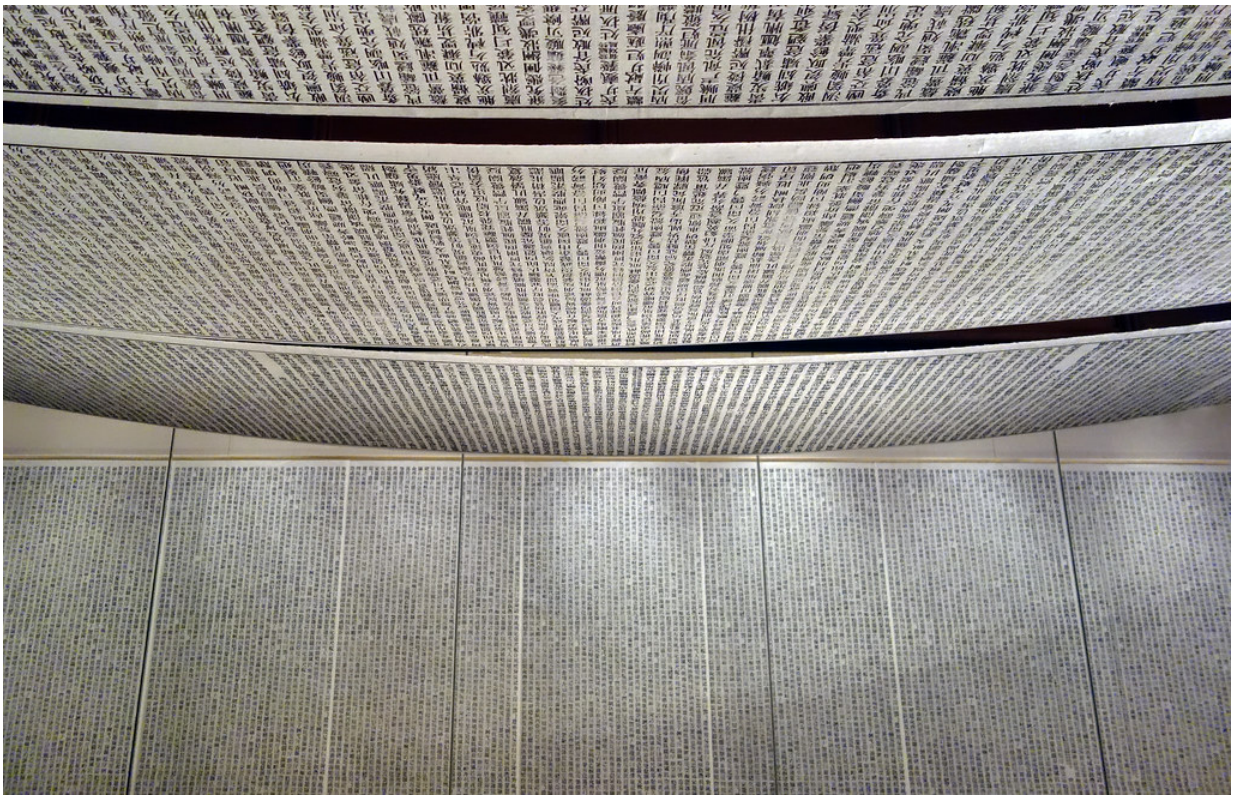


Figure 9.2.2: *Book from the Sky* (ceiling and wall) (profzucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

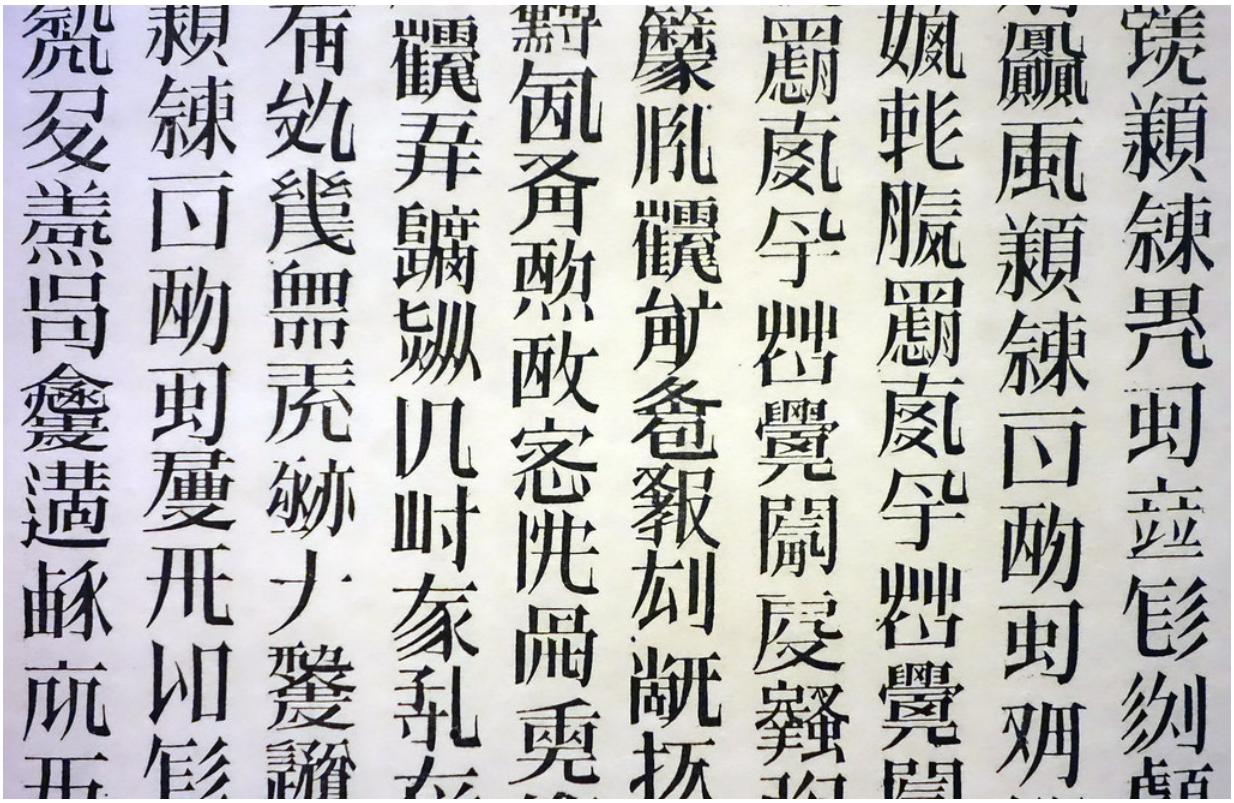


Figure 9.2.3: *Book from the Sky* (print) (profzucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Book from the Sky

Xu Bing, Book from the Sky, c. 1987-91, hand-printed books and ceiling and wall scrolls printed from wood letterpress type; ink on paper, each book, open: 18 1/8 × 20 inches / 46 × 51 cm; each of three ceiling scrolls 38 inches × c. 114 feet 9-7/8 inches / 96.5 × 3500 cm; each wall scroll 9 feet 2-1/4 inches × 39-3/8 inches / 280 × 100 cm



Xu's sculpture, *Phoenix* (11.2.4), was installed in a church in New York City. The bird was based on the concept of *Fenghuang*, a mythological bird that symbolizes harmony and virtue. Xu salvaged debris, tubing, and workers discarded tools, shovels, and drills from demolition sites in China to create his two giant birds. He named one bird Feng, the male bird (30 meters long), and Huang, the female bird (27 meters long), and together, they weighed over twelve tons. Xu said, "The phoenix of today's China bears countless scars. It has lived through great hardship. But it has adorned itself with great respect."[1] Xu started creating the idea of the rising phoenix when he saw the low-tech methods used to construct high-tech buildings.

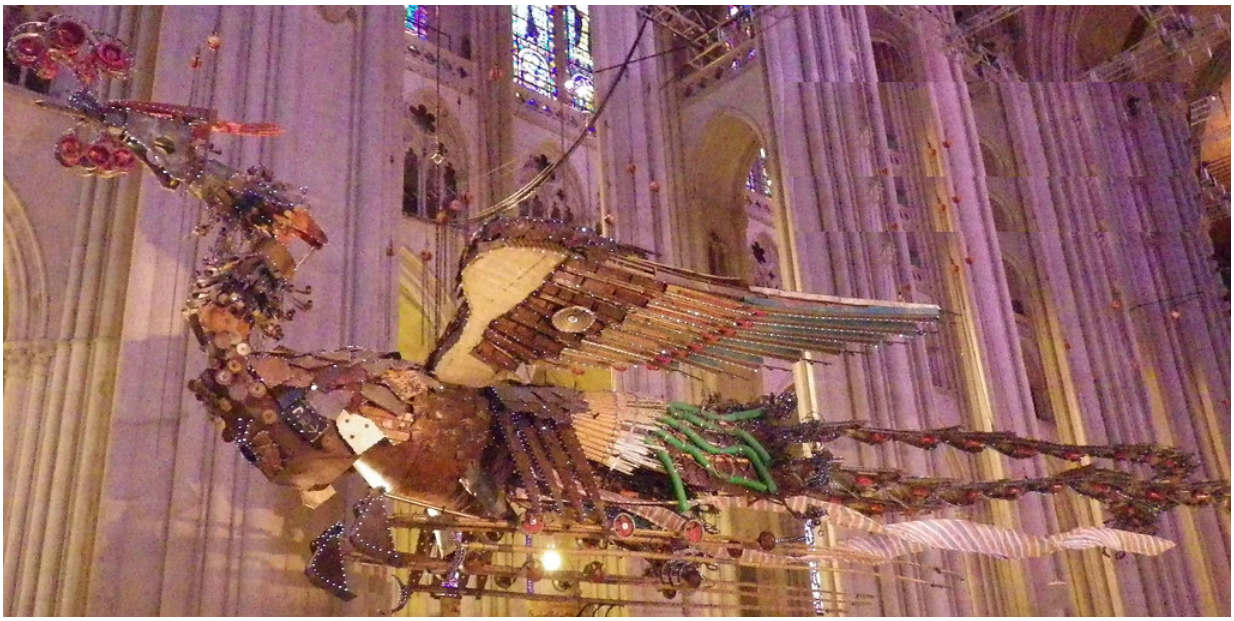


Figure 9.2.4: *Phoenix Flying* (misc. debris and tools, 2008, 27.4 x 30.4 m.) (catchesthelight, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Phoenix

A look at “Phoenix,” a monumental project by Chinese contemporary artist Xu Bing, which is installed at The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine.

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Nam June Paik

Nam June Paik (1932-2006) was born in Seoul, Korea; his father owned a large textile company. He was the youngest of five children and trained as a pianist as a child. During the Korean War, the family fled to Hong Kong and then Japan, where, in 1956, he received a BA in aesthetics from the University of Tokyo. Paik went to West Germany to study music further and became part of a new experimental art group. When he moved to the United States in the early 1960s, Paik started to experiment with synthesizers and how to manipulate musical sounds. He first used a Sony recorder until 1967, when Sony introduced a new portable video tape recorder, giving Paik the platform he needed and creating a new direction in art. Paik's first exhibition was based on thirteen television sets. He continued to use TV sets for experiments, spanning the capabilities of technology and art. By 1974, he proposed the electronic information superhighway, connecting cities and people with satellites, coaxial cables, and fiber optics. Paik wanted to distribute videos freely, flowing through the information highway. His optimism and forward-thinking forecasted the future, and

he is internationally considered the Father of Video Art. Paik also began to make installations from old television sets and video monitors to display different images on closed circuits across the installation. He used television sets to make robots, adding wire, metal, and miscellaneous parts. Paik understood the future capabilities of imagery and used files and video as multi-textual art forms. "Using television, as well as the modalities of single-channel videotape and sculptural/installation formats, he imbued the electronic moving image with new meanings…transforming the electronic moving image into an artist's medium, part of the history of the media art."[2]

Paik used television sets to create the American flag; in this installation, *Video Flag* (11.2.5), seventy sets are primarily programmed to red, white, and blue images. He used magnets to manipulate the signals and synthesizers, video feedback, and various technologies to create different colors and shapes. Paik made several other installations of flags in a variety of sizes. In this flag, he projected on a continuous loop, 24 hours a day, different images of political images. Technology has a finite ability to continue working, and all of Paik's flag installations have been undergoing conservation efforts, using new technology and wiring to preserve the mechanisms.



Figure 9.2.5: *Video Flag* (1996, 70 CRTs, wiring, fans, metalwork, power strips) (Ian T Edwards, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

1964, when Paik first came to America, the interstate highway system was only nine years old and was established under Eisenhower's presidency. The highway ran from coast to coast, linking the country's states. At the time, detailed maps guided the drivers from state to state. Restaurants and motels were constructed nationwide, neon nights burned brightly, and different states presented different cultures. The entire country also embraced the television set, linking the news and daily events with the homes of America. Paik recognized how to use video media to connect people and how it would transform everyone's life. He created *Electronic Superhighway* (11.2.6), a massive installation of 336 television sets, 50 DVD players, 3,750 feet of cable, and 575 feet of multicolored neon tubing. [3] On the different monitors, he plays images to represent each state surrounded by flashing neon light tubes. Paik wanted to display his vision of how technology and communication would advance. *Megatron Matrix* (11.2.7) was an installation of 215 monitors. Paik played different clips in sections, some based on his images from his home country of South Korea and others different ideas of entertainment and culture of the United States. Paik's installations were prophetic of the world's future information age.

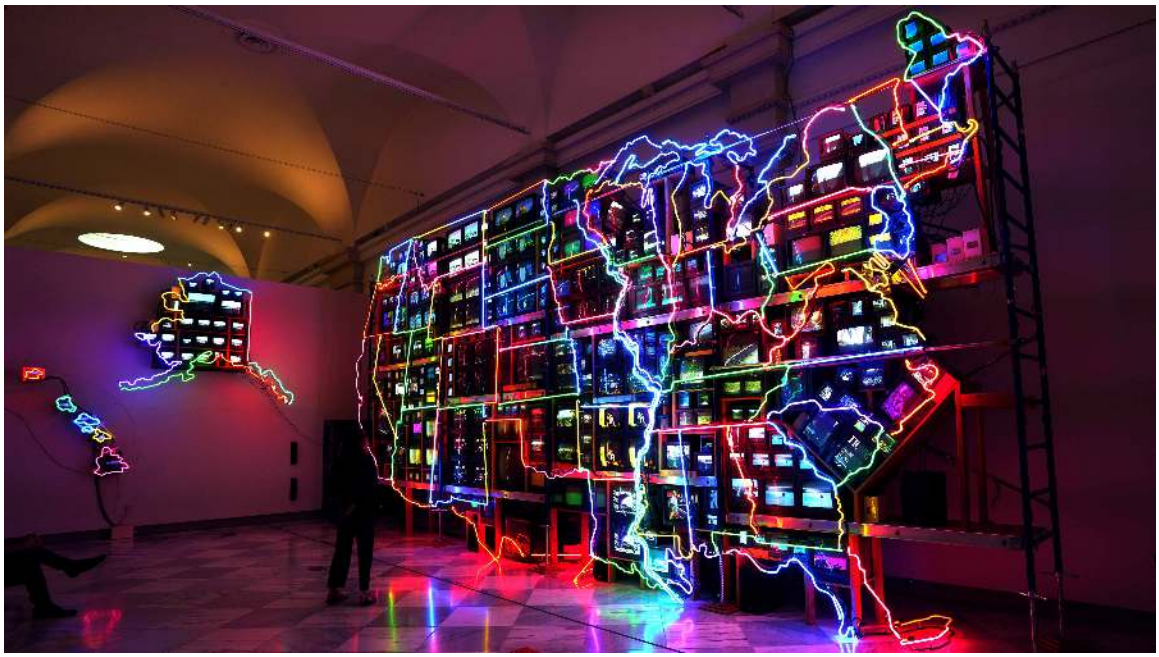


Figure 9.2.6: *Electronic Superhighway: Continental US* (1995, 313 monitors, neon, steel structure, sound, 4.5 x 9.7 x 1.2 meters) (The Q Speak, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

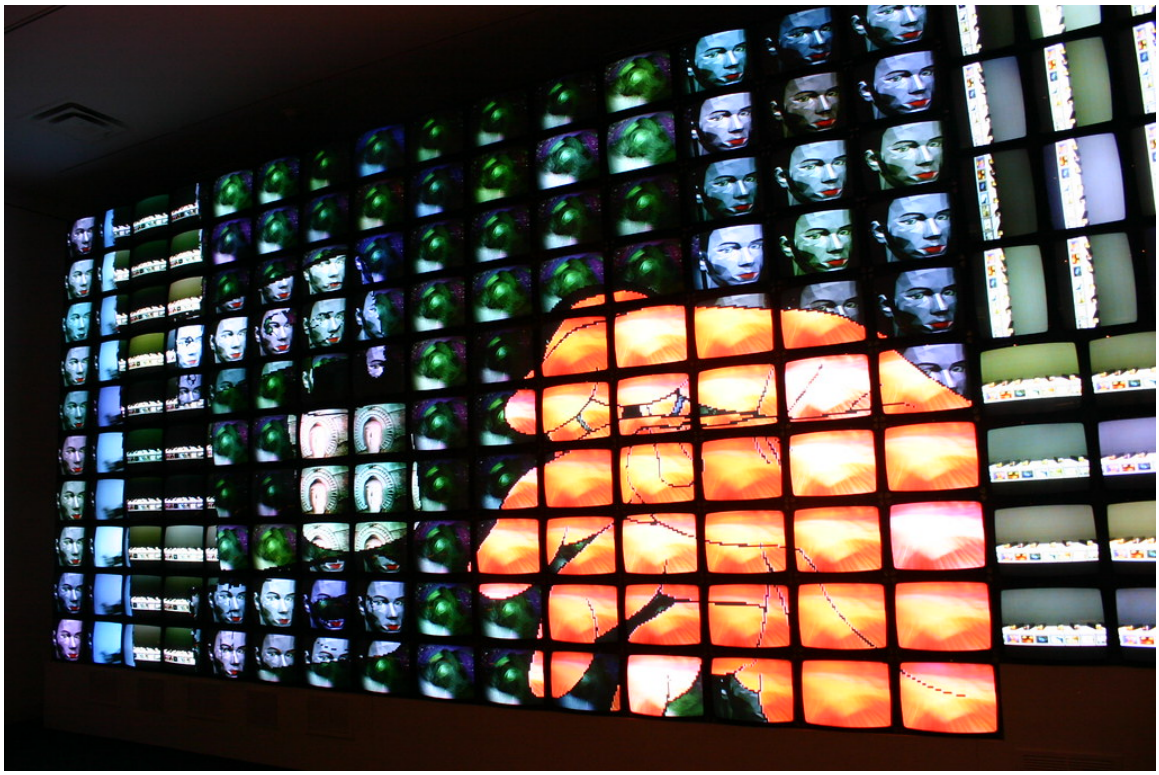


Figure 9.2.7: *Megatron/Matrix* (1995, eight-channel video installation, custom electronics, color, sound, 335.3 x 1005.8 x 121.9 cm) (Ryan Somma, CC BY 2.0)

Electronic Superhighway

Robots, video synthesizers, experimental music—discover the multidimensional creative world of electronic artist Nam June Paik. Working across media since the 1960s, Paik established himself as an early innovator of video art, setting the scene for many of today's contemporary art practices. Through groundbreaking performances, immersive artworks, and interdisciplinary collaborations, Paik established new approaches to music and television, and changed the way we look at screens.



Katsura Funakoshi

Katsura Funakoshi (1951-) is one of Japan's leading visual artists living in Tokyo. His father was a sculptor, and Funakoshi first learned from him. He attended the Tokyo University of Art and Design for his Bachelor of Arts and the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music for a Master of Arts degree. Funakoshi became a serious carver in 1980 using camphor wood. Thematically, he combined Asian and Western features in the sculpture and mixed reality with fantasy to develop a certain spirituality. His trademark was to carve the hybrid figures from the waist up, each one different. Funakoshi used the wood grain as a visible carving strategy and added marks from his carving tools. Funakoshi generally left the crown or top of the head unpainted when he painted or polished the figure. He made the eyes luminescent, almost life-like, to engage the viewer. The materials he used for each sculpture were essential to him. Funakoshi stated, "I'm interested in human existence, a statement concerning humanity. The material I use- wood for sculpture, paper for drawings, and charcoal or pencil- is important, as it influences the result. I am seeking the perfect tension or moment between the material and the image."[4]

Am I Floating? (11.2.8) is made from camphor wood, and her arms and torso are painted with light and almost translucent turquoise. Her shoulders are pushed upward, giving more room on her chest for the pendulous breasts. The statue is not decorated or distorted with other images, making her relatively simple. *A Lunar Eclipse in Forest* (11.2.9) followed the same format for the image; only the torso was distorted, and her neck elongated. Made from camphor wood and painted in tones of sienna, the body is the lightest section. Her hands appear as appendages on the rounded wings, and she stands on four thin legs, helping to balance her spherical body. In *Am I Floating?* the figure looks straight out at the viewer, while the figure looks downward in this image.



Figure 9.2.8: *Am I Floating?* (2011, painted camphor wood, marble, 103.5 x 29 x 32 cm) (Annie Guilloret, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Figure 9.2.9: *A Lunar Eclipse in Forest* (2007, painted camphor wood, marble, miscellaneous wood, 212 x 134 x 139 cm) (jdlasica, CC BY 2.0)

Ruth Asawa

Ruth Asawa (1926-2013) was born in California; her parents were immigrants from Japan. As California farmers, when World War II started, Asawa and her family were sent to an internment camp in Arkansas. Even though Asawa's father lived in the United States for forty years, he was suspected of being a spy and separated from the family for six years in a different camp. Asawa's younger sister happened to be visiting Japan and was forced to stay there during the war. The relocation camp was next to a swamp, and the smell and poor water made life difficult. The family lived in the hastily constructed tar-paper barracks identified as Block 13. About the camp, Asawa said, "I hold no hostilities for what happened; I blame no one. Sometimes, good comes through adversity. I would not be who I am today had it not been for the Internment, and I like who I am."[5]

She had time to draw during the camp, and others recognized her talent. A Quaker organization gave her a scholarship to attend college in Wisconsin after only spending eighteen months in internment. She would not see her family for almost five years. After the war, she studied at Black Mountain College, where she started experimenting with wire. Crocheting the wire and hanging them from the ceilings became Asawa's focus.

Asawa has always explored new techniques for constructing abstracted forms using wire. She visited a village in Mexico and studied the villagers' methods of making wire baskets. She said, "I was interested in it because of the economy of a line, making something in space, enclosing it without blocking it out. It's still transparent. I realized that if I was going to make these forms, which interlock and interweave, it could only be done with a line because a line can go anywhere.[6]

Asawa's looped wire sculptures (11.2.10) are grouped, three-dimensional works that created their additional images based on the position of light and shadows. During this time of day, only a few sculptures project their images on different walls, which appear to be eight unique pieces, yet only three actual sculptures. The shadows portray the exact image of each hanging object. The position of the light also changes how long the sculpture appears on each wall. The sculptures are hand-tied and crocheted.



Figure 9.2.10: *Looped wire* (copper, brass, or Montel wire) (CTG/SF, CC BY-NC 2.0)

When Asawa first saw a plant from the desert, she observed how tangled it was and decided to replicate it in wire so she could draw a proper image. When handling the wire, she opened up the center and pushed the small pieces outward, creating a flat image. Her wall-mounted images (11.2.11, 11.2.12) were made by tying the wire with branch-like forms. Each form has a geometric center and four to seven points. Each point defines how many branches and the shape of the branches. On some of her wall-mounted sculptures, Asawa used reverse electroplating or galvanizing the wire to add layers of rough, colorful-looking skin similar to bark. As with Asawa's ceiling mounting sculptures, those on the wall reflect the light and produce independent shadows on nearby surfaces.

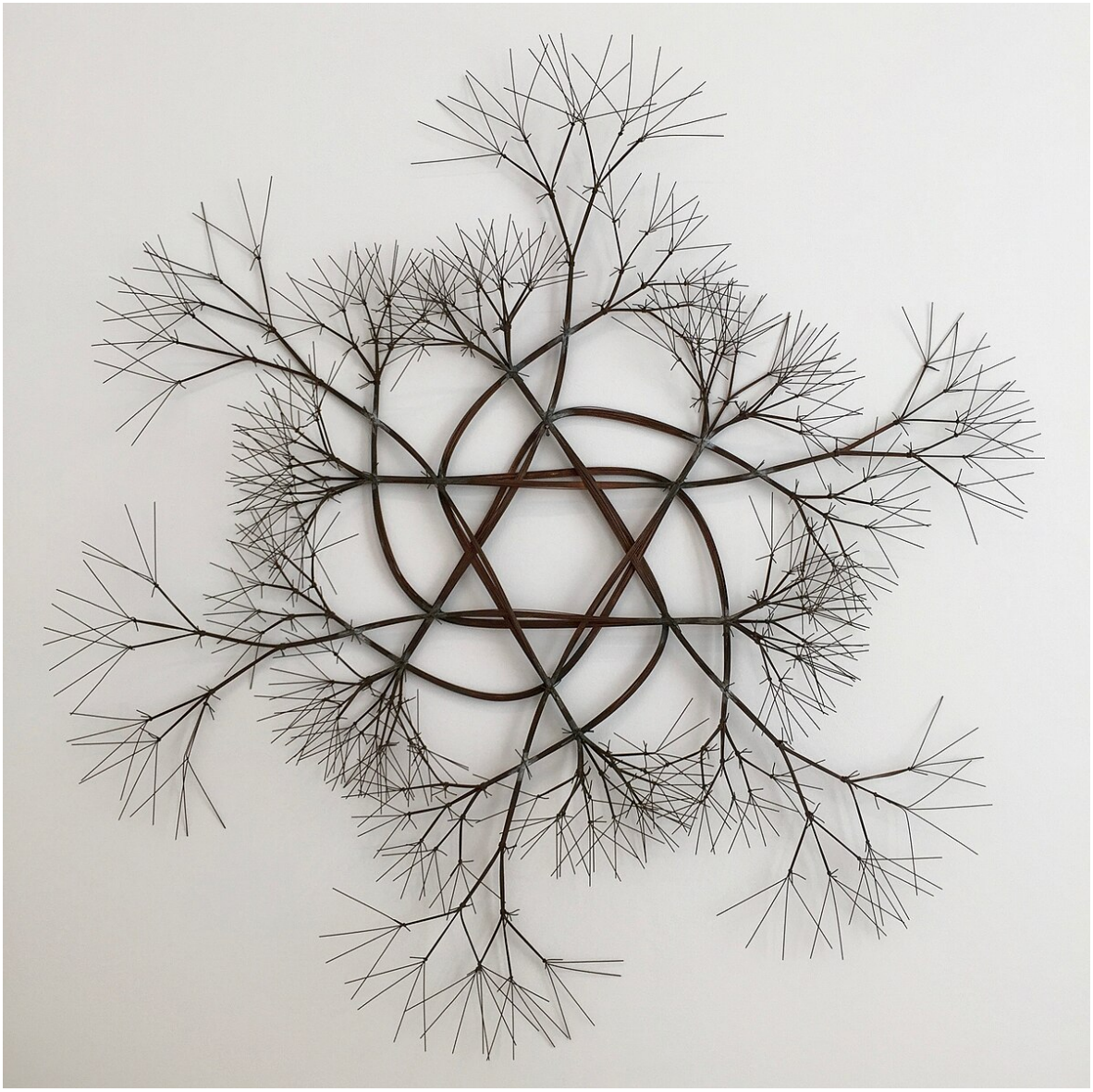


Figure 9.2.11: *Untitled* (tied wire, 1967) (Xyz1018, CC BY-SA 4.0)



Figure 9.2.12: *Untitled* (tied wire) (rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Ruth Asawa

In this new short documentary, discover the exhibition Ruth Asawa: Citizen of the Universe through the words of the visionary artist herself. “When I was in the (internment) camp in Arkansas, we had our fortunes told. So I was told that I probably should be an artist.” - Ruth Asawa The exhibition Ruth Asawa: Citizen of the Universe (28 May - 21 August 2022) takes a unique look at the visionary artist, educator and activist Ruth Asawa (b. 1926, Norwalk, CA – d. 2013, San Francisco, CA). In this short documentary to accompany the exhibition, get insights into the making of Ruth Asawa’s signature hanging sculptures in looped and tied wire, and hear from Modern Art Oxford Chief Curator, Emma Ridgway about the artist’s inspiring holistic integration of art, education and community.



In the 1960s, Asawa began working on large-scale sculptures interacting with water. She wanted to involve the community in the fountain in San Francisco near Union Square (11.2.13). She had over two hundred children help her design images of different parts of San Francisco. Each of the unique sections of the city was assembled into a map, including Chinatown (11.2.14) and Lombard Street (12.2.15), all designed with the children's help. Asawa had the children model their ideas in bakers' dough, which was baked in an oven to harden them. The parts were cast in bronze. She created multiple sculptural fountains in the city and became known as the "fountain lady."



Figure 9.2.13: San Francisco Fountain (bronze, 1973, 2.3 m high x 4.9 m in diameter) (Wally Gobetz, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Figure 9.2.14: *Part of San Francisco Fountain*; Chinatown (wallyg, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Figure 9.2.15: *Part of San Francisco Fountain*: Lombard Street (wallyg, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Heri Dono

Heri Dono (1960-) was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, and studied art at the Indonesian Art Institute. He was not encouraged to be an artist as a child and was punished whenever he drew in his exercise books. However, he pursued and spent seven years at the art institute and two more years learning the Indonesian style of puppetry. Dono gathers materials from multiple places worldwide, focusing on materials used in ordinary people's lives. Much of his work is based on Indonesia's political and social troubles. He uses an international approach with materials and ideas while incorporating local traditions.

In *Glass Vehicles* (11.2.16), Dono creates no masculine or feminine figures, only trying to represent the everyman or, in Indonesia, the 'orang kecil.' The figure identifies one of a privileged group instead of an individual person. The archetypal 'orang kecil' figures are dolls fashioned as half human and half doll-like. Dono was trained in making wayang puppets, and he used these techniques to make these figures. Each object stands inside a large, glass, multisided container generally used to hold prawn crackers. Dono added legs and wheels to each glass container, alluding to the fragility of Indonesia's transportation system.



Figure 9.2.16: *Glass Vehicles* (glass, fiberglass, cloth, lamps, sable, iron, toy carriages, 1995, 125 x 40 x 40 cm each) (Theen, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Dono liked to use elements of Indonesian culture's words, images, and myths. He frequently represented people as royalty, clowns, puppets, and even angels, all without any fixed definition. An image may be a man or woman or positioned in any direction. Dono was particularly fond of using corruption, political figures, and the influence of mass media as his subject matter. *Political Clowns* (11.2.17) are made with fifteen oversized clown heads. The clown is a repeated theme Dono uses in much of his work. Each face has oversized lips, exaggerated eyebrows, and enhanced paint around the eyes. The disembodied heads are set on skeletal-like structures imitating a body. The cords tumbling throughout the space interconnect the figures and light the small flames in each person.



Figure 9.2.17: *Political Clowns* (fiberglass, bulb, bottles, metal, cable, tin can, acrylic, plastic pipe, 1999) (Nieuws uit Amsterdam, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Isamu Noguchi

Isamu Noguchi (1904 –1988) was born in California, the son of a Japanese poet. After high school, Noguchi went to work as an apprentice to a sculptor. However, most of his work was finding models and his mentor told Noguchi he would not be a sculptor and suggested he follow his original idea of being a doctor. Noguchi enrolled at Columbia University in pre-med and one of the professors suggested he reconsider and major in art. He decided to pursue art and become a sculptor. He traveled to other countries, studying and working on his ideas. At first, he made abstract sculptures and then only created portrait busts to make a living. During World War II, he volunteered to be interned at the Poston Camp, where he continued working on his designs. After the war ended, he returned to New York, finally becoming successful.

The Red Cube (11.2.18) is a three-dimensional parallelogram, not a cube. The cube is made of steel and designed to collaborate with the horizontal and vertical definition of the surrounding buildings; the cube is sited on the diagonal, appearing to be rolling. The bright red cube presents a stunning contrast to the black, brown, and white buildings surrounding the cube. Through the center of the cube is a cylindrical hole painted gray, moving the viewer's eye through the cube to the building. Noguchi believed art should blend in with its surroundings. Noguchi was known for his interlocking sculptures made from multiple materials and assembled without glue or screws. Although he used different materials, stone was his preferred medium. Noguchi also took geometric shapes and distorted them, making them more organic.

The Void series, a collection of abstract sculptures was first conceived during Noguchi's time in Italy. The largest sculpture in the series, Energy Void (11.2.19), was carved in 1971 at his studio on the island of Shikoku, Japan, where Noguchi spent much of his career working with the local stones of basalt and granite. Energy Void, standing at roughly 6 feet in height, was crafted from black Swedish granite, and Noguchi even built his studio around it. The sculptures in the Void series highlight the importance of negative space in art, drawing from Zen Buddhist beliefs centered on emptiness. Noguchi was also inspired by the laws of physics, which dictate the continuous flow of energy through all matter. This concept is reflected in the never-ending loop of the Energy Void sculpture, capturing the timeless essence of life and energy.

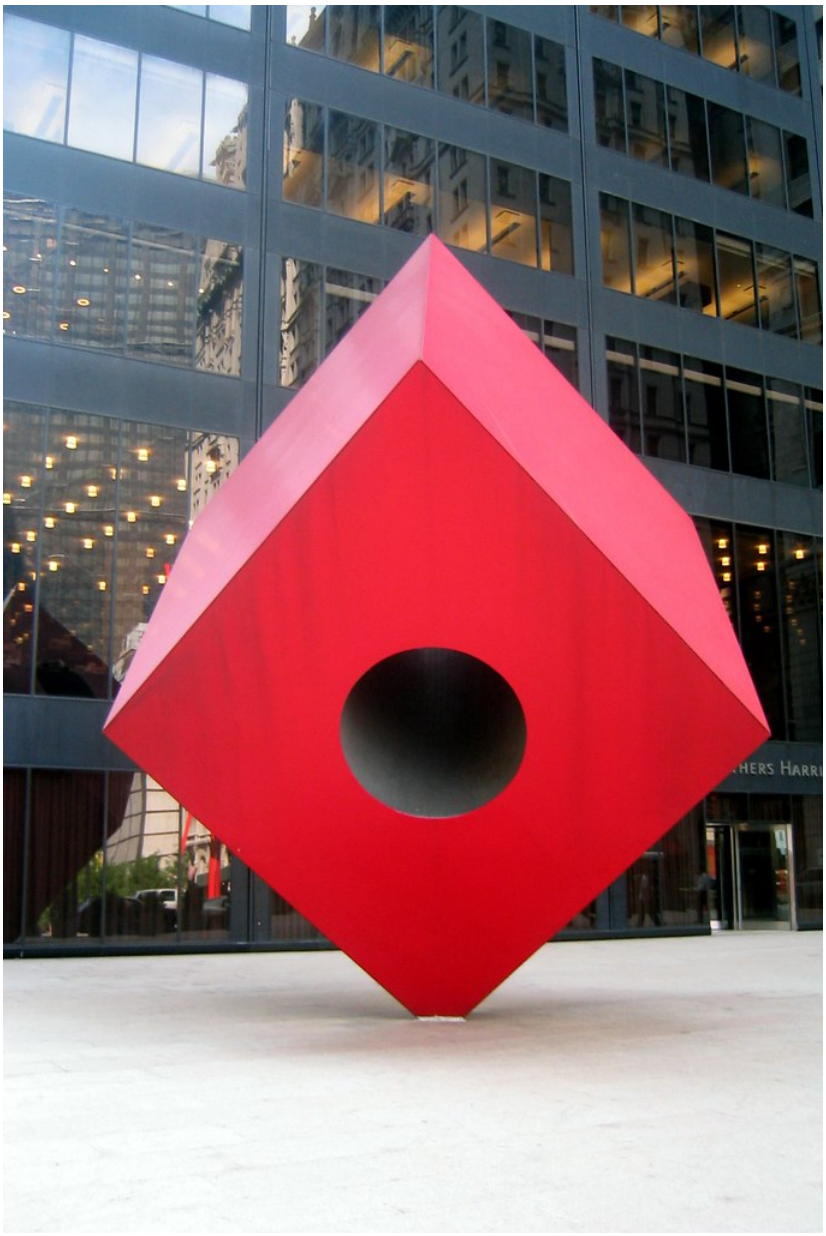


Figure 9.2.18: *The Red Cube* (968, steel, aluminum, 24 feet tall, installation view, 140 Broadway, New York) (wallyg, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Figure 9.2.19: *Energy Void* (181.61 × 156.21 × 57.15 cm, Swedish Granite) (jpellgen, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Lee Ufan

Lee Ufan (1936-) was born in the Korean province of South Kyongsang. As a child, he lived in Korea during the Japanese occupation and learned Korean and Japanese art traditions, especially inkbrush painting. Lee went to Nihon University in Tokyo, earned a degree in philosophy, and applied his philosophical beliefs to his artwork. Lee also spent much of his time on politics and the reunification of North and South Korea while developing his ideas as an artist. He combined Eastern and Western ideas and aesthetics, emphasizing "system, structure, and process through fields of dots or lines to create tension between his gestures and the picture plane while marking the passage of time."[7] Lee and other artists formed Mono-ha, or the School of Things, and Lee was the leader. They rejected Western ideas and focused on the relationships of space and matter and the use of materials with little additional manipulation. Lee stated they were not just presenting an object; "rather, we were examining the relationship between object and space, or between object and object."[8] Other movements were happening in the United States and Europe, such as minimalism. Mono-ha became Japan's version of a movement.

Relatum (11.2.20) comprises four sheets of rusted steel with large boulders appearing to hold the whole structure together. The weathering metal provides a vivid contrast with the stones. Lee used the stones to represent nature and the natural elements of the earth and metal to symbolize the hard, cold, and unfeeling industrial objects. From his early time in the Mono-ha period, Lee limited his use of materials to stone – a natural thing from the unknown world- and metal – building materials from the modern world.



Figure 9.2.20: *Relatum* (1978, stone, iron) (Statler, CC BY-SA 3.0)

Lee uses the concept of a long, rounded piece of metal and a large boulder for many of his sculptures. He designs and places the metal and boulder in a site-specific location, continuing the idea of conflicts between the natural and the manufactured. He does not look at the individual parts and believes the sculpture must be viewed in its entirety. Just as with all things, Lee thinks the viewer should look at the sculpture, its space or lack of space, and its positions and find more than just artwork. *Relatum-The Case of Titan* (11.2.21) is an example of a formation Lee created multiple times in different places. The position of the metal rod on the stone or the stone on the earth changes depending on the environment. The long hoe-like implement appears to be cracking the stone in this sculpture. Lee used the white coloring in the stone to determine the sculpture's placement.



Figure 9.2.21: *Relatum-The Case of Titan* (date unknown, stone, metal) (Pierre Nguyen, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Lee felt the gardens of Versailles were overwhelming because they were constructed for man's use instead of an extension of nature. In Asia, gardens were part of a natural environment. Lee decided to make a curved sculpture to pass through so a viewer comes from one space, passes through the neutral space of the sky, and enters a different space. Lee used stone to represent nature and iron plates to symbolize the concepts of an industrialized society. He said, "My works go beyond the deep history of Versailles and the perfect image of a garden; they are a metaphor inviting visitors to experience these places differently. They reveal a new dimension opening up on infinity."[9] The immense arch (11.2.22) is 29.8 meters long and 11.8 meters high and made of steel. A large boulder anchors each side of the arch.



Figure 9.2.22: *The Arch of Versailles* (2014, stainless steel and two stones, 111.3 x 150.0 x 20.0 cm) (dominique Bernardini, CC BY 2.0)



Figure 9.2.23: *The Arch of Versailles Close up* (dominique Bernardini, CC BY 2.0)

Open Dimension

"Lee Ufan: Open Dimension" is an ambitious site-specific commission by the celebrated Korean artist Lee Ufan. The expansive installation, featuring 10 new sculptures from the artist's signature and continuing "Relatum" series, marks Lee Ufan's largest single outdoor sculpture project in the US, the first exhibition of his work in the nation's capital, and the first time in the Hirshhorn's 45-year history that its 4.3-acre outdoor plaza has been devoted, almost in its entirety, to the work of a single artist.



Huang Yong Ping

Huang Yong Ping (1954-2019) was born in Xiamen, China. Huang was among the first students to attend the newly formed art academies after the Cultural Revolution. He graduated from the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts and became known as one of the most avant-garde artists in China in the 1980s. Influenced by Taoism and Buddhism, Huang established the Xiamen Dada, a group of artists whose work was modern and performative. In the 1980s, poverty dominated China, and pretty or nice things were unobtainable, so artists used whatever they found. Reusing materials was a practice Huang continually followed. Early in their careers, the artists made and burned their artwork. They believed "action needed to be taken, sacrifices made, and flames raised if we would like to see change made."[10] And then Tiananmen Square happened. Huang moved to France and incorporated his Eastern beliefs and characteristics with the more rigid Western standards.

Huang was inspired by the sculpture when he visited a Catholic church and saw an armless crucifix with the inscription "I have no arms other than yours." Huang remade the idea based on the Buddhist iconography of love, a thousand hands to help all who need rescuing in his sculpture *Fifty Arms of Buddha* (11.2.24). Huang used an ordinary metal stand and sculpted the arms from clay and resin. Each arm (11.2.25) holds something based on the iconography of the goddess Guan Yin (the bow (intuition), the bell (wisdom), the ritual scepter (action and compassion), the Samsara wheel (cycle of reincarnations), the arrow and the ritual sword of the young Buddha Siddharta, the lotus flower (purity) and peacock feathers (evoking the eyes of the goddess).[11] Huang also added purely domestic objects like a broom. He wanted to demonstrate the combination of the East and West with the past and present, forming a new state of continual change.



Figure 9.2.24: *Fifty Arms of Buddha* (1997, metal, terra cotta, resin, various objects, 600 x 420 cm) (carolyngifford, CC BY-NC 2.0)



Figure 9.2.25: *Fifty Arms of Buddha Close up* (corno.fulgur75, CC BY 2.0)

One of the Chinese mythological symbols is the snake, which represents wisdom and knowledge unlike Western cultures who fear the snake. The exceptionally long snake is made from aluminum and is 130 meters long with a large open mouth at one end. Most of the snake can be seen during low tide, including the tail (11.2.26). However, at high tide, only the mouth and tips of the vertebrae are visible (11.2.26). The curving snake resembles a nearby curving bridge. The snake always appears differently depending on the tides and weather. Eventually, the snake will succumb to the water, weather, and marine life.



Figure 9.2.26: *Serpent d'ocean* (Serpent of the Ocean) (2012, aluminum, 130 m) (corno.fulgur75, CC BY 2.0)



Figure 9.2.27: *Serpent head* (Mairie de Saint-Brevin-les-Pins, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

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[1] Phoenixes Rise in China and Float in New York

[2] Nam June Paik

[3] Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii

[4] Katsura Funakoshi

[5] Internment

[6] Martin, Douglas (August 17, 2013). "Ruth Asawa, an Artist Who Wove Wire, Dies at 87". *The New York Times / International Herald Tribune* (online) (Global ed.). The New York Times Company.

[7] Lee Ufan

[8] Man and nature unitedIn the studio: Lee Ufan

[9] Lee Ufan Versailles

[10] HUANG YONG PING - HUNGRY FOR BLOOD

[11] CINQUANTE BRAS DE BOUDDHA

9.2: Sculpture (1950-1999) is shared under a CC BY license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by LibreTexts.

9.2.1: Ruth Asawa, Untitled

by ALLISON GLENN, CRYSTAL BRIDGES MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, and DR. BETH HARRIS

Page ID
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Video 9.2.1.1: Ruth Asawa, *Untitled*, c. 1958, iron wire, 219.7 × 81.3 × 81.3 cm (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, © Estate of Ruth Asawa)

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9.3: Sculpture (1970-2000)

Introduction

By the 1960s, the concept of sculptures was changed, the trend towards abstract and figurative firmly in place as traditional ideas were rejected. New materials were available, and sculptors began to experiment with them. The period also brought more sophistication to create and manufacture sculptures, especially oversized images. Sculptors no longer created a single figure out of marble or bronze, and the use of multiple materials involved additional people beyond the artist. Projects, particularly those outdoors, became collaborative efforts with landscape designers and site architects. Site-specific and environmental works on a grand scale were pioneered during this period. The landscape was the basis for the sculpture for some artists, and works were integrated into existing environments.

Materials were important choices for each artist based on technology and the placement in an environment. Those sculptors using metal needed a broad expanse of space and technology to cast or weld the metal. Other sculptors who made large works in factories required trucks and oversized cranes to transport and install their work. Some artists found materials in the environment and used them to create a natural work, while others transformed natural elements with unnatural materials. Some art was permanently installed in this period, while other artwork was temporary and responsive to natural forces.

Richard Serra

Richard Serra (1939-) was born in San Francisco. His father worked in the steel mills as a pipefitter and influenced Serra's eventual use of steel for his sculptures. Serra received bachelor's degrees from the University of California and Yale, adding an M.F.A from Yale and a Fulbright scholarship. While he was in college, he also worked in the steel mills to support himself, learning the process of melting and rolling metal. Serra even developed a list to describe his work, including to hurl – throwing molten lead against a wall and to roll – rolling the metal. By the late 1960s, he started creating large-scale sculptures on a site. Most of Serra's work focused on Minimalism for his oversized steel structures.

Joe (7.8.1) was an early site-specific, permanent sculpture, a commission for the late Joseph Pulitzer Jr. Serra made the immense work from a large plate of hot rolled steel shaped into a spiral. The weathered steel sculpture stands in sharp contrast to the modern square white building. The rolled steel walls widen and narrow as the viewer traverses through the shifting contours of the spiral path surrounded by steel, only the blue sky above visible. Serra described the experience of walking through structure, "It is as if your body becomes its roller coaster, one tracked not up and down but round and round."[1]



Figure 9.3.1: Joe (1999, weathering steel, 4.1 x 14.6 x 12.1 meters) by Pulitzer Arts Foundation, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Clara Clara (7.8.2) was named after Serra's wife. The sculpture has two weathered steel bands curving away from each other. At one point, they almost touch, although there is a narrow pathway for people to move through. The sculpture brings the feeling of wide doors opening and inviting the viewer in, only to be squeezed in the middle, then moving along the sides open again.



Figure 9.3.2: Clara Clara (1983, weathered steel, 36.5 meters long and 3.0 meter high) by dalbera, CC BY 2.0

Intersection II (7.8.3) is formed from Serra's favorite material, weathered steel. The massive four panels appear to be precariously balanced. The narrow leaning angles of the walls invite people to walk through the dark, rusted surfaces. Each piece of steel is sloped and curved, forming a central space in the middle of the ellipse. Serra said, "The viewer in part became the subject matter of the work, not the object. His perception of the piece resided in his movement through the piece, [which] became more involved with anticipation, memory, and time, and walking and looking, rather than just looking at a sculpture the way one looks at a painting."[2]



Figure 9.3.3: Intersection II (1992, weatherproof steel, four identical conical sections, 4 meter high, 15.7 meters long, 5.4 cm thick) by Stephen Hill, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Elizabeth Catlett

Elizabeth Catlett (1915-2012) was born in Washington D.C. and lived there as a child. Her grandparents were freed slaves and often told Catlett stories about Africa and the hardships of slavery. She graduated from Howard University with outstanding grades; however, Howard was not her first choice. Her original admission into Carnegie Institute of Technology was overturned when the university discovered Catlett was black. Although she was always interested in art, the concept of a black woman as an artist was not acceptable, and Catlett majored in education. She admired the work of Grant Wood and decided to attend the University of Iowa's graduate program where Wood was a teacher. She was accepted into the university but was not allowed to reside in the dormitories and had to rent a room in town. Catlett earned a Master of Fine Arts at the university. She spent time in Mexico studying sculpture and was active in social politics. Because of Catlett's activism, she was barred from returning to the United States; instead, she became a citizen of Mexico.

Throughout her career, Catlett consistently worked making prints while shifting to her main art of sculptures. She used multiple types of material for her sculptures in various sizes and different themes of famous to ordinary people. Her major works were black women whom she depicts as strong and caring with their torsos slanted forward to demonstrate attitude. *Pensive Figure* (7.8.4) portrays a sculpture of an abstracted woman sitting thoughtfully, gazing into the distance. Viewers might feel they had to walk quietly while looking at the bronze statue, unwilling to interrupt the woman's thoughts. Her clothing style is unknown until the bottom half of the figure, and it appears she wears a dress based on the line above her crossed legs.



Figure 9.3.4: Pensive Figure (1968, bronze, 45.7 x 30.4 x 43.1 cm) by ali eminov, CC BY-NC 2.0

El Abrazo (The Embrace) (7.8.5) demonstrates Catlett's exceptional use of wood. The work is carved from a single piece of wood, and she used the grain of the mahogany to accentuate the entwined bodies. The pair's faces look outward at the viewer, not at each other. Their direct gaze lets the viewer share their humanity. Catlett stated, "I still work figuratively, trying to express emotion through abstract form, color, line, and space…Even in more abstract sculpture, I attempt to get a reaction, possibly by a strong upward gesture, or a close tight feeling between two figures."[3]



Figure 9.3.5: El Abrazo (The Embrace) (1978, carved mahogany, painted details, 66 x 35.5 x 26.5 cm) by Amaury Laporte, CC BY-NC 2.0

Magdalena Abakanowicz

Magdalena Abakanowicz (1930-2017) was born in Poland; her mother descended from previous Polish nobility. The family had fled an earlier Russian invasion of the Polish countryside, and they moved to the city. Abakanowicz was only nine when the Nazis invaded Poland. During the war and occupation years, the family lived outside of Warsaw and were part of the resistance. After the war, the Soviet Union controlled Poland, and the Soviets defined art as Socialist Realism, the only acceptable art for artists. Anything modern or style influenced by Western art was outlawed, and art was completely censored. Abakanowicz attended different art schools and was admitted to the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw in 1950-54. The laws of Socialist Realism forced strict rules for the students to follow, and realist portrayals of traditional 19th-century images became the only thing taught at the university. Abakanowicz believed the Academy was rigid and challenging to learn and said, "I liked to draw, seeking the form by placing lines, one next to the other. The professor would come with an eraser in his hand and rub out every unnecessary line on my drawing, leaving a thin, dry contour. I hated him for it."[4] Abakanowicz did take many textile design classes; the methods she learned later influenced her work.

When Abakanowicz first started working as an artist in Poland, the Soviet-controlled country was relatively poor, and artists had little access to materials. She gathered any pieces of materials she found and kept them stored under the bed for possible use. *Embryology* (7.8.6) was made from rough-hewn fabrics she stuffed. She created a series of different installations using fabric because she liked the concept of no tool between her hands and the material. Her hands were the energy creating the sculpture. The objects in this installation are strewn with no order creating a disturbing scene, appearing as bodies of some sort. Each element seems heavy, like a dead weight from afar. Closer inspection reveals fabric with seams and stuffing, soft to the touch. Because of the brutality of the war and the harshness of Soviet control, many wondered if the stacked figures were a sign of Auschwitz. The human figure was an essential part of Abakanowicz's work, whether overt or implied.



Figure 9.3.6: Embryology (1978-80, burlap, cotton gauze, hemp rope, nylon, sisal, variable dimensions) by FaceMePLS, CC BY 2.0

Throughout her sculptures, her work used different materials in a diversity of forms, as she always returned to the concept of the fragility of humans. *Space of Human Growth* (7.8.7) covers 2,012 square meters. The oversized concrete shapes are undefined, the meaning left to the viewer. Abakanowicz always abstracted her forms, living things, ambiguous and open to the viewer's interpretation. Installed in a park in Lithuania were the objects unopened blossoms, or parts of the human body or maybe even haystacks, open for viewer interpretation.



Figure 9.3.7: Space of Unknown Growth (1998, concrete forms, 6 forms – 330 x 420 cm, 4 forms – 250 x 320 cm, 2 forms – 170 x 220 cm, 10 forms – 130 x 160 cm) by twiga_swala, CC BY-SA 2.0

Bronze Crowd (7.8.8) is a set of bronze abstracted figures standing emotionless. Abakanowicz based her work on references to the turmoil of her past, of war and brutal Soviet occupation. She said, "It happened to me to live in times which were extraordinary by their various forms of collective hate and collective adulation. Marches and parades worshipped leaders, great and good, who soon became mass murderers. I was obsessed by the image of the crowd, manipulated like a brainless organism and acting like a brainless organism. I suspected that under the human skull, instincts and emotions overpower the intellect without us being aware of it."[5] The statues in this installation are devoid of any hint of feeling or thought, just the lineup of humans dutifully standing in a row. Even their clothing is wrapped tightly around their bodies, removing all freedom of movement as the leaders control them. The control of art education by the academy Abakanowicz attended is evident in her artwork as she consistently moves beyond the insistence of realism into the consistency of abstraction.



Figure 9.3.8: Bronze Crowd (1990, bronze) by Diorama Sky, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Ten Seated Figures (7.8.9) appear to be the same, all sitting in a row, legs down, backs straight. A closer look reveals the individuality of each one as the protective patina is applied differently, and the surfaces are wrinkled and textured. The figures are headless; perhaps they do not need brains to think when leaders rigidly control them.



Figure 9.3.9: Ten Seated Figures (2010, cast iron) by puffin11uk, CC0 1.0

Katsura Funakoshi

Katsura Funakoshi (1951-) is considered one of Japan's leading visual artists, currently living in Tokyo. His father was a sculptor, and Funakoshi learned at first from his father. He attended the Tokyo University of Art and Design for his Bachelor of Arts and the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music for a Master of Arts degree. Funakoshi became a serious carver in 1980 using camphor wood. Thematically, he combined Asian and Western features in the sculpture and mixed reality with fantasy to develop a certain spirituality. His trademark was to carve the hybrid figures from the waist up, each one different. Funakoshi used the wood grain as a visible carving strategy and left the marks from his carving tools. When he painted or polished the figure, Funakoshi generally left the crown or top of the head unpainted. He made the eyes luminescent, almost life-like, to engage the viewer. The materials he used for each sculpture were essential to him. Funakoshi stated, "I'm interested in human existence, a statement concerning humanity. The material I use-wood for sculpture, paper for the drawings, and charcoal or pencil-is important, it influences the result. I am seeking the perfect tension or moment between the material and the image."[6]

Am I Floating? (7.8.10) is made from camphor wood, her arms and torso painted with light and almost translucent turquoise. Her shoulders are pushed upward, giving more room on her chest for the pendulous breasts. The statue is not decorated or distorted with other images, making her relatively simple.



Figure 9.3.10: Am I Floating? (2011, painted camphor wood, marble, 103.5 x 29 x 32 cm) by Annie Guilloret, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

A Lunar Eclipse in Forest (7.8.11) followed the same format for the image; only the torso is distorted, her neck elongated. Made from camphor wood and painted in tones of sienna, the body is the lightest section. Her hands appear as appendages on the rounded wings, and she stands on four thin legs helping to balance her spherical body. In *Am I Floating?*, the figure looks straight out at the viewer, while the figure looks downward in this image.



Figure 9.3.11: A Lunar Eclipse in Forest (2007, painted camphor wood, marble, miscellaneous wood, 212 x 134 x 139 cm) by jdlasica, CC BY 2.0

Andy Goldsworthy

Born in England, Andy Goldsworthy (1956-) was a laborer on farms as a teenager. He graduated from the now University of Central Lancashire with a Bachelor of Arts and moved to Scotland, where he still resides. Goldsworthy is a sculptor and photographer who creates Land Art or Earth Art. He works with natural materials in their location, his art moving through creation, completion, and disintegration stages. Goldsworthy states, "I enjoy the freedom of just using my hands and 'found' tools – a sharp stone, the quill of a feather, thorns. I take the opportunities each day offers; if it is snowing, I work with snow, at leaf-fall it will be leaves; a blown-over tree becomes a source of twigs and branches. I stop at a place or pick up material because I feel there is something to be discovered. Here is where I can learn."[7] When Goldsworthy goes out into nature, he observes his surroundings to decide what he will create. Most of his work disappears, naturally decaying except for some of his stone walls. Even a wall does not remain the same; grasses grow in the cracks, insects make a nest or animals remove a stone. Most of his art is visible to the public through the photographs he records. Goldsworthy also takes photographs at different times of the day, revealing the interaction of light with the sculpture he made.

For the construction of *Sticks Framing a Lake* (7.8.12), Goldsworthy had to stand in the cold waters to build the structure. He gathered sticks and twigs from the surrounding areas. The dark sticks provided a perfect frame and contrast for the lake, altering the water's appearance. The placement of the sticks was difficult because they had to hold each other in place. Goldsworthy did not use any ties or other artificial material, only the sticks woven together. Although it appears the complete circle is sitting on top of the water, the bottom part of the structure is anchored in the mud of the lake. The circle reflects off the lake water presenting a complete image. If the light was in a different position, the reflection might look quite different.

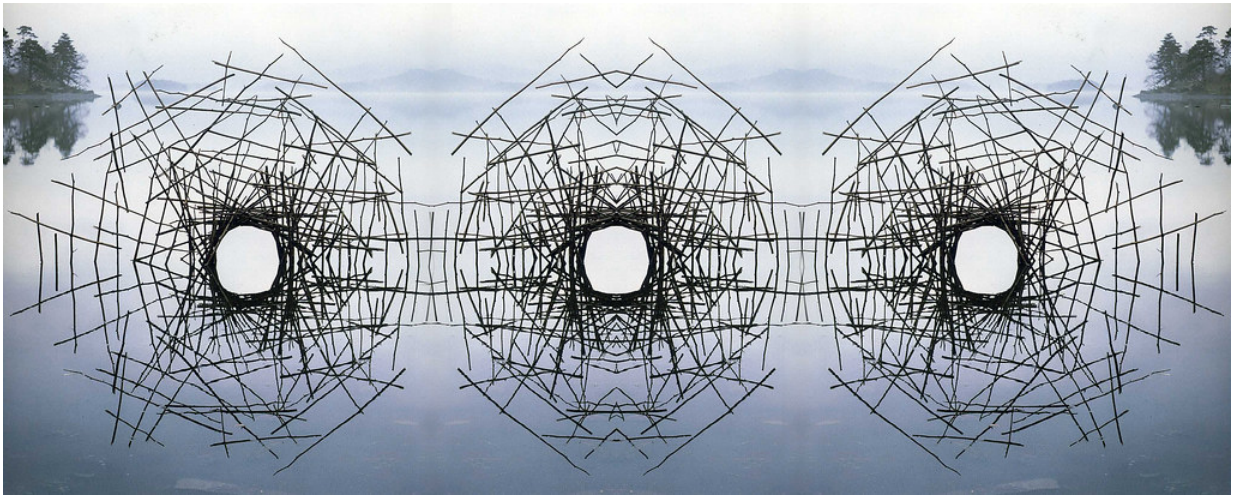


Figure 9.3.12: Sticks Framing a Lake (1986, found twigs) by iurikothe, CC BY 2.0

Growing up in Scotland, Goldsworthy spent a lot of time in his younger years replacing the ancient stone walls found in the countryside. The walls were always dry-stacked stones, and he frequently used stones in many of his different sculptures. One of his first major commissions was constructing the stone wall *Storm King Park* (7.8.13). Originally, Goldsworthy planned to build a 237.7 meters long wall through the woods using the British tradition of stone-stacked walls. However, it was logical to continue the wall down to the pond when he came to an end. After Goldsworthy reached the pond's edge, the wall was extended again, across the pond and uphill to the roadway for a total of 694.3 meters. Some of the stones he used were remnants of an old collapsed wall in the woods. To construct the wall, larger, chunky stones were placed for the foundation, and smaller, rounder stones were built up the middle of the wall. Flat stones were used for the cap of the top layer. The team working on the wall had to chip small parts of the stone to ensure a tight fit. Goldsworthy believed the stone walls of different places connected the past to the present and the region's history.



Figure 9.3.13: Storm King (1997-98, found stone) by _ElijahPorter, CC BY-ND 2.0

Burnt Patch (7.8.14) is constructed from pine branches Goldsworthy had trucked from the trees of the Sierra Nevada. He burned some of the sticks to use in the center portion of the sculpture. The work was installed on a museum floor, unusual for Goldsworthy, who generally builds his work in the natural surroundings of a site. Each stick was installed in a precise pattern of a single layer; the charred sections in the center appeared as a hole.



Figure 9.3.14: Burnt Patch (1995, pine sticks from Sierra Mountains) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

The *Cairn* (7.8.15) was a recurring theme Goldsworthy used for sculptures, incorporating stone, branches, or even ice for different installations. Sometimes the cairn was more permanent, and others lasted only a short time. The stone cairn appears solid and long-lasting; however, even stone objects can collapse over time. Each stone in the cairn was hand cut to fit in place, most of the selected stones flat in appearance. For this cairn sculpture, Goldsworthy imported the stone from a local quarry.



Figure 9.3.15: Cairn (1997, found stone) CC BY-SA 3.0

Louise Bourgeois

Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010) was born in Paris, France. Her parents originally had a gallery selling antique tapestries. When Bourgeois was still small, her parent started repairing antique rugs, filling in tattered areas. Bourgeois received a good education in design and color. In 1930, she went to the Sorbonne to major in mathematics. However, when her mother died while Bourgeois was in school, Bourgeois switched to study art. After graduating from Sorbonne, she also studied art at some Academies. When she married, they moved to New York City. In the 1940s, she began to make sculptures from wood and other materials like plaster and latex. During the 1950s and 1960s, she was severely depressed and spent significant time in psychoanalysis. By the 1970s and 1980s, she started working in bronze and making large-scale works.

Maman (7.8.16) was one of her most famous sculptures, a larger-than-life creature and a scary image in anyone's dream. The bronze spider holds her eggs in part of her body; the massively tall spider is balanced on excessively long spindly legs. The sculpture is high above the platform, and viewers can walk through the legs and look up at the meshed sac holding the marble eggs.



Figure 9.3.16: Maman (1999, bronze and steel, 895 x 980 x 1160 cm) by dalbera, CC BY 2.0

Bourgeois made multiple spider sculptures in different sizes, and *The Nest* (7.8.17) created five different spiders, all standing under each other. Each spider has its distinctive body and long knobby legs. Bourgeois suffered emotional abuse from her father as a child, and her mother became her primary support. Bourgeois looked at the spider as a patient, methodical and valuable creature, reminiscent of her mother.



Figure 9.3.17: The Nest (1994, steel, 256.5 x 480 x 401.3 cm) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

Eyes (7.8.18) is in a sculpture park in Oslo, Norway. The giant granite eyeballs sit by the water, the overly small pupils looking at the view. Some viewers see the sculptures as huge eyes while others infer them as two breasts. Bourgeois placed the balls on a small hill open for interpretation by viewers; are they accepted as eyes, or do they reflect the masculine perception of the female body.

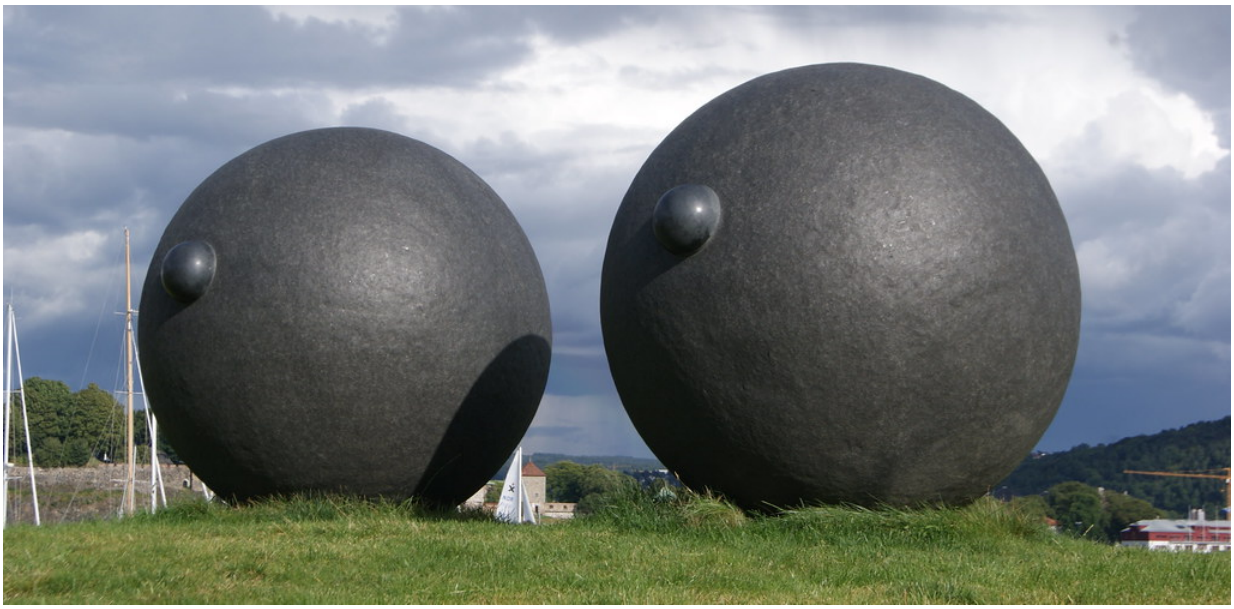


Figure 9.3.18: Eyes (1995, granite, 160 cm diameter) by tgrauros, CC BY-SA 2.0

Eye Benches IV (7.8.19) is installed in a park in New Orleans. The bronze benches have actual lights for the center of the eyes. Hurricane Katrina destroyed the square where the benches were installed, and when it was rebuilt, the benches were installed. Bourgeois made several different styles of benches from eyes, some in bronze and others granite. The various eye benches sit in their location, watching people walk by, viewers looking back at the eyes.



Figure 9.3.19: Eye Benches IV (2001, bronze, 137.1 x 271.7 x 165.1 cm) by Derek Bridges, CC BY 2.0

George Segal

George Segal (1924-2000) was born in New York after his parents immigrated from Eastern Europe. Segal's parents owned a chicken farm in New Jersey. He graduated from New York University planning to teach school. After he married, Segal and his wife also bought a chicken farm he ran. On the farm, he held picnics and invited friends from the university and the art world for performances while he taught art and English at a high school and Rutgers University. Segal started as a painter, and in 1961, he was given a box of plaster bandages to evaluate as an art medium. Segal took them home and made a cast of his own body, starting his career as a sculptor. Segal became a pioneer using the plaster-impregnated strips and created the process for using the material. He wrapped different parts of a model with the bandages until he had completed a whole body. After Segal assembled the sections, he added more plaster to the forms. At first, he left the sculptures in the original white color of the plaster bandages, and in a few years, began to paint them bright colors. Eventually, Segal cast the statues in bronze, sometimes adding a white patina to resemble the original form.

The *Holocaust Memorial* (7.8.20) was installed in San Francisco as a memorial to those who lost their lives during World War II in the concentration camps. Made of bronze and painted white, Segal constructed different symbolic meanings into the sculpture. The white, ghostly appearing bodies lie in piles, like the massive stacks of discarded bodies found in the concentration camps. One woman held an apple-like Eve in the bible, and another person resembled Jesus, connecting Jewish and Christian beliefs. Segal had his friends pose for the different people, so they did not appear emaciated as the corpses in the camps. The single person holding on to the wire fence is modeled after a photograph by Margaret Bourke-White of the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp. During the actual time of the camps, the wire was electrified to prevent escapes.



Figure 9.3.20: Holocaust Memorial (1984, bronze, paint, wire) by @bastique, CC BY-SA 2.0

Gay Liberation (7.8.21) is part of the Stonewall National Monument in New York, and a second casting is installed at Stanford University in California. The four figures are made of bronze with a white patina, and two women are sitting on the bench while the two men are standing. The images of two gay men and two lesbians relaxing in a public place would have provoked controversy and derogatory reactions. Segal said of the finished sculpture, "it concentrates on tenderness, gentleness, and sensitivity as expressed in gesture…and makes the delicate point that gay people are as feeling as anyone else."[8]

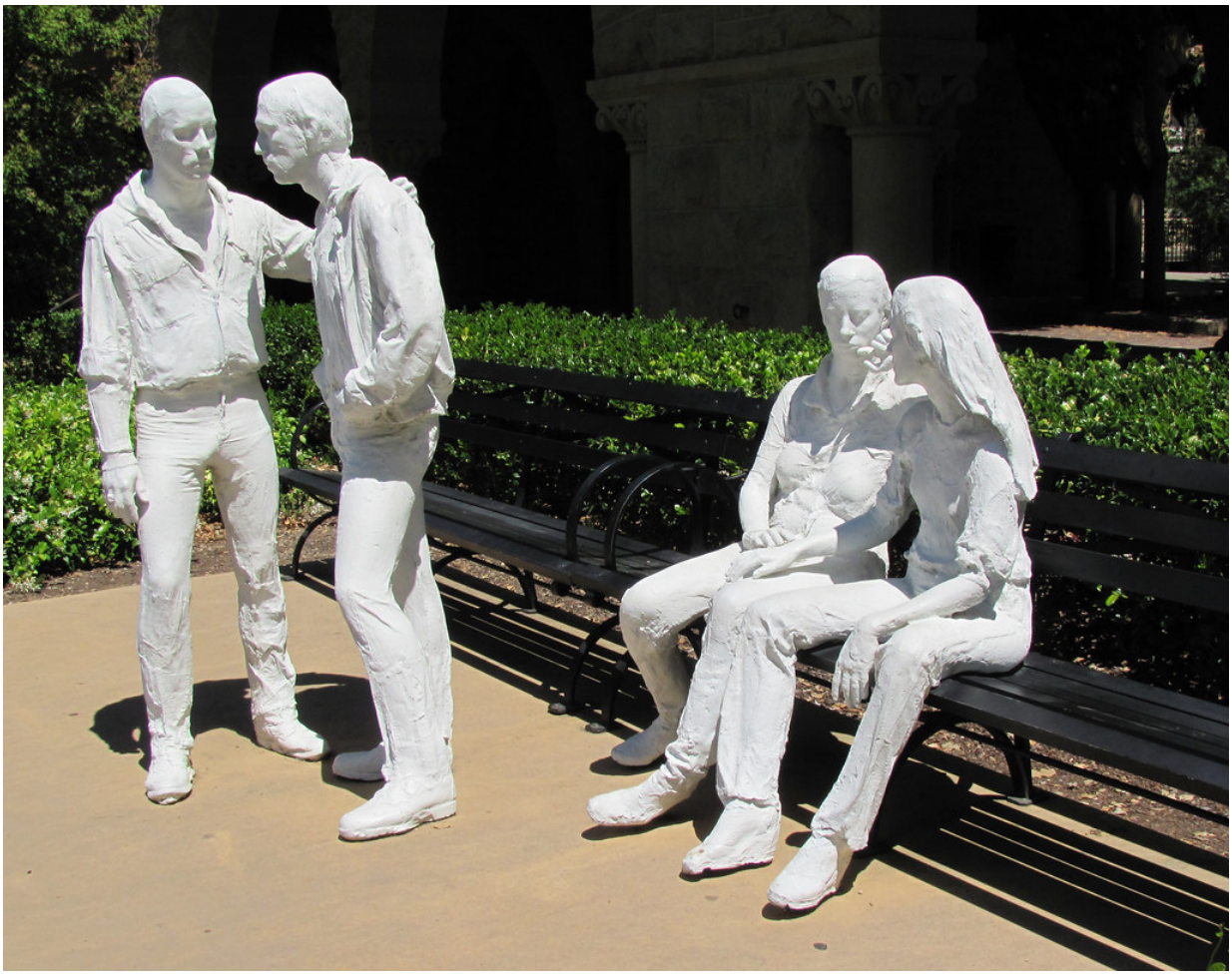


Figure 9.3.21: Gay Liberation (1992, figures - bronze (white lacquer), bench – steel (black paint), group, 1.8 x 4.8 x 2.2 meters) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

The figures in *Depression Breadline* (7.8.22) stand slump-shouldered in nondescript clothing against the dark brick wall. The sculpture, in monotone colors, was a reflection of the alienation people felt during the depression. During the depression in the 1930s, one of every four workers was unemployed, and hunger and joblessness were common. People waited in long lines for food at soup kitchens, schools, or churches. The men in the sculpture are like the reality of the time, each person staring at the back of the other, no one engaged in conversation, each person isolated. Yet, they were all experiencing the same hunger issues, loss of jobs, and money. Segal dressed his models in the appropriate clothing and then wrapped the plaster bandages he dipped in the water around the model to make the sculpture. The person had to stand in place until the cast dried. The molds captured the folds, seams, buttons, and other clothing details. The molds became Segal's basis for using bronze to create permanent life-like images.



Figure 9.3.22: Depression Breadline (1991, plaster, wood, metal, acrylic, 274.3 x 375.9 x 91.44) by pontla, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Hock e aye vi Edgar Heap of Birds

Hock e aye vi Edgar Heap of Birds (Born 1954-) is a Cheyenne and Arapaho native artist born in Wichita, Kansas. Heap of Birds holds a *Bachelor of Fine Arts* from the University of Kansas and a Master of Fine Arts from (Temple University. He works in various media from drawing, painting, printmaking, glassmaking, but is known for his public installations and his powerful use of words. Heap of Birds grew up in Oklahoma and spent hours exploring the land, discovering the sharp stones. He thought about these stones as weapons, perhaps utilized by the Indigenous population 1000 years ago. The stones inspired his activism, fighting against racial injustice and Native American rights – not with sharp stones – but with art as his weapon.



Figure 9.3.23: Minnesota (1980s, enamel on aluminum) by Lorie Shaull, CC BY-SA 2.0

In the 1980s, Heap of Birds started to make commercial-looking signs, placed on land not directly Cheyenne or Arapaho to recognize local tribes. The text on the sign *Minnesota* (7.8.23) stated in simple text, "ATOSENNIM TODAY YOUR HOST IS CLOUD MAN VILLAGE" the backward letters of Minnesota make the viewer decode the message and meaning. Basic shapes and colors evoke strong emotions conveyed through a few words. The present tense "today" underscores the native tribal population still here today. Heap of Birds created signs installed all over the country that defined the current name of the state and the Native American tribe originally inhabiting the area and, in many places, still there.

The sign *Fighting Illini* (7.8.24) reads, "INILLI GNITHGIF TODAY YOUR HOST IS POTAWATOMI" located in Illinois where the Potawatomi lived.



Figure 9.3.24: Fighting Illini (1990 enamel on aluminum) by jeffkolar, CC BY-SA 2.0

The installation, *Building Minnesota* (no pictures available) on the Minnesota River, came from an inspiration based on the gifts of the local native community in the Minneapolis area. He wanted to give back in a meaningful way. The site-specific work along the Minnesota River honors the 40 Dakota warriors hung in the United States' largest government-sanctioned death. Although 303 Dakota people received a death sentence after the end of the wars and forced relocation, only thirty-eight were ordered hung by Abraham Lincoln and two by Andrew Johnson. Heap of Birds created the installation with 40 signs. On the commercial-looking signs is text, which comes from letters written by Abraham Lincoln, each native warrior's name is spelled phonetically, for example, Ma-ka'tal-na'-zin (One Who Stands on the Earth). The text also states, "death by hanging on the order of Abraham Lincoln." This site became a place to honor those killed. Tribal citizens visited the site and left different items, sweat lodge bundles, and feathers. The Dakota Wars, which led to these deaths, was over the land; the United States government wanted more land to grow wheat and fought the Dakota tribe to force them off the land. The artwork educates people who don't know about the hangings or want to face this shameful part of history.

In 2005, Heap of Birds installed *Wheel* (7.8.25), a complex work of art with ten vertical forms in the shape of a fork. They represent abstract versions of fork trees used to build ceremonial lodges. The circle form is based on the Big Horn Medicine Wheel, a sacred site in northern Wyoming, and the circular shape of a traditional Plains Indian Sun Dance lodge. These lodges were made

with 12 fork trees, and the forks became powerful structural devices to hold up a structure. The circular format also reflects the Medicine circle. The sculpture also underscores the astronomical science used by indigenous tribes. The artist only used ten vertical trees because he didn't want to construct a religious idol, only create art. Heap of Birds explained, "I was sensitive, very worried about overreaching my knowledge and divulging too much of it, to make a ceremonial instrument, so I removed two trees, so it doesn't function like the medicine wheel does."[9]



Figure 9.3.25: Wheel (2005, steel, enamel, 15.2 meters in diameter) by designsbykari, CC BY 2.0

The fork at the top (7.8.26) is usually where the lodge rafters are positioned in a ceremonial lodge. Without rafters, Heap of Birds wanted visitors, especially natives, would finish it in their imagination. The circle of bright red trees beckons visitors to interact with them. When the viewer reads the text, the artist's message about how the government massacred or reneged on treaties is understood. The artist wanted to display and expand the history and stories of Native Americans with more challenging dynamics. For example, the text on one tree states, "1864 Sand Creek Massacre," or "1868 Washita River Massacre". Heap of Birds family emblem, the Magpies, was based on his great-great-grandfather Many Magpies, who was imprisoned in the Fort Marion Prison. The image of Magpies covers one of the trees. Through text and symbolic imagery, Heap of Birds makes sure to involve the different types of viewers in seeing, reading, and understanding the artist's powerful message.



Figure 9.3.26: Wheels closeup, by yosoynuts, CC BY-ND 2.0

Viola Frey

Viola Frey (1933-2004) was born in California and received her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the California College of Arts and Crafts. Other students included Richard Diebenkorn, Manuel Neri, ad Nathan Oliveira, all active in the Bay Area Figurative movement. Frey went to New York to study at the Clay Art Center, where artists can investigate using ceramics beyond the usual constraints. She returned to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1960 and became one of the most respected ceramic artists. Her ceramics were based on enormous figures made from clay and painted bright colors. Some of the figures were almost 3.5 meters high, their immensity requiring her to create the entire sculpture starting at ground level and building up the figure. After the details were completed, the figure was cut apart to be fired and then reassembled like a jigsaw puzzle. Frey frequently portrayed the men in suits and ties and her female figures either nude or in patterned 1950s styled dresses. Although her specialty was immense ceramic figures, Frey also created paintings, drawings, photography, and work in glass. Her favorite art forms were miniature figurines she collected at flea markets. Frey took many of the smaller pieces and created assemblages of the parts. From the assembled components, she made molds to cast her sculptures made from amalgamated pieces,

Man Kicking the World (7.8.27) is dressed in a conventional suit of blues. Frey used red on his tie and face to dominate the otherwise bland person. He is looking at the world with his foot, ready to push the oversized world, only sensing some hesitancy about what might happen. She generally had men wear blue suits, portraying them as respectable and a symbol of power. The men were often seated or perhaps falling to demonstrate their vulnerabilities.



Figure 9.3.27: Man Kicking World II (2002, Glazed ceramic, 317.5 x 226 x 360.6 cm) by Donald Lee Pardue, CC BY 2.0

As seen in Homage, Frey did a small number of nude men and depicted them as vulnerable figures (7.8.28). She started the series in the 1980s when the Aids epidemic was rampant, and her assistant lost his life to Aids. Frey commented on her nude males, "I think I saw them as figures of vulnerability. How vulnerable people really are. Especially the men, who were on such a crest in the sixties. Come crashing down to all of this. It doesn't seem quite right."[10] Frey also treated the surface differently, the body covered in gashing white and orange intersected by yellows and blues. Her unusual use of color demonstrated her deep feelings about the subject.



Figure 9.3.28: Homage (1985-87, glazed ceramic, 165.1 x 218.4 x 114.3 cm) by michaelz1, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Woman with Elbow on Raised Knee (7.8.29) is sitting in a relaxed position of self-assuredness. Frey always portrayed women as in control and alert, aware of their surroundings. She used blue to define the shadows as well as connections. The woman is well-groomed, her red nail polish and lipstick in place, her hair carefully combed even though she has no clothes. Regardless of how large or positioned they were, Frey also maintained the look and feel of averageness in both men and women.



Figure 9.3.29: Woman with Elbow on Raised Knee (1994, glazed ceramic, paint, 220.9 x 129.5 x 160 cm) by Thomas Hawk, CC BY-NC 2.0

Liliane Lijn's

Liliane Lijn's (1939-) mother came to New York City from Belgium, and Lijn was born four months later. They were European Jews who were escaping the beginning of the wars. When she was fourteen and Europe recovered from the war, the family moved to Switzerland. Lijn studied archaeology and art history in Paris, hanging out in cafes and discussing poetry when she started to draw. She was always interested in different materials and experimented with plastics and how it reflected light or moved. Her first idea was the Poem Machine, where she combined her love of poetry and experimental sculptures. The words in the sculpture (7.8.30) spin, blurring, and vibrating. Lijn believed the power of words was diminished, and she wanted to change the visual expression of poetry into sound. She wanted people to see sound. While she was in Paris, Lijn also noted the lack of women artists and started making forms resembling the power of females. Much of her early work was based on kinetic art, and she wanted to do more than make something move as she was very interested in the combination of art and science.

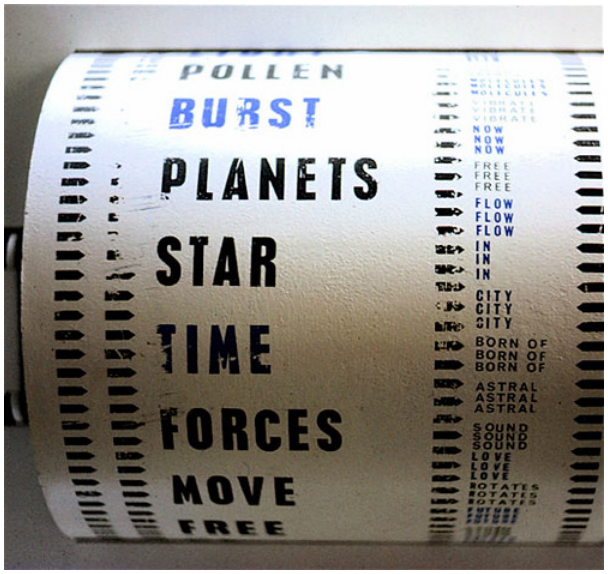


Figure 9.3.30: Poem Machines (1965) by dr vaxon, CC BY 2.0

Armoured Head (7.8.31) is a small sculpture Lijn made with wire mesh formed to surround a sphere. The wire becomes looser as it progresses upward, leaving a large opening at the top. In the center, the sphere is zinc blown glass with vertical lines. She made a series of different glass heads using the blow torch to create wounds on the head. Blowing glass was natural for Lijn as she used the scientific tools on her sculptures to display pain and suffering. Part of her investigation of glass was how light and the color spectrum reflected and changed the glass.



Figure 9.3.31: Amoured Head (1990, zinc blown glass and metal, 440 x 385 x 385 cm) by Loz Flowers, CC BY-SA 2.0

Extrapolation (7.8.32) was a sculpture Lijn created based on the concepts of a book and the layers of pages in a book, a continuation of her interest in words. The sculpture's layers of plates were held apart by spaces to allow light to flow through and a feeling of openness.



Figure 9.3.32: Extrapolation (1982, stainless steel, 427 x 396.5 x 305 cm) by mira66, CC BY 2.0

When the light shines on the panels (7.8.33), they reflect the sky, appearing as one piece.



Figure 9.3.33: Extrapolation closeup, by Leo Reynolds, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Christo Vladimirov Javacheff and Jeanne-Claude Denat de Guillebon

Christo Vladimirov Javacheff (1935–2020) and Jeanne-Claude Denat de Guillebon (1935-2009) became well-known as Christo and Jeanne-Claude, many people never knowing the artists' last names. Christo, born in Bulgaria, and Jeanne-Claude, born in Morocco. Both were born on June 13, 1935, and they met and married in Paris in the 1950s. Christo was interested in art in Bulgaria as a child, his education interrupted by World War II. After the war, Bulgaria was part of the Soviet umbrella and totalitarian rule, which suppressed and concepts of Western art. Christo did attend Sofia Academy of Fine Arts, finding the education very limited and dull. He was forced to paint propaganda and serve in the military during the summer. Christo decided to escape and stowed away on a railcar to Vienna, where he surrendered his passport to register as a stateless person and become eligible for political asylum. By 1958, he used his connections to go to Paris, where he met Jeanne-Claude.

Jeanne-Claude's father was a French army officer stationed in Morocco, where she was born. Her mother divorced shortly afterward and married three more times. Jeanne-Claude graduated from the University of Tunis, her degree in Latin and philosophy when she returned to Paris. She met Christo when he was painting a portrait of her mother, who was married to a French army general. Jeanne-Claude was engaged to another man when she became pregnant by Christo. She married the other man, left him on the honeymoon, and returned to Christo, their son born in 1960.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude created grand projects, always temporary and requiring support and approval from hundreds of people, including those who owned the land, the elected officials in every community, environmental laws and officials, engineers and designers, court systems, and the residents. They began by identifying their projects with drawings, photographs, material investigations, and how we would do this. The hardest part was approval for the seemingly impossible, grand-scale projects. The artists paid for all the expenses of the massive and large projects. They supported the project with sales of preparatory drawings, scale models, lithographs, and prints from earlier works. They did not take money from sponsors or community groups. Christo told the New York Times, "For me esthetics is everything involved in the process – the workers, the politics, the negotiations, the construction difficulty, the dealings with hundreds of people. The whole process becomes an esthetic – that's what I'm interested in, discovering the process. I put myself in dialogue with other people."[11]

Running Fence (7.8.34) was installed near Highway 101, north of San Francisco. The fence ran along on private property over the rolling hills until it met the Pacific Ocean, almost forty kilometers. The fence was one of the early massive projects Christo and Jeanne-Claude created. The preparation took forty-two months working with ranchers, holding eighteen public hearings, writing a 450-page Environmental Impact Report, and three sessions at the Superior Courts of California.[12] *Running Fence* required 200,000 square meters of nylon fabric with 2,050 steel poles holding the cables. The poles were driven into the ground without any concrete as all the parts were made to be removed without any remains from the fence construction. Because the fence crossed roads and a town, they left passageways for cars, cattle, and wildlife. *Running Fence* was installed and removed fourteen days later; the artwork was installed for two weeks.



Figure 9.3.34: *Running Fence* (1985, polyamide fabric, rope, steel chains) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

The Pont Neuf Wrapped (7.8.35) is a significant bridge in Paris, France; they wrapped in 1985, a complicated undertaking without obstructing the river traffic. The bridge was enclosed with golden, woven polyamide fabric. The fabric-covered all the bridge's parts, the sidewalks, streetlamps, and part of the embankment. Pedestrians walked on the fabric to cross the bridge. The fabric was held in place with thirteen kilometers of rope and twelve tons of steel chains, including a meter of chain underwater. The bridge was transformed, and different bridge details, usually not noticed, were suddenly interesting parts. The artwork was in place for fourteen days.

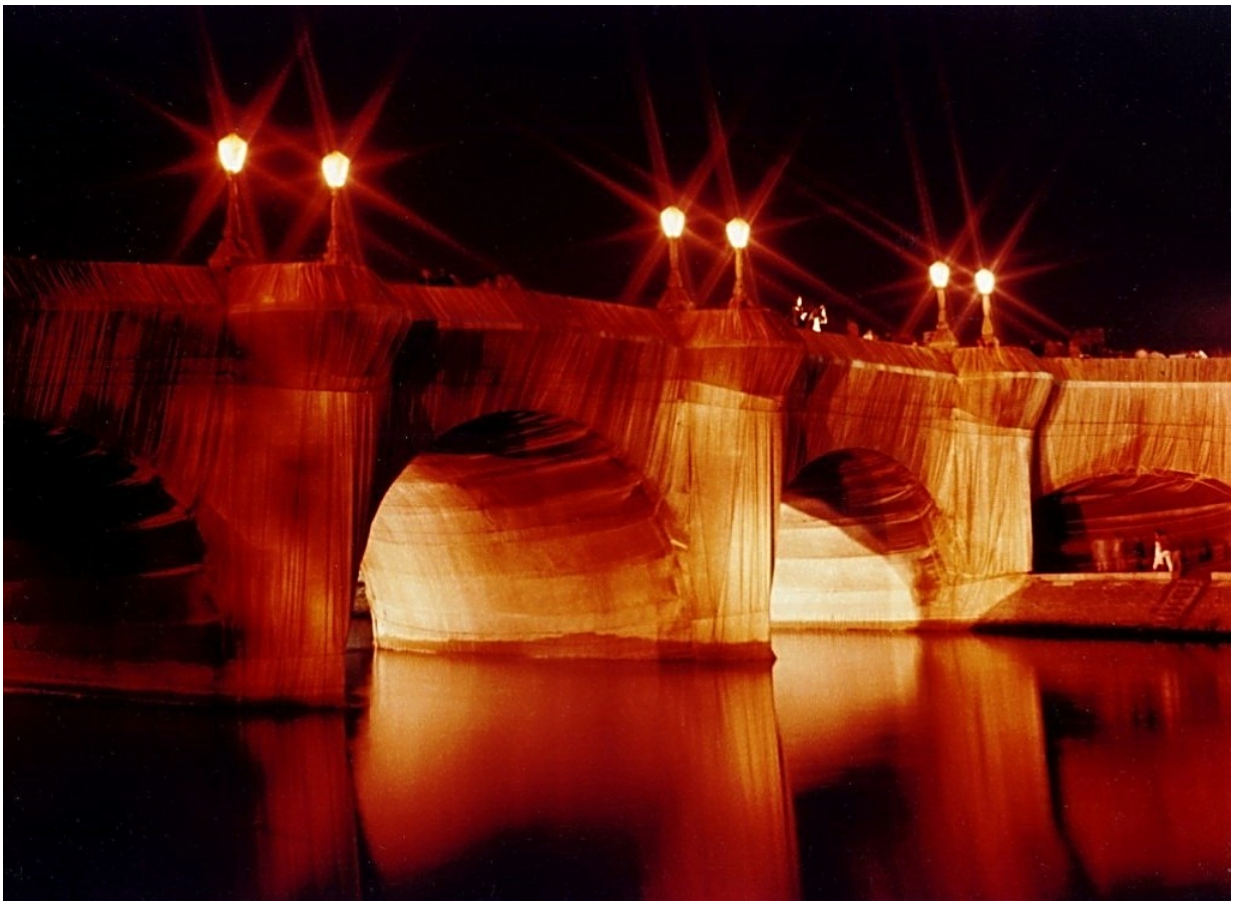


Figure 9.3.35: *The* Pont Neuf Wrapped (1985, polyamide fabric, rope, steel chains) CC BY 2.5

In 1991, as the sun rose in Japan and California, workers opened 3,100 umbrellas simultaneously. The works were designed to reflect the differences between the ways of life and land use. The valley in Japan was nineteen kilometers, and the valley in California was twenty-nine kilometers long. The umbrellas were made from fabric with an aluminum frame on steel bases. 1,340 blue umbrellas (7.8.36) were installed in Japan, and 1,760 yellow umbrellas (7.8.37) were mounted in California. The umbrellas were colored and positioned to reflect the use and availability of land in each space. In Japan, space is limited, and the umbrellas were grouped closely along with the rice fields. The blue of the umbrellas reflects the plentiful water of the region. The umbrellas were spaced far apart in California, moving along the hillsides and valleys of abundant uncultivated land. Blond grasses covered the hills, an arid landscape, the yellow color of the umbrellas blending into the hills. In both locations, the umbrellas were visible for eighteen days, and the public could drive by or walk and sit under the shade of the umbrella.



Figure 9.3.36: The Umbrellas-Japan (1991, fabric, steel, aluminum, wood) CC BY-SA 3.0



Figure 9.3.37: The Umbrellas-USA (1991, fabric, steel, aluminum, wood) by Jon Delorey, CC BY-NC 2.0

In a park in Switzerland, one hundred seventy-eight trees were wrapped with 55,000 square meters of polyester fabric and tied with 23 kilometers of rope. The *Wrapped Trees* (7.8.38) project took seven days in 1998. The trees were different heights varying from two to twenty-five meters. The installation was in place for two weeks, and when the wrapping was removed, all the material was recycled. The material was translucent, and the branches and leaves were visible through the fabric, changing the views as the wind moved the fabric into different positions. The trees were scattered throughout the park and along the creek.



Figure 9.3.38: Wrapped Trees (1997-98, polyester fabric, rope, 55,000 square meters) by juliensart, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



Figure 9.3.38: Wrapped Trees base, by juliensart, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The Gates (7.8.39) was an installation in Central Park, New York City. Along the pathways and sidewalks, they installed 7,503 fabric panels, each 4.87 meters high, 2.1 meters off the ground, and 1.68 to 5.48 meters wide on twenty-five different walkways. [13] The saffron-colored panels were suspended from the gate, the bright color visible from far away through the leafless trees. The poles were attached to paved surfaces, so they did not disturb the ground. The rectangular gates matched the shapes of the buildings. However, the gates moved along the serpentine walkways through the tree branches, a meeting of the organic forms mixed with static geometry. The warm saffron-colored gates almost appeared as golden meandering through the trees.



Figure 9.3.40: The Gates (2005) CC BY-SA 3.0



Figure 9.3.41: The Gates (2005) by aleph78, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

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9.3.1: Nam June Paik, Electronic Superhighway- Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii

by TINA RIVERS RYAN



Figure 9.3.1.1: Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, 1995, fifty-one channel video installation (including one closed-circuit television feed), custom electronics, neon lighting, steel and wood; color, sound, approx. 15 x 40 x 4′ (Smithsonian American Art Museum) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

Getting on the “Electronic Super Highway”

In 1974, artist Nam June Paik submitted a report to the Art Program of the Rockefeller Foundation, one of the first organizations to support artists working with new media, including television and video. Entitled “Media Planning for the Post Industrial Society—The 21st Century is now only 26 years away,” the report argued that media technologies would become increasingly prevalent in American society, and should be used to address pressing social problems, such as racial segregation, the modernization of the economy, and environmental pollution. Presciently, Paik’s report forecasted the emergence of what he called a “broadband communication network”—or “electronic super highway”—comprising not only television and video, but also “audio cassettes, telex, data pooling, continental satellites, micro-fiches, private microwaves and eventually, fiber optics on laser frequencies.” By the 1990s, Paik’s concept of an information “superhighway” had become associated with a new “world wide web” of electronic communication then emerging—just as he had predicted.

From Music to Fluxus

Paik was well-positioned to understand how media technologies were evolving: in the 1960s he was one of the very first people to use televisual technologies as an artistic medium, earning him the title of “father” of video art. Born in Seoul in 1932, Paik studied composition while attending college in Tokyo; he eventually travelled to Germany, where he hoped to encounter the leading composers of the day. He met John Cage in 1958, and soon became involved with the avant-garde Fluxus group, led by Cage’s student George Maciunas. Explain Fluxus.

Following the example of Cage’s oeuvre, many of Paik’s Fluxus works undermined accepted notions of musical composition or performance. This same irreverent spirit informed his use of television, to which he turned his attention in 1963 in his first one-man gallery show, “Exposition of Music—Electronic Television,” at the Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal, Germany. Here, Paik became the first artist to exhibit what would later become known as “video art” by scattering television sets across the floor of a room, thereby shifting our attention from the content on the screens to the sculptural forms of the sets.

The father of video art



Figure 9.3.1.2: Nam June Paik, *Magnet TV*, 1965, modified black-and-white television set and magnet (Smithsonian American Art Museum) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

Paik moved to New York in 1964, where he came into contact with the downtown art scene. In 1965, he began collaborating with cellist Charlotte Moorman, who would wear and perform Paik's TV sculptures for many years; he also had a one-man show at the 57th Street Galeria Bonino, in which he exhibited modified or "prepared" television sets that upset the traditional TV-watching experience. One example is *Magnet TV*, in which an industrial magnet is placed on top of the TV set, distorting the broadcast image into abstract patterns of light.

According to an oft-cited story, on October 4th of that same year, Paik purchased the first commercially-available portable video system in America, the Sony Portapak, and immediately used it to record the arrival of Pope Paul VI at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Later that night, Paik showed the tape at the Café au Go Go in Greenwich Village, ushering in a new mode of video art based not on the subversion or distortion of television broadcasts, but on the possibilities of videotape. The evolution of these tendencies into a new movement was announced by a 1969 group show, "TV as a Creative Medium." Held at the Howard Wise Gallery in New York, the show included one of Paik's interactive TVs, and also premiered another one of his collaborations with Moorman.

TV as a Creative Medium

For Paik and other early adopters of video, this new artistic medium was well-suited to the speed of our increasingly electronic modern lives. It allowed artists to create moving images more quickly than recording on film (which required time for negatives to be developed), and unlike film, video could be edited in "real-time," using devices that altered the video's electronic signals. (Ever the pioneer, Paik created his own video synthesizer with engineer Shuya Abe in 1969.) Furthermore, because the image recorded by the video camera could be transmitted to and viewed almost instantaneously on a monitor, people could see themselves "live" on a TV screen, and even interact with their own TV image, in a process known as "feedback." In the years to come, the participatory nature of TV would be redefined by two-way cable networks, while the advent of global satellite broadcasts made TV a medium of instant global communication.



Figure 9.3.1.3: Nam June Paik, *TV Garden*, 1974 (image shows 2000 version), video installation with color television sets and live plants (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

As television continued to evolve from the late 1960s onward, Paik explored ways to disrupt it from both inside and outside of the institutional frameworks of galleries, museums, and emerging experimental TV labs. His major works from this period include *TV Garden* (1974), a sculptural installation of TV sets scattered among live plants in a museum (image above), and *Good Morning, Mr. Orwell* (1984), a broadcast program that coordinated live feeds from around the world via satellite. In these and other projects, Paik's goal was to reflect upon how we interact with technology, and to imagine new ways of doing so. The many retrospectives of his work in recent decades, including one organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum in 2012, speak to the increasing relevance of his ideas for contemporary art.

The nation electric



Figure 9.3.1.4: Nam June Paik, *V-yramid* (detail), 1982, video installation, color, sound, with forty television sets (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York) (photo: **Mark B. Schlemmer**, CC BY 2.0) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

By the 1980s, Paik was building enormous, free-standing structures comprising dozens or even hundreds of TV screens, often organized into iconic shapes, as in the giant pyramid of *V-yramid* (1982). For the German Pavilion at the 1993 Venice Biennale, Paik produced a series of works about the relationship between Eastern and Western cultures, framed through the lens of Marco Polo; along with Hans Haacke, another artist representing Germany, Paik was awarded the prestigious Golden Lion. One of the works, *Electronic Superhighway*, was a towering bank of TVs that simultaneously screened multiple video clips (including one of John Cage) from a wide variety of sources. Two years later, Paik revisited this work in *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, placing over 300 TV screens into the overall formation of a map of the United States outlined in colored neon lights (see image at the top of the page and the detail below). Roughly forty feet long and fifteen feet high, the work is a monumental record of the physical and also cultural contours of America: within each state, the screens display video clips that resonate with that state's unique popular mythology. For example, Iowa (where each presidential election cycle begins) plays old news footage of various candidates, while Kansas presents the *Wizard of Oz*.



Figure 9.3.1.5: Detail, Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, 1995, fifty-one channel video installation (including one closed-circuit television feed), custom electronics, neon lighting, steel and wood; color, sound, approx. 15 x 40 x 4′ (Smithsonian American Art Museum) (© Nam June Paik Estate)

The states are firmly defined, but also linked, by the network of neon lights, which echoes the network of interstate "superhighways" that economically and culturally unified the continental U.S. in the 1950s. However, whereas the highways facilitated the transportation of people and goods from coast to coast, the neon lights suggest that what unifies us now is not so much transportation, but electronic communication. Thanks to the screens of televisions and of the home computers that became popular in the 1990s, as well as the cables of the internet (which transmit information as light), most of us can access the same information at anytime and from any place. *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii*, which has been housed at the Smithsonian American Art Museum since 2002, has therefore become an icon of America in the information age.

While Paik's work is generally described as celebrating the fact that the "electronic superhighway" allows us to communicate with and understand each other across traditional boundaries, this particular work also can be read as posing some difficult questions about how that technology is impacting culture. For example, the physical scale of the work and number of simultaneous clips makes it difficult to absorb any details, resulting in what we now call "information overload," and the visual tension between the static brightness of the neons and the dynamic brightness of the screens points to a similar tension between national and local frames of reference.

Additional resources:

Nam June Paik, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Nam June Paik, bio and collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Nam June Paik, *TV Garden* at the Guggenheim

Nam June Paik from the National Endowment for the Arts

Nam June Paik archive at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Nam June Paik from the Asia Society

Melissa Chiu and Michelle Yun, eds., *Nam June Paik: Becoming Robot* (New York: Asia Society Museum, 2014).

John G. Hanhardt and Ken Hakuta, *Nam June Paik: Global Visionary* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian American Art Museum, 2012).

John G. Hanhardt and Jon Ippolito, *The Worlds of Nam June Paik* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2000).

This page titled 9.3.1: Nam June Paik, Electronic Superhighway- Continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii is shared under a CC BY 4.0 license and was authored, remixed, and/or curated by Tina Rivers Ryan, in Smarthistory, September 7, 2018, accessed December 4, 2020, https://smarthistory.org/nam-june-paik-electronic-superhighway-continental-u-s-alaska-hawaii-2/..

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9.4: Installation and Sculpture

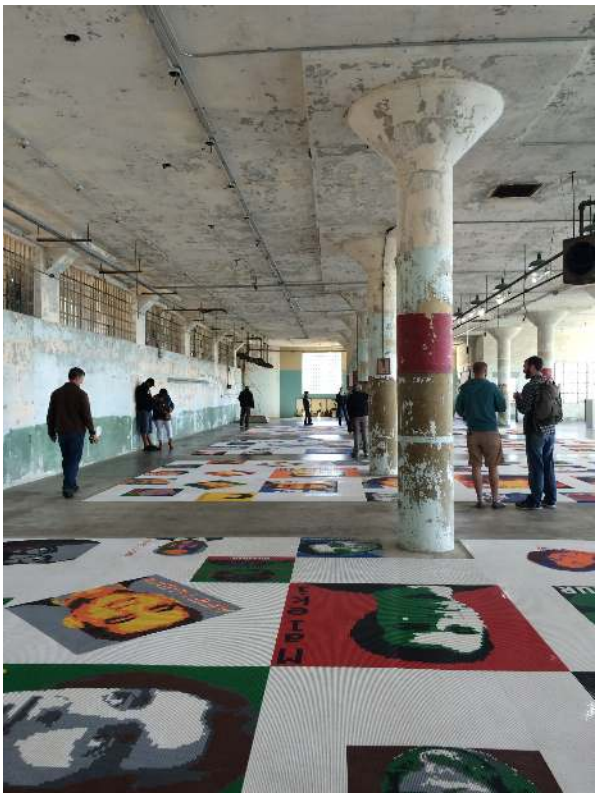
With the globalization of art and artists, public art has broadened, no longer a painting on the wall or the statue in the public square. Art installations and sculptures include experimental ideas, oversized installations covering a room of the museum or areas of large public spaces, bringing the public into the artwork with multi-dimensional views. The artist, building architects, or the local artisans who make the parts of art installation now collaborate to create a successful result.

Name	Native Country
Ai Weiwei	China
Yayoi Kusama	Japan
Kara Walker	United States
Dale Chihuly	United States
Nam June Paik	Korea
Andy Goldsworthy	England
El Anatsui	Ghana
Mona Hatoum	Palestine
Judy Chicago	United States
Christo	Bulgaria
Jeanne-Claude	Morocco
Ruth Asawa	United States
Esther Mahlangu	South Africa

Ai Weiwei (born 1957) is a contemporary Chinese artist and the artistic consultant on the Beijing National Stadium for the 2008 Olympics. Weiwei studied animation at the Beijing Film Academy and is a founder of the Avant-Garde art group called the 'Stars'. Exploring the issues of freedom of speech and human rights, he exhibited with the Stars in Beijing. Weiwei attended the Parson School of Design in New York and spent eight years taking photographs. He returned to China when his father became ill and started working on political art. In 2010, he was put under house arrest by the police when the government objected to his political ideas.



In 2014, Weiwei created an art installation to explore the issues of freedom of speech and human rights at Alcatraz Island, a notorious island prison in the San Francisco Bay. Weiwei could not leave China to attend the opening but sent all the work for the installation, relying on others to properly install his work, using 12 million Lego pieces (15.1) to create the 176 tile pictures of political prisoners, creating a dialogue for how people define individual rights, liberty and justice, and personal responsibility. He added porcelain flowers and Chinese kites, (15.2) incorporating them throughout the prison. In one of the large rooms, an oversized, colorful dragon kite hung from the ceiling and in another room binders about the dissidents provided information along with postcards viewers could send.



15.1 *Ai Weiwei at Alcatraz, Trace*



15.2 *Ai Weiwei at Alcatraz, With Wind*

The art of Marchel Duchamp, who used utilitarian objects to create his artwork, influenced Weiwei early in his life. *Forever Bicycles* (15.3) is an installation Weiwei made from almost 1,300 bicycles. His concept was based on the bicycles mass-produced in his hometown, yet too expensive for those without economic resources. The structure of steel bicycles formed a tunnel for viewers to see the unending puzzle of interwoven parts against the sky. Trees (15.4) were sculptures Weiwei made from camphor and cedar tree branches and trunks he collected from the mountains in China. He assembled the parts to resemble real trees, a source for contemplation, and appreciation of nature.



15.3 *Forever Bicycles*



15.4 *Trees*



Yayoi Kusama (born 1929) is a Japanese artist and writer who has worked with a variety of media. Her work is bold, psychedelic, repetitious, and full of pattern. Known around the world as the Princess of Polka Dots, Kusama reflects the polka dot motifs in her art. She is one of the best pop art artists and came to New York to study and work when she was young, returning to Japan and creating her exceptional and unusual art installations. She is considered one of Japan's greatest living artists.

Ascension of *Polka Dots on the Trees* (15.5) and *Pink Balls* (15.6) are red/pink and white/black polka dots surrounding the trees, or an entire room filled with polka dots. Obsessive about her art and its vibrancy, color, and style are trademarks of Kusama. The art is a combination of minimalism, abstract, surrealism, conceptual, and just plain Kusama. Using found objects in the environment as her canvas, she fills the object with shining polka dots. Pumpkins have been part of her themes for a long time, whether creating rooms of pumpkins or single giant pumpkins, always covered with her motif of dots. The lone, massive *Yellow Pumpkin* (15.7) sculpture sits by the sea, decorated with lines of large and small dots.



15.5 *Polka Dots on the Trees*



15.6 *Pink Balls*



15.7 *Yellow Pumpkin*



Kara Walker (born 1969) is an American artist with an M.F.A. from Rhode Island School of Design who explores the conflicts of race, sex, and gender with significant silhouetted figures that can be humorous while also demonstrating violence and suppression. She builds a panorama of cut out paper silhouettes installed against a white wall bringing the violence to life. Overhead projectors illuminate the figures and cause the viewers' body to cast shadows onto the scene, adding depth and a ghostlike feeling. *Blacklisted: The Unsettling Art of Kara Walker* (15.8) was on of her shows exhibiting slavery in historical truths of violence, sexual assault, and subjugation as she portrays the myths of slavery from the Antebellum south.



15.8 *Blacklisted: The Unsettling Art of Kara Walker*



Dale Chihuly (born 1941) is an American glass sculptor who changed the way glass is blown, how it is shaped, and the unique effects of how the glass transforms. Chihuly started as an interior design major at the University of Washington but was introduced to glass making and switched to the Rhode Island School of Design. Constrained by the rules of the property of melted materials, Chihuly had to overcome the technical difficulties of glass blowing to create his large-scale colorful sculptures. He founded the Pilchuck Glass School in Washington, where he practiced experimenting with glass.

Chihuly creates large installations made to interact with the environment (15.9), for instance, in the botanical garden, large spheres, and spikes of glass intermix with the flowers in complementary and contrasting colors. The boat of glass balls (15.10) floating on the lake reflect the colors, while other vibrant glass balls are floating around the boat as though they fell into the water. *The Sun* (15.11) is one of his original concepts in glassblowing, creating long, twisted pieces of glass and installing them on metal spikes building a large sculpture to hang or rise from the ground. The Chihuly Garden and Glass Museum is a vast permanent exhibition showcasing his work.



15.9 Glass garden in Seattle



15.10 *The Boat of glass*



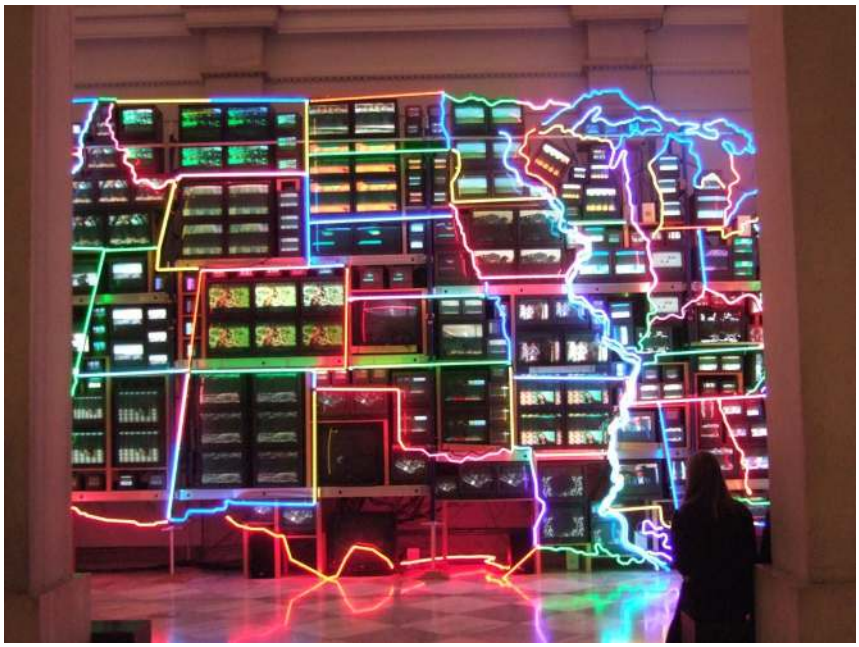
15.11 *The Sun*

Nam June Paik (1932-2006) was a Korean-American artist who worked with multiple types of media but was considered the founder of video art. Fleeing their native home during the Korean War, his family moved to Germany, and then Paik moved to New York to combine video and music with performance art. In one of his installations, he scattered televisions everywhere and used magnets that would distort or change the images and sound. In another installation, Paik laid several aquariums containing water and fish in a line swimming in front of monitors showing images of other fish. He is well known for taking television sets and making them into robots, *Pre-Bell-Man* (15.12), adding wire, metal, and parts from radios.

Paik created a large installation entitled, *Electronic Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii* (15.13) currently installed in the Smithsonian. It is a statement about America's obsession with television, moving images and bright shiny objects. Paik is also credited with the term 'electronic superhighway,' a precursor to the coined term 'information superhighway.' For the installation *Video Sculpture* (15.14), Paik stacked video monitors and used neon lights around the screens, flashing and reflecting on the screens.



15.12 *Pre-Bell-Man*



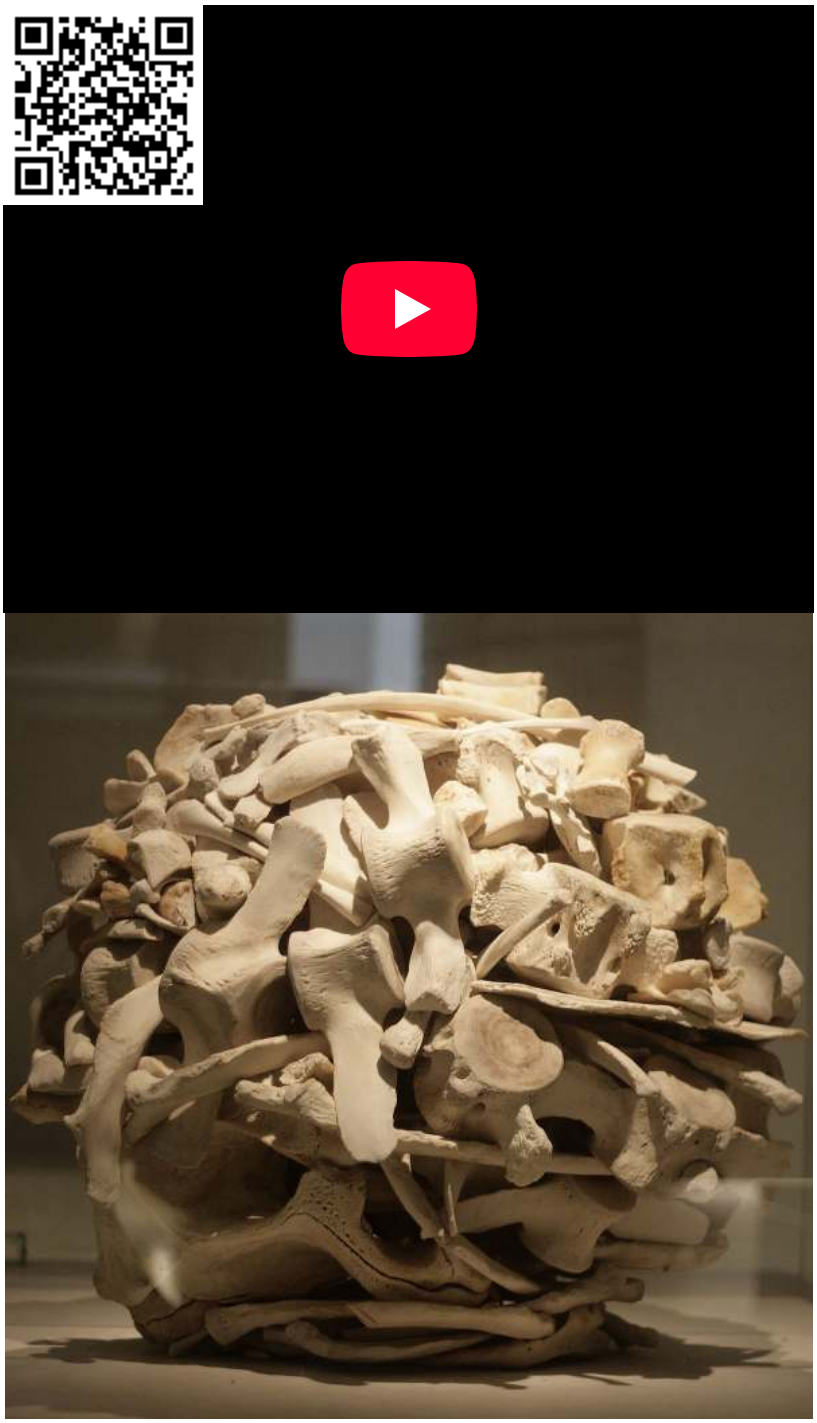
15.13 *Superhighway: Continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii*



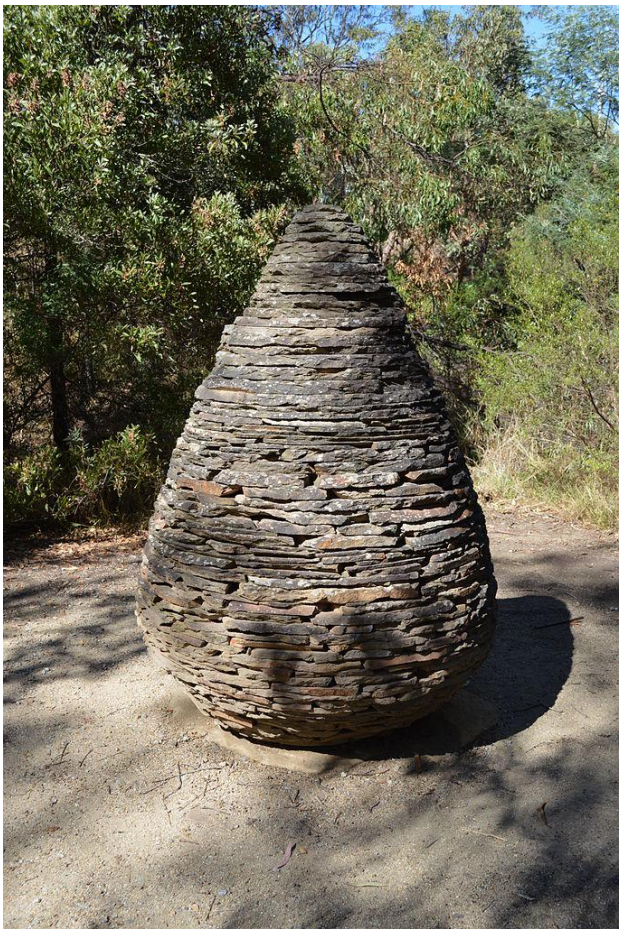
15.14 Video

Andy Goldsworthy (born 1956) is a British sculptor and environmentalist who creates land art in natural and urban settings. Goldsworthy studied fine art at Bradford College of Art and Preston Polytechnic. He uses found natural materials that are visible for a short period to construct a sculpture either outside or in a gallery (15.16). Using photography to document his work at different stages of life, he immortalizes his work in film. Goldsworthy uses materials like flowers, leaves, snow, twigs, icicles, rocks, and other found objects. Many believe him to be the founder of rock balancing seen in *Cairn* (15.17) a unique shape of rocks without mortar. He likes to use his bare hands and found tools to create with, instead of human-made tools. Some of his works are permanent sculptures standing the test of time and nature, including the *Stone River* (15.18) stacked along the dry creek bed; however, most installations succumb to decay.

> *"I enjoy the freedom of just using my hands" – Goldsworthy*

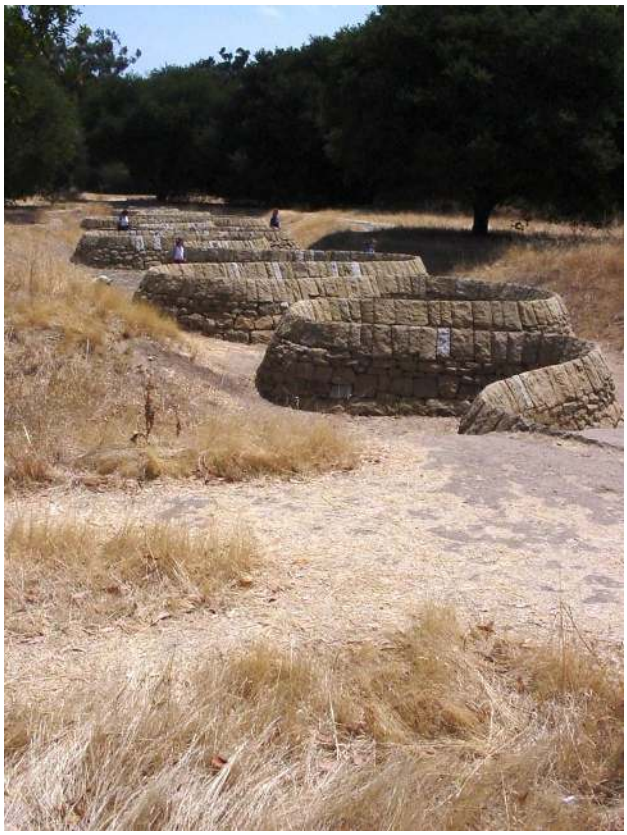


15.16 *Sculpture*



15.17 *Cairn*

https://human.libretexts.org/@go/page/342095



15.18 *Stone River*

El Anatsui (born 1944) is a Ghanaian sculptor who taught at the University of Nigeria and affiliated with the Nsukka group from the 1970s to revive the tradition of uli. Uli is a design drawn by the Igbo people of Nigeria and was becoming a lost art. It is a robust linear design without many perspectives and is asymmetrical. Initially, El Anatsui used clay and wood to make objects based on Ghanaian beliefs and subjects, cutting wood with chainsaws, he let the marks show from the chainsaw and then used an acetylene torch to blacken the piece.



15.19 *Man's Cloth*

El Anatsui became interested in doing something with a large amount of recycled material available. *Man's Cloth* (15.19)is a large sculpture resembling cloth and the installation material layers like Kente cloth (15.20). He used discarded items from bottle caps or folded and crumpled pieces of metal found at recycling stations, which he tied together with copper wire, giving the material the

ability to fold and drape. His works can be significant and cover a wall and the luminosity of the metal and the gallery lights reflecting through the room, give the piece its own life. *Peak* (15.21) was made of found bottle tops and tins used for milk, debris littering the countryside, and filling the trash bins that El Anatsui recovered and used to form the sculpture. He wired them together loosely (15.22), so the pieces could create their shapes and folds.



15.20 *Man's Cloth closeup*



15.21 *Peak*



15.22 *Peak closeup*



Mona Hatoum (born 1952) is a Palestinian who wanted to be an artist throughout her early years, even in the face of parental disapproval. She finally studied in Lebanon and London, now creating art to explore the dangers and issues of the world. *Hot Spot* (15.23) is a large globe depicting political unrest on the planet. The steel globe is illuminated with red lighting to magnify the problems any viewer perceives about global warming, humanitarian issues, wars, or people fleeing their homelands.



15.23 Hot Spot

Judy Chicago (born 1939) studied art at the university, and her original work followed the ideas of Minimalism before she incorporated feminist concepts into her work, and she helped start a collaborative movement to encourage and assist female artists. *The Dinner Party* (15.24) is one of the best known of her installations, a triangular table set for thirty-nine women from history. Chicago used motifs commemorating the lives of each woman, embellishing each table setting with events in the woman's life. Names of 999 other women are written with gold on the floor beneath the table.



15.24 *The Dinner Party close up*

Christo (born 1935) and **Jeanne-Claude** (1935-2009) are a husband and wife team who created large-scale installations; he was born in Bulgaria, and she was from Morocco. They worked together for over thirty-five years using materials to wrap or drape across large parts of the landscape or buildings around the world, based on themes of political or economic changes. They did not participate in the usual gallery or art markets; instead, they worked outside the system, drawing criticism. *The Gates* (15.25) was erected in New York City along the paths of Central Park. Although the planning and construction of the gates took a year, they installed 7,503 brightly colored saffron-colored gates in five days, achieved without any city money or sponsorship. Christo and Jeanne-Claude raised money to pay for the project from posters and T-shirts.



15.25 *Gates*



15.26 *Umbrellas (blue)*



15.27 *Umbrellas (yellow)*

Another project they designed and installed was *The Umbrellas*, the blue umbrellas (15.26) were mounted in Japan and the yellow ones (15.27) in California, all planned to be ready at the same time. Steel bases were planted into the ground to hold the poles and anchors before approximately 2,000 workers could insert the umbrellas. In Japan, over 1,300 blue umbrellas were fit tightly together in the smaller space; however, in California, the more than 1,700 yellow umbrellas were spread over the much larger space. The umbrella installations only remained in place for a few months; however, it was a major attraction for tourists, weddings, or family gatherings.



Ruth Asawa (1926-2013) was born in California, her parents' Japanese immigrants, and during World War II, she and her family were detained in the internment camps. After the war, she started her education as a teacher before switching to art. At one point, she learned to weave baskets and started to use galvanized wire for weaving, which inspired her to become interested in lines and how a line can go in multiple directions. She worked with wire to make her three-dimensional woven structures (15.28, 15.29) meant to hang and generate shadows that shift in the light and change the space. Asawa was passionate about art education and helped establish programs for children as well a training and employment programs for artists.



15.28 *Wire Sculpture*



15.29 *Wire sculpture reflection*



Esther Mahlangu (born 1935) was born in South Africa as part of the Ndebele people and began painting as a child. Her mother and grandmother were mural painters, an ordinary skill for the females in the region. Mahlangu paints on extensive scale backgrounds using patterns she saw in the clothing of the people, generally very brightly colored with geometric shapes. The carmaker BMW had artists such as Warhol and Hockney design a car each year to use as their Art Car. Mahlangu was the first female asked to design a car, and her BMW Art Car (15.30) was painted with her traditional geometric designs and colors. Many of her designs are found on corporate brands, the bold patterns outlined with black lines and bright colors. It is common for the people to paint their houses with colors, and she painted her house (15.31) following these concepts. Mahlangu has worked tirelessly to bring art education to children, directing a school she founded while continuing to support artists in her homeland. For her continuing dedication, she received an honorary doctorate from the University of Johannesburg.



15.30 *BMW Art Car*



15.31 *Homestead*



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9.4.1: Installation Art

Introduction

Installation art is a relatively new genre for the millennium defined as large-scale constructions, usually mixed media, and installed for a specified period. The artwork usually fills the space, and viewers must walk through the exhibit, often becoming part of the installation. However, some installations might be fragile or installed along a wall. A sculpture is generally one piece of art displayed in separate or individual spaces. An installation is a more unified experience, engaging the viewer in most of the environment. Technology has also contributed to the ability of artists to create large installations involving LEDs, computerized movement, unusual formations, and even environmentally supported projects. One attribute of installation art is its immersive properties, how the art appears depending on the viewer's position. The works are also large in scale and site-specific, made to fit into the gallery and museum. or outdoor space. Generally, they are placed in unique surroundings to compliment the artwork.

Ai Weiwei

Ai Weiwei (1957-) was born in China; his father was a poet. The family was sentenced to a labor camp when Ai was one, then sixteen years in exile in far northern China. After Mao Zedong's death, the Cultural Revolution ended, and the family moved back to Beijing, where Ai studied animation. He moved to the United States for twelve years to learn English and art. He returned to China when his father's health failed in 1993 and set up his studio. Ai began openly criticizing the Chinese government's human rights issues, corruption, and lack of democracy. Most of his work follows his political beliefs and feelings about the social problems in China, leading to harassment by the government and occasional house arrest. In 2011, Ai was jailed for three months; however, the government kept his passport when he was released, and he could not travel. When his passport was returned in 2015, he moved to Europe. Ai Weiwei uses his art as dissident art, protesting human abuses in China by the government. His work is international and brings his messages to the world. He used simple or everyday objects or materials to create his installation as he believed they were meaningful to people.

Sunflower Seeds (12.2.1, 12.2.2) is composed of 100 million small seeds stacked evenly on the floor. Each seed appears the same; however, every seed is unique. The life-sized seeds are made by hand from porcelain, sculpted, and painted. The seeds were produced in small workshops in the city of Jingdezhen, known for producing porcelain since 1004 CE and originally produced the Imperial porcelain for the royal palaces. Revolutionary types of kilns and access to deposits of *petuntse*, the clay needed for porcelain, were part of the city's success in becoming the primary Chinese porcelain site, even today. Ai Weiwei used porcelain sunflower seeds to examine the idea of 'Made in China' and its position in the global economy. He created each seed piled in the installation to represent the relationship between an individual and the masses. He posed the question: "What does it mean to be an individual in today's society? Are we insignificant or powerless unless we act together? What do our increasing desires, materialism, and number mean for society, the environment, and the future?" [1]



Figure 9.4.1.1: *Sunflower Seeds* (Анна Астахова, CC BY-SA 3.0)



Figure 9.4.1.2: *Sunflower Seeds* closeup (Dominic's pics, CC BY 2.0)

Ai Weiwei's installations reflect his commentary on society, politics, and economics in contemporary China, and he uses irony to create his installations. *World Map* (12.2.3) is an example of simple, basic objects to make a simple visual expression. The map comprises thousands of fine, thin cotton cloth layers (12.2.4). Making, cutting, stacking, and installing the cloth was exceptionally time-consuming and laborious. The map demonstrates China's position in the world as a place of cheap labor, especially in the clothing industry. Ai stated, "*China is blindly producing for the demands of the market… My work very much relates to this blind production of things. I'm part of it, which is a bit of a nonsense.*" [2] He also uses other materials to make maps of China in protest, including 1,800 milk tins to protest China's tainted milk, making infants sick.



Figure 9.4.1.3: World Map (2006-09, cotton and wooden base, 120 x 800 x 400 cm) (Vilseskogen, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)



Figure 9.4.1.4: World Map closeup (Vilseskogen, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

In the installation, *Moon Chest* (12.2.5, 12.2.6), Ai made 81 chests of wood, each with four circles cut in the upper and lower panels on both sides. The openings vary on each chest, and the moon's phases are visible when the chests are carefully aligned (x.x). He wanted to create an installation of simplistic materials and construction while having a sense of functionality. The chests were made from Huali wood, a common material for Chinese furniture, and were constructed without any joining materials, the methods used for ancient furniture. The exhibition was one of the few of Ai's installations without a direct political message, emphasizing artistic beauty. Ai said, "In the 1980s, I saw many works by Donald Judd and Carl Andre, many minimalist sculptures. Moon Chest is a work in which I try to put together art and minimalist architecture, installation, and drawing to create an object that discusses the relations between functionality and the so-called highbrow art."[3]



Figure 9.4.1.5: *Moon Chest* (2008, Huanghuali wood, 320 x 160 x 80 cm) (maurizio.mwg, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

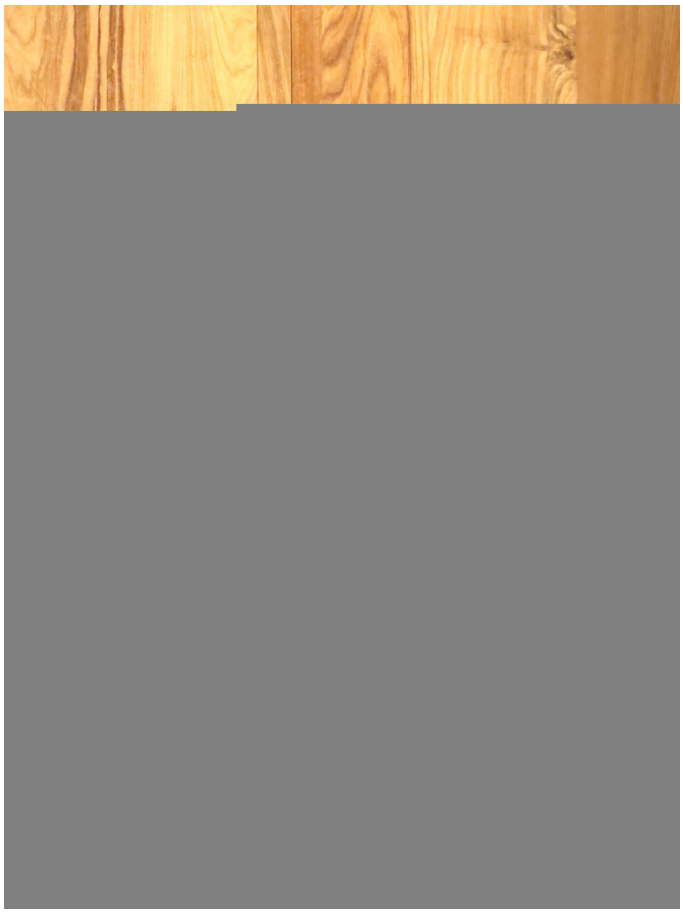


Figure 9.4.1.6: *Moon Chest* Closeup (Edna Winti, CC BY 2.0.)

Ai Weiwei created different bicycle installations to acknowledge China's past reliance on bicycles, the mass-produced transportation becoming obsolete to the car culture. *Forever* (12.2.7) is one of the installations. Bicycles can be installed in multiple configurations, representing the universal use of the bicycles and the beauty found in the object. However, the chain and pedal have been removed from each unit, and they are now obsolete and unusable. However, the bicycles are arranged in a circle, giving the feeling of motion—the "forever" of the title belying the actuality.



Figure 9.4.1.7: *Forever* (2003, forty-two bicycles) (Jackman Chiu, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Forever Bicycles by Al Weiwei

See Ai Weiwei's spectacular Forever Bicycles installation consisting of 3,144 bikes, come together on Toronto's Nathan Phillips Square over the course of two and a half weeks. The build began on September 19, 2013 and finished on October 4, 2013—just in time for the 8th annual Scotiabank Nuit Blanche. The open-air installation is available for viewing 24hrs a day until October 27, 2013.



Ai Wei Wei's accumulations and use of single objects are used again in installations with stools. Both installations (*Stool Installation 1* (12.2.8) and *Stool Installation 2* (12.2.9) demonstrate how he combined small and large sets of stools. The three-legged wooden stool was typical in China and is now an antiquated object in today's Chinese society. Previously, the stools were carefully carved and passed down through the generations, an expression of centuries-old aesthetics. Today, stools are plastic or

aluminum in China, modern and mass-produced objects that are disposable in today's society. A common symbol of the importance of and creativity of the individual as opposed to the massive state.



Figure 9.4.1.8: *Stool installation 1*, (FaceMePLS, CC BY 2.0)



Figure 9.4.1.9: Figure 9.4.1.9: *Stool installation 2*, (micmol, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Yayoi Kusama

Yayoi Kusama (1929-) was born in Japan, where her parents owned a nursery for plants and seeds. Kusama started drawing pumpkins from the time she was a child. She said she drew from hallucinations she observed, a concept followed throughout her life. Kusama's childhood was traumatic; her mother did not support her art and was abusive. Her father had continual extramarital affairs, which her mother made Kusama follow him and spy, reporting back. By the time Kusama was ten, her hallucinations had included flashing lights and fields of dots she believed engulfed her. She studied traditional Japanese Nihonga style, finding it unsatisfactory, and studied Western avant-garde. After success in Japan, at twenty-seven, she went to the United States from 1957 to 1972, believing Japan was too disparaging of women and too feudalistic.

In the United States, Kusama developed her reflective mirror rooms, complex installations with mirrors, colored balls, and lights. She worked successfully with other artists in New York City, however financial success eluded her. During this period, Kusama became heavily involved with the anti-Viet Nam war protesters, often doing unusual things to draw attention to her demonstrations, including painting polka dots on nude protesters. When Kusama returned to Japan in 1973, mentally ill and suicidal, she checked herself into a hospital. Since that period, she has resided in the psychiatric hospital, creating her art in a nearby studio.

Dots have become Kusama's obsession on all her artwork and installations, dots covering everything in repetitive patterns. Kusama said, "A polka-dot has the form of the sun which is a symbol of the energy of the whole world and our living life, and the form of the moon which is calm. Round soft, colourful, senseless and unknowing. Polka-dots can't stay alone; like the communicative life of people, two or three and more polka-dots become movement. ...Polka-dots are a way to infinity."[3] Most of her work is based on the repetitive use of dots, beloved pumpkins, and mirrors in her installations. *Dots Obsession* (8.2.9) is like Kusama's hallucinations in childhood, believing her space was covered in patterns. In this installation, she used red for the base color and the highly contrasting white dots. The room was enclosed with mirrors, multiple lights, and large balloon-like structures, giving the viewers an immersive involvement.



Figure 9.4.1.9: Dots Obsession (2011, red paint, white dots, giant balloons, mirrors) by hmboo Electrician and Adventurer, CC BY-ND 2.0

Repetitive Vision (8.2.10) creates a startling strange, and disorienting environment. The black mirrored walls and ceiling reflect the mannequins covered in red dots. The mirrors present views of the front, back, and sides of the mannequins confusing the viewer, impossible to know the limits of the room or numbers of mannequins. The red dots on the floor, mannequins, and reflections add to the confusion of the room's boundaries. Kusama said, "A mirror is a device which obliterates everything, including myself and others in the light of another world or a gallant apparatus which creates nothingness."[4]

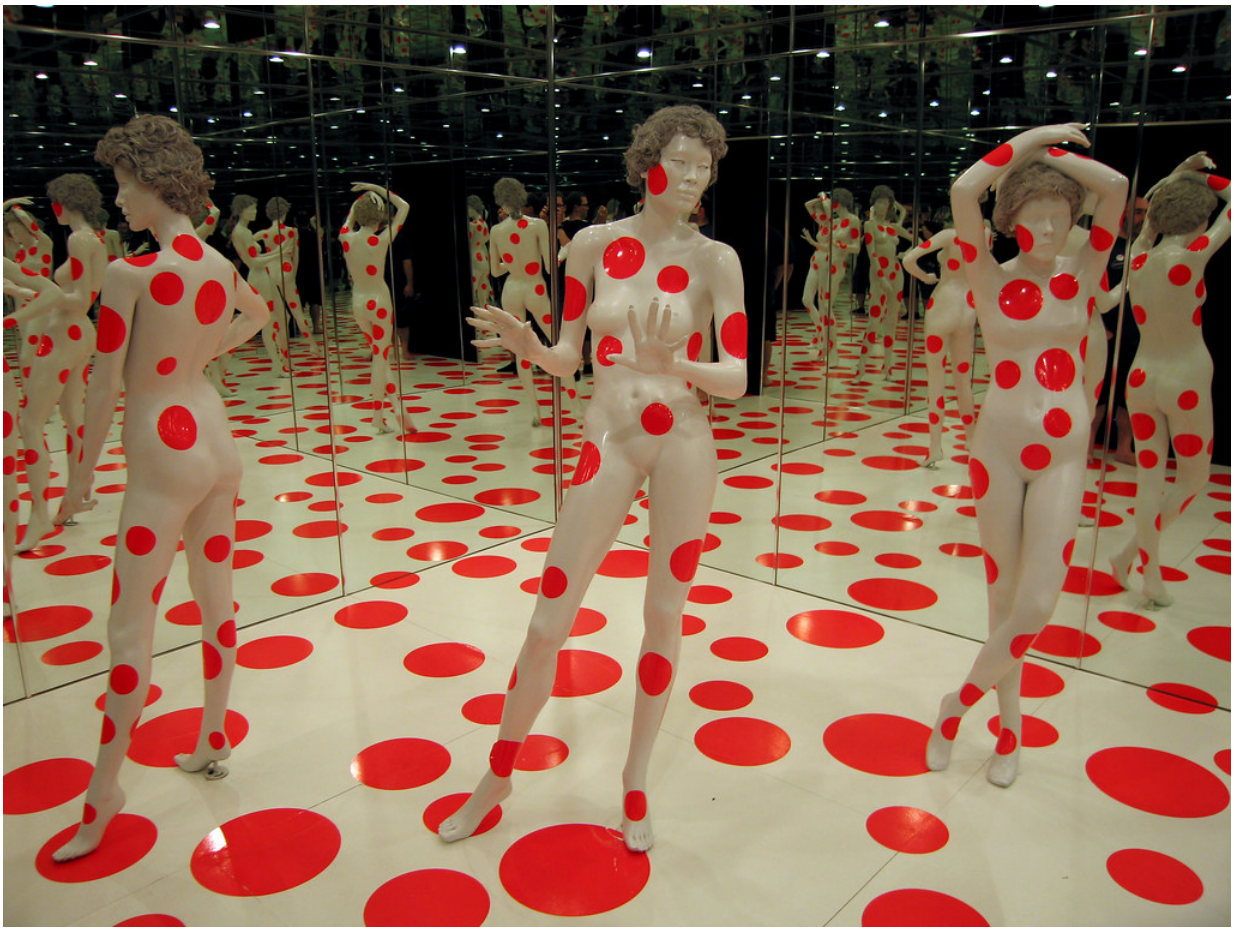


Figure 9.4.1.10: Repetitive Vision (1996, adhesive dots, formica, mirrors, mannequins) by watz, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Late in her career, Kusama's infinity rooms expanded and included her trademark dots and pumpkins. The mirrored and lighted ceiling and walls infinitely reflect the dotted pumpkins in *All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins* (8.2.11). The illusion of the installation stretched the concept of ad infinitum. Kusama has placed rows of yellow pumpkins painted with strips of black dots, making the room's depth impossible to judge. The space reflects Kusama's obsessive-compulsive disorder for the repetition of polka dots enclosing the person in the room, the pattern wrapping around and surrounding the viewer.



Figure 9.4.1.11: All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins (2016, wood, mirror, plastic, acrylic, LED) by Infomastern, CC BY-SA 2.0

In Japan, pumpkins are known as kabocha; an image Kusama spent hours drawing as a child. Pumpkins represented stability and comfort and were attractive in color and shape. By the late 1970s, she started to include pumpkins in some of her work, covering them with dots and incorporating them into the themes of her mirrored rooms. Pumpkins became major subjects by the new millennium, and Kusama made enormous sculptures. The *Red Pumpkin* (8.2.12) and the *Orange Pumpkin* (8.2.13) were made from fiberglass for installation on Naoshima Island in Japan. The oversized red pumpkin sits on the edge of a protected inlet. The sculpture is hollow inside, made from fiberglass, and covered with large black dots. The orange pumpkin with a different set of black vertical dots was installed on the end of a pier adjacent to the water. The pumpkin was dislodged when a typhoon swept the island in 2021, and waves took it into the sea. The sculpture cracked but was recovered and will be repaired.



Figure 9.4.1.12: Red Pumpkin (1994, reinforced fiberglass, 3.9 meters high x 7 meters wide) by Yohei Yamashita, CC BY 2.0



Figure 9.4.1.13: Orange Pumpkin (1994, reinforced fiberglass, 1.8 meters high x 2.4 meters wide) by Yohei Yamashita, CC BY 2.0

Kusama also made immense pumpkins from stainless steel (8.2.14, 8.2.15). The metal is shiny and reflects light and images like her mirror rooms. The dots on the pumpkins were made with long-lasting urethane paint.



Figure 9.4.1.14: Pumpkin (2010, stainless steel, urethane paint, 220 cm high x 220 cm diameter) by See-ming Lee (SML), CC BY-NC 2.0



Figure 9.4.1.15: Pumpkin (2015, stainless steel, urethane paint, 173.7 x 182.2 x 167.6 cm) by art_inthecity, CC BY 2.0

The nine decades of artist Yayoi Kusama's life have taken her from rural Japan to the New York art scene to contemporary Tokyo, in a career in which she has continuously innovated and re-invented her style. Well-known for her repeating dot patterns, her art encompasses an astonishing variety of media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, film, performance, and immersive installation. It ranges from works on paper featuring intense semi-abstract imagery to soft sculpture known as 'Accumulations' to her 'Infinity Net' paintings, made up of carefully repeated arcs of paint built up into large patterns.



Do Ho Suh

Do Ho Suh (1962-) was born in Korea, the son of a famous artist who used traditional paintings in ink to create more abstract concepts. Originally, Suh wanted to be a marine biologist, failing to achieve the grades. He went to art school in Korea and earned a master's degree in art based on traditional Korean painting. Suh relocated to the United States in 1991, freeing himself from his father's influence and traditional art and studying at the Rhode Island School of Design. Here, he was interested in how space was used and how people interacted in different cultures. Suh explicitly studied houses' psychological and physical dimensions and the architectural structures.

Suh's major project was *Home Within Home* (8.2.16), a life-sized reconstruction of an actual home where he once lived. Suh also constructed a replica of his home in Korea, contrasting style and size inside the house. He used translucent fabrics to construct the houses, interior rooms, and different large appliances. He also displays hallways, doors, or specific rooms from various places he lived in other installation parts. Suh used a 2-D scanning machine to ensure accurate and exact specifications. Using the defined dimensions and outlines, Suh used a traditional Korean hand sewing method to make every part of the building or objects, adding precise details found in the actual item. The oversized home is designed for the viewer to approach the building and see through the walls before entering the door and walking through the spaces. The rooms in the building create a dreamlike environment; shelves, doors, fixtures, windows, stairs, or appliances are viewable while still looking through to other spaces.

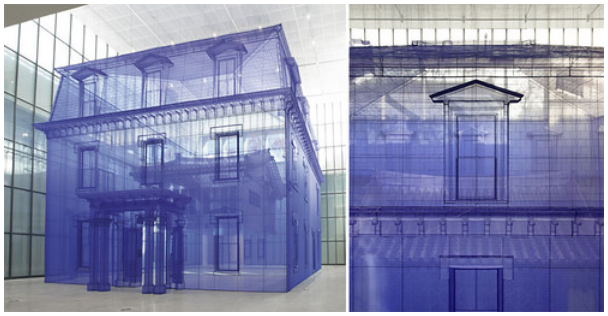


Figure 9.4.1.16: Home Within Home (2013, fabric, 12 meters high x 15 meters wide) by 準建築人手札網站 Forgemind ArchiMedia, CC BY 2.0

The bathtub (8.2.17) and the toilet (8.2.18) are created in exact sizes and placed in the bathroom. Suh used steel wire to frame the bathtub and toilet to hold the fabric properly. For the larger structures, he used stainless steel armature.



Figure 9.4.1.17: Bathtub (2013, fabric, stainless steel wire, LED, 34 x 150.1 x 76.5 cm) by 準建築人手札網站 Forgemind ArchiMedia, CC BY 2.0



Figure 9.4.1.18: Toilet (2013, fabric stainless steel wire, LED, 34 x 150.1 x 76.5 cm) by 準建築人手札網站 Forgemind ArchiMedia, CC BY 2.0

Suh was raised in South Korea, the influence of North Korea and the ever-present threat in the lives of those on the Korean peninsula. The two countries were a display of conflicting social and political societies. The images of North Korean soldiers in precise and continued marching manifested in the concept of the control and collectivism of the state over the thoughts and activities of the individual.

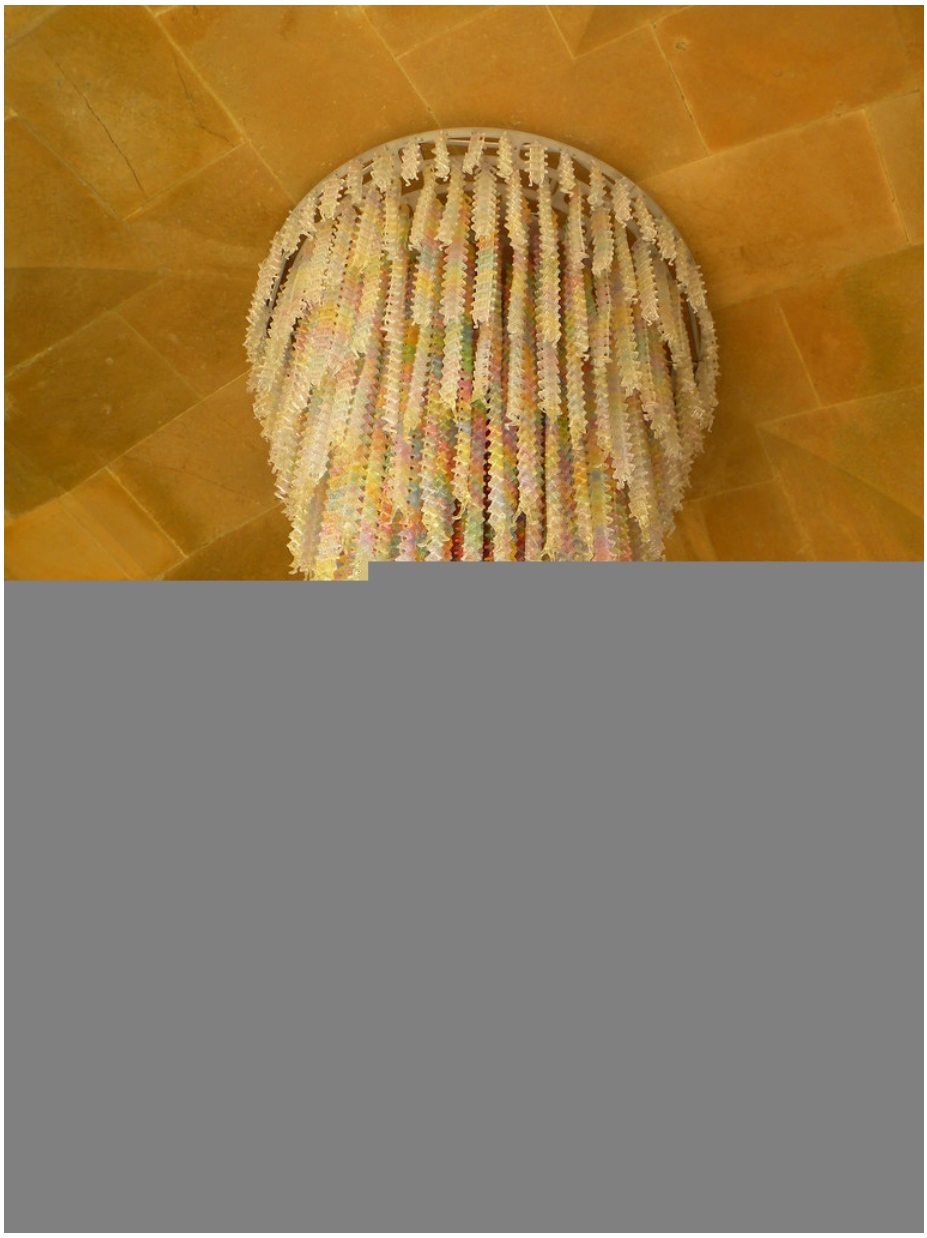


Figure 9.4.1.19: Cause and Effect (2007, acrylic resin, aluminum disc, stainless steel frame and cable, monofilament, 120 x 295 cm) by foshie, CC BY 2.0

The sculpture *Cause and Effect* (8.2.19) is made of 1,200 naked resin figures cast in different colors. Each small figure sits on the figure below it, portraying the relationship between the individual inside the collective or the concept of the individual supporting the larger society.



Figure 9.4.1.20: Cause and Effect closeup, by foshie, CC BY 2.0

El Anatsui

El Anatsui (1944 -) was born in Ghana, where his uncle raised him. As a child, he drew on a chalkboard and later trained at the University of Science and Technology in Ghana. His early work was based on traditional wood carving and sculpture and teaching at the University of Nigeria. His first entry into the international art world was in Harlem, New York, in 1990 when he entered a show about contemporary African artists. Anatsui found his art medium in the streets of the local towns, discarded liquor bottle caps. After collecting thousands of metal seals from the bottles and bottle caps, he must smooth and flatten them to be more malleable and workable. For his sculptures, he uses copper wire to attach the pieces. His work combines the concepts of traditional African imagery and the ideas of abstraction. Anatsui's work is moveable and easy to configure in different ways. His work does not have a fixed form, and when he sends a sculpture to an institution, he does not send any instructions, allowing them to decide how to hang and drape his work. Anatsui said, "I am interested in textile because it is always in motion. Anytime you touch something, there is bound to be a change. The idea of a sheet that you can shape or reshape. It can be on the floor; it can be up on the ceiling; it can be up on the wall, all that fluidity is behind the concept."[5]

Anatsui noticed walls worldwide and how they close space and stop the eye from traveling further. He wanted to create a wall the viewer can see, though fluid and moveable. The term *Gli* meant will, however with a different inflection, the word might mean story or even disrupt. *Gli (Wall)* (8.2.21) is an oversized installation hung from the ceiling representing a wall. However, it is a transparent wall, most of the metal pieces formed into circles, creating visibility through each small opening. Anatsui connected thousands of bottle caps and collars with thin copper wire. The reflective metal shimmers, giving the appearance of curtains moving in the breeze instead of rigid metal.



Figure 9.4.1.21: *Gli (Wall)* (2010, aluminum and copper wire) by gsz, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

AG+BA (8.2.22) is an example of Anatsui's selection and application of color. Each of the bottle tops was branded by different companies who bottled the liquor. Anatsui collected millions of the tops and sorted them by color in his compositions. In part of the sculpture, the red pieces were interspersed with gold and some black; the other portion is formed with gold and small amounts of gold and red. The bottle tops are relatively soft and easy to flatten. Part of this sculpture is hanging and draped, the pieces wired together; the sizeable golden section does not drape and is welded into a massive block. Anatsui started using bottle tops when he found three bags of tops. The liquor bottles could be recycled; however, no one recycled aluminum.



Figure 9.4.1.22: AG+BA (2014, aluminium (liquor bottle caps), copper wire, nylon string) by FaceMePLS, CC BY 2.0

Drifting Continents (8.2.23) depicts a fragmented map of the world where the continents collapse into each other. The work displays the interconnectivity of the regions and the creation of restrictive, poorly defined borders. Wealth and gold flowed out of Africa for centuries causing economic disorder today. In the sculpture, the flattened gold tops flow down the walls, beautifully reflective and demonstrating the beauty of gold and why it is coveted. The discarded refuse of the bottle caps recreating the richness of piles of gold only the value is only in the art, not the materials.

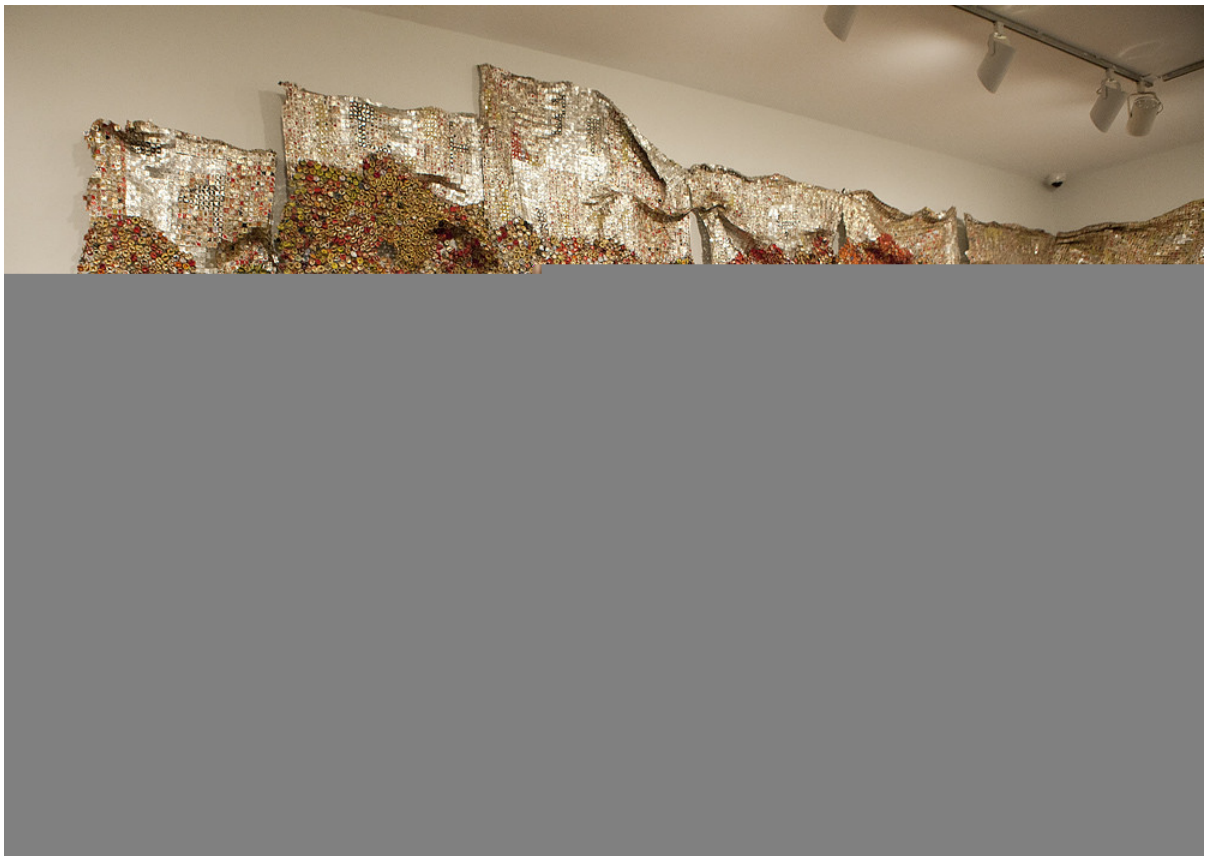


Figure 9.4.1.23: Drifting Continents (2009, aluminum, copper wire, 151 x 410 cm overall) by Eva Blue, CC BY 2.0

Subodh Gupta

Subodh Gupta (1964-) was born in India; his father died when Gupta was young. He was sent to live with an uncle on a remote farm, where children went to school without shoes or roads. He attended the College of Arts & Crafts in Patna, a place without even a library. When he graduated in 1988, Gupta moved to Delhi, starting his career as an artist. He always loved steel and metal, from the dull brass plates the family used for eating to the replacement stainless steel plates. Gupta started using the everyday kitchen utensils used at home, a material he uses. *Line of Control* (8.2.24) is a sculpture based on the mushroom clouds developed from atomic bombs and represents the dismaying deployment of nuclear war. Nuclear weapons are always an issue between Pakistan and India and the potential of their use in war. The sculpture also represents geopolitical borders, limitations, disputed territories globally, and potential nuclear warfare potential. The work was constructed with twenty-six tons of stainless-steel pans, thalis, bowls, milk pails, tiffin boxes, and various utensils. Each element was welded together to assemble the sculpture.



Figure 9.4.1.24: Line of Control (2008, stainless steel utensils, 10.9 x 10.9 meters, 26 tons) CC BY 2.0

Gupta has always been interested in the migration or displacement in India, even why they travel to other places, carefully noting the changes in Indian society. *The Silk Route* (8.2.25) comprises stacks of an abundant supply of pots, bowls, and plates carefully arranged on a giant conveyer belt. He presents the growth of the middle class and its constant need for more. The reference to the old silk road defines the influence and threat of globalization changing local communities and the spread of consumerism. The towers of tiffin pots (stackable containers) move along the installation much like India's rapid pace of change. The tiffin pots were a standard method of carrying food when Gupta was a child, the objects now having a different meaning. Gupta said, "My work is about where I came from, but at the same time, the expansion of the art world means that to a certain extent, everything is shrinking together, and you have to be aware of international discourses in your work."[6]

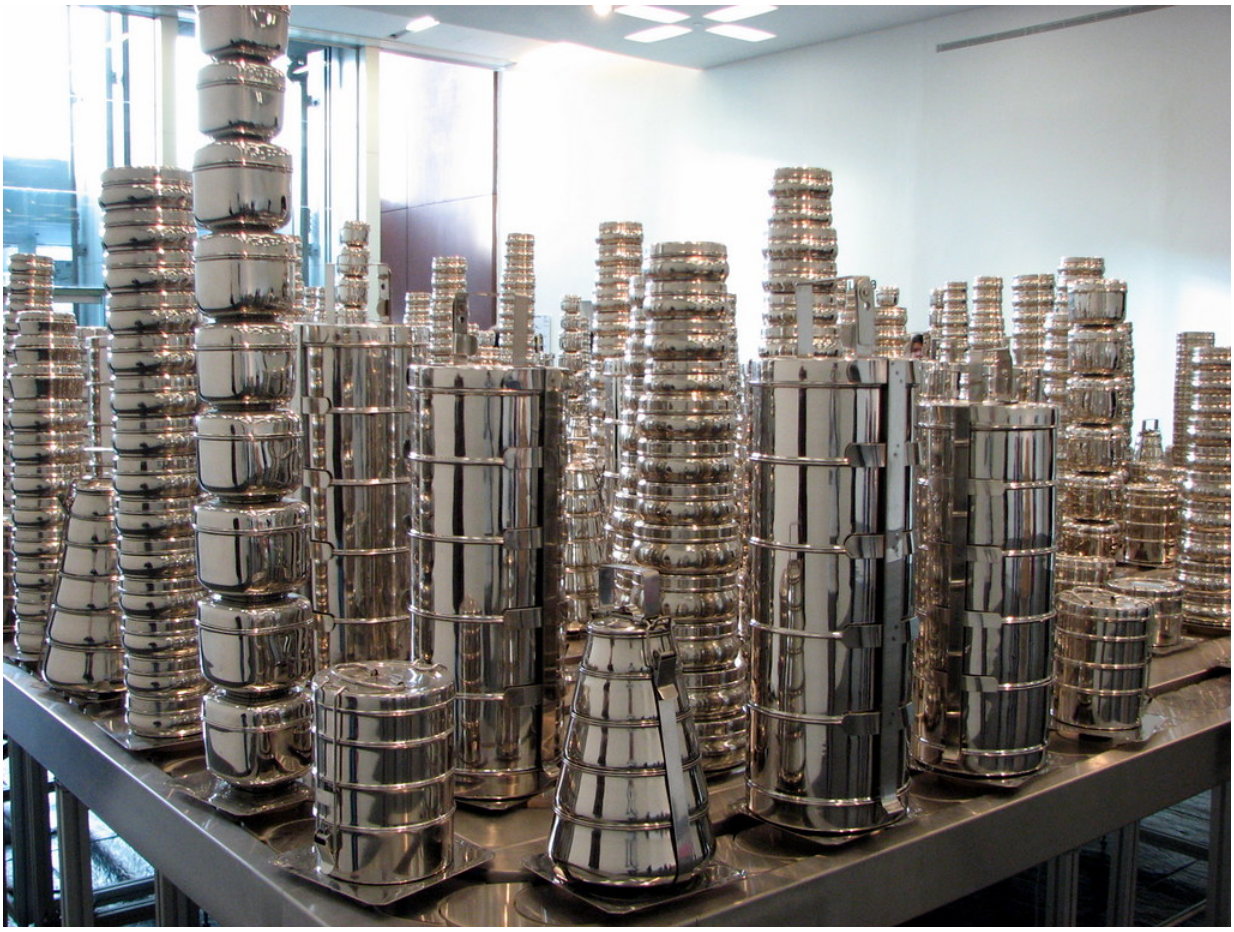


Figure 9.4.1.25: The Silk Route (2007, stainless steel kitchen utensils) by Glen Bowman, CC BY-SA 2.0

Gupta created the magnificent, stainless-steel banyan tree stating, "I'd like this sculpture to be a place where families gather and get photographed."[7] The structure has become a place for people to sit and pose and ponder the illusion of the sculpture. The tree, *Specimen No. 108* (8.2.26), was exceptionally complex to construct. Gupta first made the metal trunk with the branches before the utensils were individually welded to the tree. The tree is shiny with the beauty of an actual tree, elegant and graceful, combined with the ubiquity of common household elements hanging like fruit. The banyan tree is incorporated into Indian culture as sacred and a center of worship; however, the number 108 is meaningful in multiple religions. The imposing tree is a symbol for other meanings. The mystical formation of the tree is further enhanced by the sun bouncing off the steel and the utensils softly moving in the breeze.



Figure 9.4.1.26: Specimen No. 108 (2014, stainless steel utensils) by gauravmishr, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Jean Shin

Jean Shin (1971-) was born in Korea, where her parents were professors. When she was six years old, they moved to the United States. Shin graduated with a BFA from Pratt Institute and an MS in History. Her artwork is made from cast-off materials she collects and forms into installations. She is not particular in her accumulations, including one sock or a broken ceramic, discarded lottery tickets, and even old pill bottles. Shin creates large-scale sculptures and needs large numbers of any one element. She believes the object in an installation may all look the same until closer observation reveals individuality and variety. Shin wants the viewer to continually shift between the group and the individuals within the group, some things more intimate and others appearing excessive.

Huddled Masses (8.2.27) connects the idea of the environmental waste of technology and the desire from society for more and more technological products. The sculpture is made of old cell phones, obsolete by the following year's model. Meters of old, no longer viable computer cables encircle the structure capturing the phones into piles of meaninglessness. The toxic waste now sits, planned obsolescence forcing the new technology to the detriment of the environment from the masses of unusable waste. Large forms jut out of the middle like the ancient rocks of Chinese art, the purity of natural, long-lasting stones of the past, now covered by today's pollution. Oddly, the sounds on the phones made to carry the noise and discourse of society are now silent in their obsolesce. The most significant part of the sculpture is 2.28 meters tall. Shin collected over 3,000 different styles of phones, some as long as twenty years ago, for the sculpture.



Figure 9.4.1.27: Huddled Masses (2020, cellphones and computer cables) by Asian Art Museum, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Chance City (8.2.28) was constructed from thousands of losing scratch-and-win lottery tickets, discarded as useless. People purchase them hoping to make money; the losing tickets reveal the unfulfilled dream someone had when they bought the ticket. The worthless tickets are the blocks Shin uses for her colorful houses of cards; it too a temporary structure full of chance and optimism. She does not use any glue when erecting the house of cards, only balancing one on top of another. Although the sculpture looks fragile, gravity and friction hold the cards in place. Shin believes, "Picking up your life and moving to the city and giving I all you can, your dreams may change-transform. But somehow, I think all of us retain that memory of something that they really wanted to do, and against all odds, are able to succeed."[8] The ticket may not bring instant riches, but our odds of success are achievable.



Figure 9.4.1.28: Chance City (2001, raffle tickets) by nicknormal, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



Figure 9.4.1.29: Chance City closeup, by nicknormal, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Liu Wei

Liu Wei (1972-) is from China and graduated from the China Academy of Art. At first, he created realistic paintings before working on installations. He moved to Beijing and was associated with other artists who produced exhibitions protesting the government. Their video, photography, and performances contained pictures of corpses, cadavers, or other gross and visceral images. Their concept was to repel Western audiences, revealing their resentment of Western powers. However, as China expanded its trade globally, the artists opened to Western investors. Since the new millennium, Liu has been creating models of cityscapes using unusual materials. The massive construction of cities in China inspired him to create installations based on the continual change, decay, and construction found daily in cities. Today, Liu creates his images digitally before assembling an installation, continuing to change them over time.

Liu's installation *Love it! Bite it!* is made from the unusual material of dog chews. He tried to create buildings from across Western history. The work was exceptionally detailed, with ornate columns, domes, towers, and cornices. However, most of them resembled ruins of the dystopia of fallen empires. After seeing his dog gnaw on its chew, Liu made the construction from dog chews as it was crumbled with saliva and dirt. He observed the dog's lust for food like a human's hunger for power, the city the representative of that power. *Love it! Bite it!* (12.2.27) displays the falling coliseum, a church, and other collapsing buildings. *Love it! Bite it!* (12.2.28) is part of the United States Capitol building exhibit showing the buildings eroded by greed and time.



Figure 9.4.1.27: *Love it! Bite it!* (2013, edible dog chews, dimensions vary) (mr.push, CC BY-NC 2.0)



Figure 9.4.1.28: *Love it! Bite it!* (2013, edible dog chews, dimensions vary) (mr.push, CC BY-NC 2.0)

In *Library II-II* (12.2.429), Liu constructed four sections displaying another dystopian city with seemingly familiar buildings, although anonymous. Some buildings are leaning at ninety degrees; a few resemble old New York skyscrapers. All the buildings were made and sculpted with books. Liu said, "I was drawn to books at first because of the uniform density; the morphology of books seems to give them the ability to replace all other architectural and urban features; books represent a real world and expand wantonly." [8] Liu used iron and hardware for the basic frame covered by wood to assemble the books into buildings.



Figure 9.4.1.29: *Library II-I* (I2013, books, wood, iron, hardware, 290 x 140 x 170 cm) (nicknormal, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Maya Lin

Maya Lin (born 1959) was born in Ohio after her parents emigrated from China. Both of her parents were professors at Ohio University. In high school, Lin studied bronze casting methods at a nearby university. After high school, she attended Yale University and earned bachelor's and master's degrees. Lin was always interested in the environment, respecting nature, and balancing the man-made and the natural world. The video discusses Lin's projects.

In this milestone video, we feature visual artist/designer Maya Lin, who has a long history with the NEA, starting with her winning the public design competition for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which the NEA administered. She has also received an NEA Visual Arts Fellowship and the National Medal of Arts, as well as having her exhibitions and projects supported by the agency, including the most significant and most prolonged project she has undertaken, the Confluence Project in Northwest U.S.

Lin was a university student studying architecture when she submitted her design for a nationwide competition for concepts of a new memorial to Vietnam veterans. Her design was very unusual and unlike the general tradition of memorial tributes. She proposed to build a V-shaped granite wall where the names of every soldier who was killed or still missing were inscribed on the wall. One end of the V-shape pointed towards the Washington Monument and the other towards the Lincoln Memorial, tying the design into existing structures. The black granite walls mirror each other as they slope below ground level with a long walkway in

front of the polished, reflective wall (12.2.30). The new, controversial wall has become an accepted and essential tribute to the veterans of the contentious war, attended by many to visit a fallen soldier, lay flowers, or hang flags. The wall designed by Lin became a model for new and unusual memorials and sculptures. The names of the fallen (12.2.31) are inscribed on the highly polished wall as a man in uniform stands at attention. The man's reflection becomes part of the wall as though he was one with the other fallen names. The video describes her ideas for the Vietnam War Memorial.



Figure 9.4.1.30: *Wall at the memorial* (Timothy J Brown, CC BY-SA 3.0)



Figure 9.4.1.31: *Reflection on the wall* (Public Domain)

Maya Lin: Veterans Memorial

Maya Lin, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, 1982, granite, 2 acres within Constitution Gardens, (National Mall, Washington, D.C.)



Systematic Landscapes was a series of different installations Lin created to give viewers unusual sights of the earth and how it looks. She used today's technologies to build the installations and generate unique views of the physical world. Lin stated, "I would say that I'm no different than an eighteenth-century landscape painter, but I have more than my eyes to take a look at nature." [9] Lin created multiple diverse exhibits using different technologies. *Water Line* (12.2.32) (metal structure in background) appears as an outline in space. Using aluminum tubing, Lin positions the frames as they would trace mountains buried deep underwater. The strong lines forming the contours give the viewer an intimate view of a previously unseen mountain range. The sculpture hangs from the ceiling, presenting a vision of walking on the ocean floor and looking skyward. Lin brings ambiguity to the image, blurring the concepts of where the sky and water intersect and challenging the viewers' idea of distinct environments. In the foreground, *Blue Lake Pass* (12.2.32) represents mountains cut into segments. The viewer can walk through the exhibit, experiencing the different valleys and peaks, a feeling of walking under the earth's crust. Lin was always interested in the various geological forces creating other regions, and she incorporated unusual views of the earth.



Figure 9.4.1.32: *Systematic Landscape* series *Water Line* (aluminum tubing and paint, 2006, 579.1 x 914.4 x 1,059.2 cm) (CC BY-NC 2.0)

When Lin was growing up, she watched her father start an experimental glass studio. Her father even brought her a box of marbles; she thought they were like opening a water container. In her installation, *Folding the Chesapeake* (10.3.27), Lin used the same fiberglass material her father used in his experiments. Lin studied the Chesapeake Bay region and its changes over the decades. She used the water-colored marbles to recreate the area, installing the marbles up and down the walls and across the floor, appearing to be floating. Lin used 54,000 marbles to create the installation and bring the ecological importance of the entire waterway as a totality, a complete living system. The video described Lin's ideas when she made the installation. Installation art is based on multiple earlier movements, including the reuse and small installations of Dada or Performance Art creatively using and interpreting space, even conceptual art, and the focus on the ideas over the aesthetic.



Figure 9.4.1.33: *Folding the Chesapeake* (glass marble, 2015) (Ron Cogswell, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Maya Lin

Growing up in an artistic environment, Maya Lin sees the materials used in Folding the Chesapeake, installed at the Renwick Gallery, as a reflection of her childhood.



Tiffany Chung (1969-)

Tiffany Chung was born in Da Nang, Vietnam before her family migrated to the United States as war refugees. She received her bachelor's degree from California State University, Long Beach, and a master's from the University of California, Santa Barbara. After graduating, Chung returned to Vietnam to work in Ho Chi Minh City. Chung first became known for the cartographic maps she made into installations. The maps were based on her memories of migrating from Vietnam, and she extended those memories into the more significant experiences of all Southeast Asian people who fled their countries during wartime and afterward. Chung wove people's experiences onto maps with multimedia, sculptures, drawings, paintings, embroidered, and even video media to demonstrate and illustrate people's journeys. Chung incorporated the impacts of war, political, economic, and environmental destruction into the maps and travels of migrating people.

> Rivers and their effects on populations have been of particular interest to Chung since her father was imprisoned after his helicopter was shot down over North Vietnam, and he became a POW. A prisoner swap was set to occur on the river Thach Han. The bridges were bombed out, and when the North Vietnamese decided to cancel the swap of South Vietnamese and American prisoners, many prisoners went across the river anyway. Chung's mother stood on the south side of the river, waiting for Chung's father, who was never released. The wall between North and South Vietnam was invisible; however, it was very painful.[10]

As part of that memory, Chung created a series of maps based on not only rivers but also how traumatic events affected the surrounding populations. Some maps covered the earthquake in San Francisco and the Berlin Wall in Germany. Chung draws the maps, and the foundation stitches are embroidered with additional hand stitching. She also adds buttons and grommets. The positions and colors of the threads, buttons, and grommets have meaning. As part of her River Project, she documented different river systems in Asia. In this project, she made maps with two layers, vellum and paper. The map of the Mekong Delta (12.2.34) demonstrated the continual flooding of the land and how hydropower development and dams change the river's flow, aggravate people's poverty, disrupt spawning fish, and damage the agricultural soil.

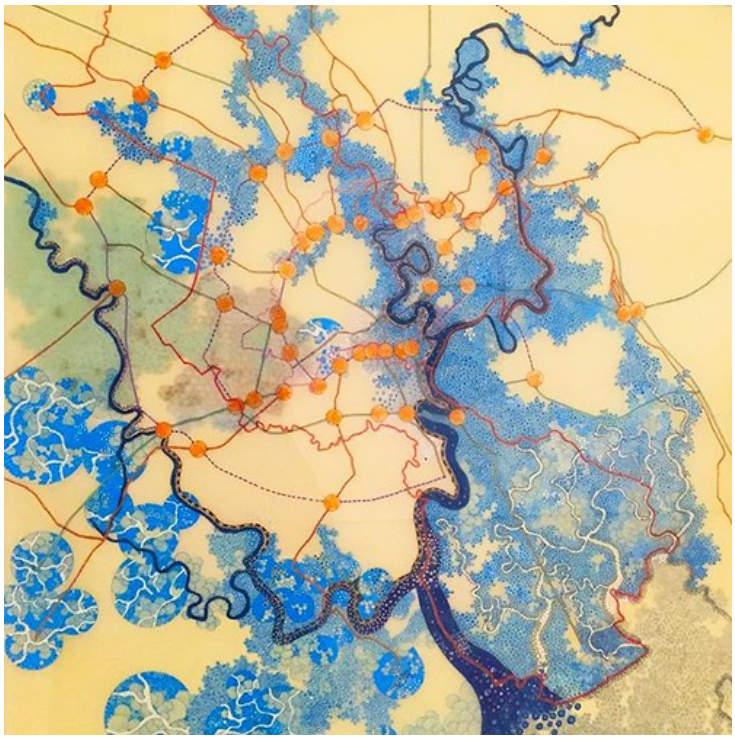


Figure 9.4.1.34: *The River Project* (micro-pigment ink, oil, vellum, paper, 2010) (veritatem, CC BY 2.0.)

Chung's installation, *For the Living* (12.2.35), is an immense world map constructed on a large grass mound. The map is centered on the migration routes of exiles from Southeast Asia who the Vietnam War displaced. Chung explores the stories of the refugee movements and how the pathways are part of the American story of assimilation and acceptance. A color-coded rope represents each line (12.2.36) and corresponds to how people moved across the globe. The yellow rope represented those transported by air, blue by boat, and orange by land, with the connecting points indicated with red dome caps. The maps noted people's routes from their homes to refugee camps and their resettlement countries. Refugees ended up all over the world, with large numbers in the United States and France, while others went to places where they knew someone, could get accepted by a government, or found some type of transportation.

The monument is only temporary but was constructed by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Chung wanted to give life to each person displaced or forced to migrate. She noted that the Veteran Memorial commemorates the names of American soldiers who died in the war, and the memorial is 137 meters long. To build a memorial listing the names of dead Vietnamese, a nine-mile-long wall would be needed (and this does not include Laotians, Hmong, and Cambodians who died).[11]

Chung said, "The Vietnamese experience is an anchor point and reminder of America being a second chance many people have risked their lives for."[12]



Figure 9.4.1.35: *For the Living* (mixed media earthwork, 2023, 50 x 60.0 meters)(Ron Cogswell, CC BY 2.0)



Figure 9.4.1.36: *For the Living closeup* (Elvert Barnes, CC BY-SA 2.0)

Beyond Granite: Pulling Together

In Summer 2023, Beyond Granite will present a dynamic new series of installations designed to create a more inclusive, equitable, and representative commemorative landscape on the National Mall. The Beyond Granite initiative is led by the Trust for the National Mall in partnership with the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Service, and is funded by the Mellon Foundation. The inaugural exhibition, Beyond Granite: Pulling Together, will feature installations from six leading contemporary artists that respond to a central question: What stories remain untold on the National Mall?



After the war, the new communist government changed the structure of those living in the south with reeducation, population redistribution, new agricultural changes, and changing the rivers. Chung, her mother, and sister were forcibly relocated in 1978. A massive undertaking was to remove and modify the landscape, marshlands, and mangroves around the rivers and transform them into urban areas, eliminating memories and forcing new ideologies. Stored in a Jar: Monsoon, Drowning Fish, Color of Water, and the Floating World (12.2.37) was an installation Chung created to accommodate climate change. The floating town contained forty-three houseboats and seventy riverboats. "Chung proposed a floating village model combining vernacular architectural forms of farming and houseboat communities in Asia as a sustainable way of living with chronic floods instead of suggesting mobility adaptations. This work also draws on and critiques the modernist ethos of master planning, highlighting universal design principles that have existed for generations and underscoring that these ecological concerns and strategies for sustainability are neither a contemporary nor Western phenomenon."[13] Chung wanted the work to contradict the usual urban planning and focus on what is good for the environment, adapting to change, and what is suitable for the local population.



Figure 9.4.1.37: *Store in a jar: Monsoon, Drowning fish, Color of water and the floating world* (2011, plexiglass, wood veneer, aluminum, paint, steel cables, foam, copper wire, etc., 600 x 300 cm) (Amasou Umasou, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Tiffany Chung

Artist Tiffany Chung probes the legacies of the Vietnam War and its aftermath through maps, videos, and paintings that highlight the voices and stories of former Vietnamese refugees.



Haegue Yang (1971-)

Haegue Yang is from South Korea and received her bachelor's degree from Seoul National University and a master's degree from Stadelschule in Berlin. Yang lives in both Berlin and Seoul. Yang's father went to work in the Middle East, and her parents divorced when he returned. The turmoil in Korea and her family inspired her works to reflect historical events, human migration, and industrialization. Yang generally creates work for a specific site and the history or culture of the region. Yang creates multisensory installation environments from ordinary manufactured objects and everyday household items. Each installation

combines contrasting disparate materials with elements like light bulbs juxtaposed with feather boas. She also incorporates knitting and weaving methods into her work using unusual materials. Yang generally makes her work site-specific and interweaves personal and local histories into the installation, frequently adding audio for an immersive effect.

> Yang believes "abstraction is not a…simplified way of thinking: it's a leap-a leap into a dimension that cannot otherwise be understood."[14]

Yang is known for her installation using Venetian blinds to convert large spaces with filtered light and segmented spaces, forcing the viewer to move to multiple viewing points. "Her light sculptures and signature Venetian blind installations are often metaphors for her life of willful isolation and her refusal to embody any single nationality in her work."[15] *Lingering Nous* (12.2.38) is a site-specific installation in Paris constructed in contrast to the linear structures of the museum complex itself. Each color is angled to reflect the color scheme of the museum's service apparatus, as seen in the ventilation, electrical, and other connective building facilities. The blind installation consists of 166 Venetian blinds hanging in the vast space of the three-story lobby. The iridescent green and pink blinds glow at different times based on the light streaming in. Each of the blinds is also hung askew—the installation moves between ornamental and abstraction.

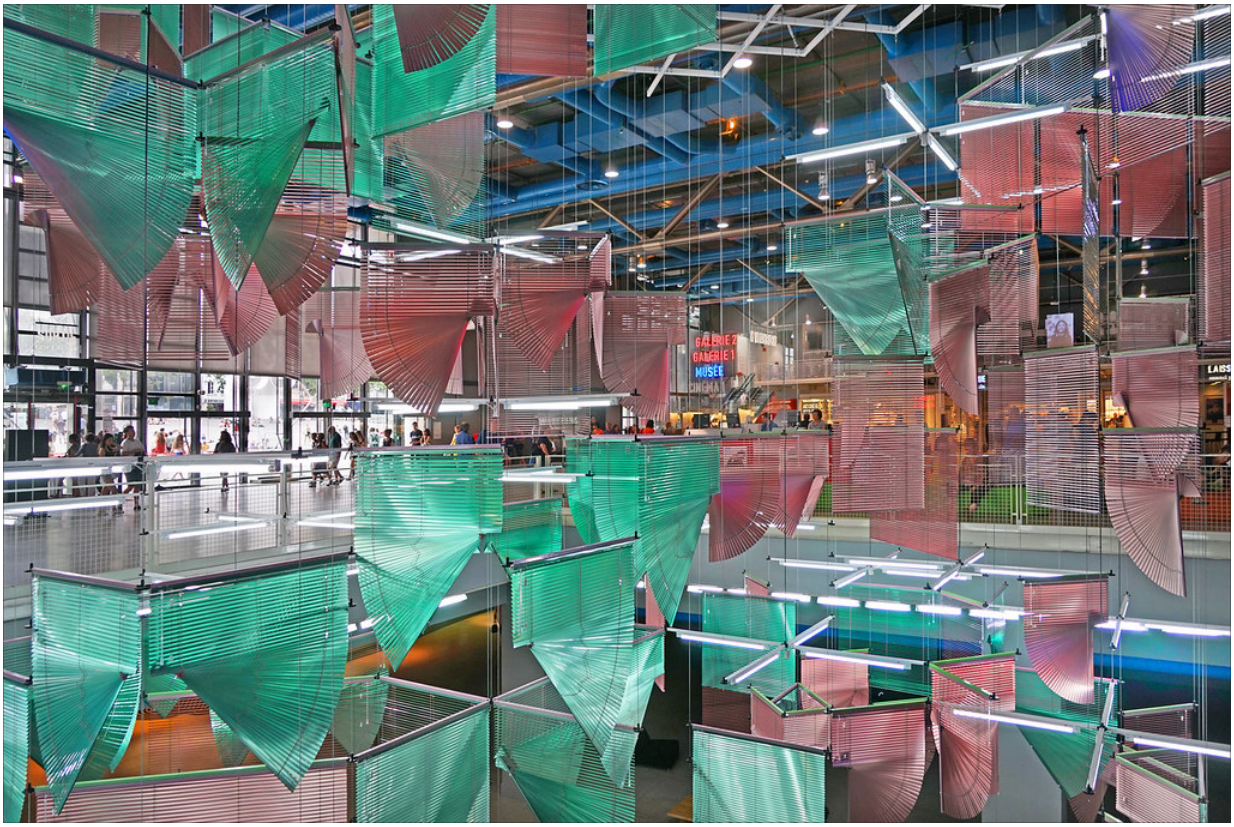


Figure 9.4.1.38: *Lingering Nous* (2016, aluminum Venetian blinds, aluminum hanging structure, powder coating) (dalbera, CC BY 2.0)

Yang was known for using utilitarian objects in a typical household and creating images with objects out of context. The work has a transitory feeling, with images ready to move at any time, reflecting geographical and personal displacement happening to people worldwide. Female Natives and Medicine Men (12.2.39) come together in an installation of structures that are both visual and auditory. Yang used drying racks draped and adorned with hanging materials, light bulbs, wire, and other household paraphernalia. Yarn and fabric instill color into the figure, with reflected light bulbs changing the movement of the whole structure. The objects are surreal as the bodies hung on chrome skeletons appear to glow. The inhuman structures form a community and appear ready to move at any time. In the image Close up 1 (12.2.40), the figure appears clothed in soft, fluffy, white fur, betraying the aggressive position of the stiff, brown wooden arms. It seems to wear a ceremonial headdress, and the lights are visible, conveying strength. Close-up 2 (12.2.41) is much softer and more closed. The lights hang inside the structure, surrounded and protected by large balls and draped material, much daintier than the adjacent figure.



Figure 9.4.1.39: *Female Natives and Medicine Men* (2010) (clothing rack, casters, light bulbs, cable, cord, plastic items, papier mâché, water color, varnish, metal rings, zip ties, yarn, wire, 180 x 99 x 103 cm) (準建築人手札網站 Forgemind ArchiMedia, CC BY 2.0)



Figure 9.4.1.40: *Female Natives and Medicine Men Close up one* (準建築人手札網站 Forgemind ArchiMedia, CC BY 2.0)



Figure 9.4.1.41: *Female Natives and Medicine Men Close up two* (準建築人手札網站 Forgemind ArchiMedia, CC BY 2.0)

As part of Yang's show, Changing From From to From, the wallpaper for the installation, *Non-Linear and Non-Periodic Dynamics* (12.2.42), in the background, is based on the model of how chaotic weather behaves. The butterfly effect of the weather model is visible in the design, where the chaos theory of a small change causes incalculable and dramatic outcomes. The design incorporates water and weather patterns. The wallpaper wraps around the walls and is printed with digital color print on self-adhesive vinyl film.

> Yang stated, "Historical figures inhabit my head like creatures in a mystic landscape. They are my tools to carve this landscape, finally becoming mountain peaks and rivers in my idiosyncratic way."[16]

The exhibition's second part includes *Sonic Intermediates – Three Differential Equations* (12.2.42), three sculptures in the foreground, that move and fill the air with ritualistic rattling and ringing of bells. The objects are moveable through space and bring the feeling of abstract humans or intermediaries for the human and spirit world. The steel frames are covered in mesh, bells, and twine, all waiting to come to life. Yang constructs the figures to have remnants of human or animal characteristics: a head, fuzzy brown fur, or moveable parts.



Figure 9.4.1.42: *Non-Linear and Non-Periodic Dynamics* –in background (2020, ink, vinyl film) and *Sonic Intermediates–Three Differential Equations* - in foreground (2020, steel frame, mesh, handles, casters, red brass, copper, nickel, plated bells, rings, plastic twine, broom, zip ties, turbine vent, size variable) (SandwichCafe, CC BY 2.0)

Haehue Yang: Changing from to from

The exhibition title, drawn from a poem by Chinese-British conceptual artist Li Yuan-chia, evokes the notion of migration between locations. The exhibition features four works that express different strands of Yang's multivalent practice, linked by her abiding interest in mobility and transformation. Each work explores physical, social and conceptual movement: from the activation of the sculptures, Sonic Intermediates – Three Differential Equations 2020 to the layered imagery of shifting water and weather patterns in the wallpaper, Non-Linear and Non-Periodic Dynamics 2020.



Chiharu Shiota (1972-)

Chiharu Shiota was born in Japan, where her father manufactured boxes for fish. She always wanted to be an artist and attended Kyoto Seika University and other universities in Australia and Germany. Shiota lives in Berlin, and her installations are based on memories, emotions, and the cycle of life and death. She uses red, black, or white yarn for her construction material and weaves intricate and meticulous environments with massive webs covering large parts of a gallery or museum. Shiota forms the yarn into shapes based on ordinary cobwebs, human veins, or mathematical fractals. She also incorporates everyday objects in her work, adding to her personal feelings and emotions.

Living Inside (12.2.43) was created during the forced lockdowns of the pandemic. Staying inside, Shiota became interested in scale, remembrances, and our ties to ordinary household things. Shiota made a miniature world where pieces are frozen in time, reflecting a familiar place yet unseeingly still and quiet. The objects are trapped and tied together with red and black threads and enclosed in a tangled, interwoven web of red. Shiota explained, "We are connected since we are all in the same situation. Everyone is sitting at home looking at their furniture and asking questions about the outside world, which right now has been reduced to a mere memory."[17]



Figure 9.4.1.43: *Living Inside* (2021) (dalbera, CC BY 2.0)

Shiota used almost 430 suitcases for her work *Accumulation: Searching for the Destination* (12.2.44). She believed the suitcases held memories about the movement and migration of people. The suitcases themselves witness the journeys of life. Shiota started collecting suitcases from flea markets. In one suitcase, she found a newspaper from 1947 and became interested in hidden stories. The red strings unite the suitcases and the beginning of someone's journey. The suitcases hang and move on the strings because no journey is precisely known, and change occurs throughout any journey. Shiota said:

> "When I look at a heaping pile of suitcases,
>
> all I see is a corresponding number of human lives.
>
> Why did these people leave the place they were born,
>
> in search of some destination?

> Why did they go on this voyage?
> I think back on the feelings of these people
> on the morning of their departure."[18]

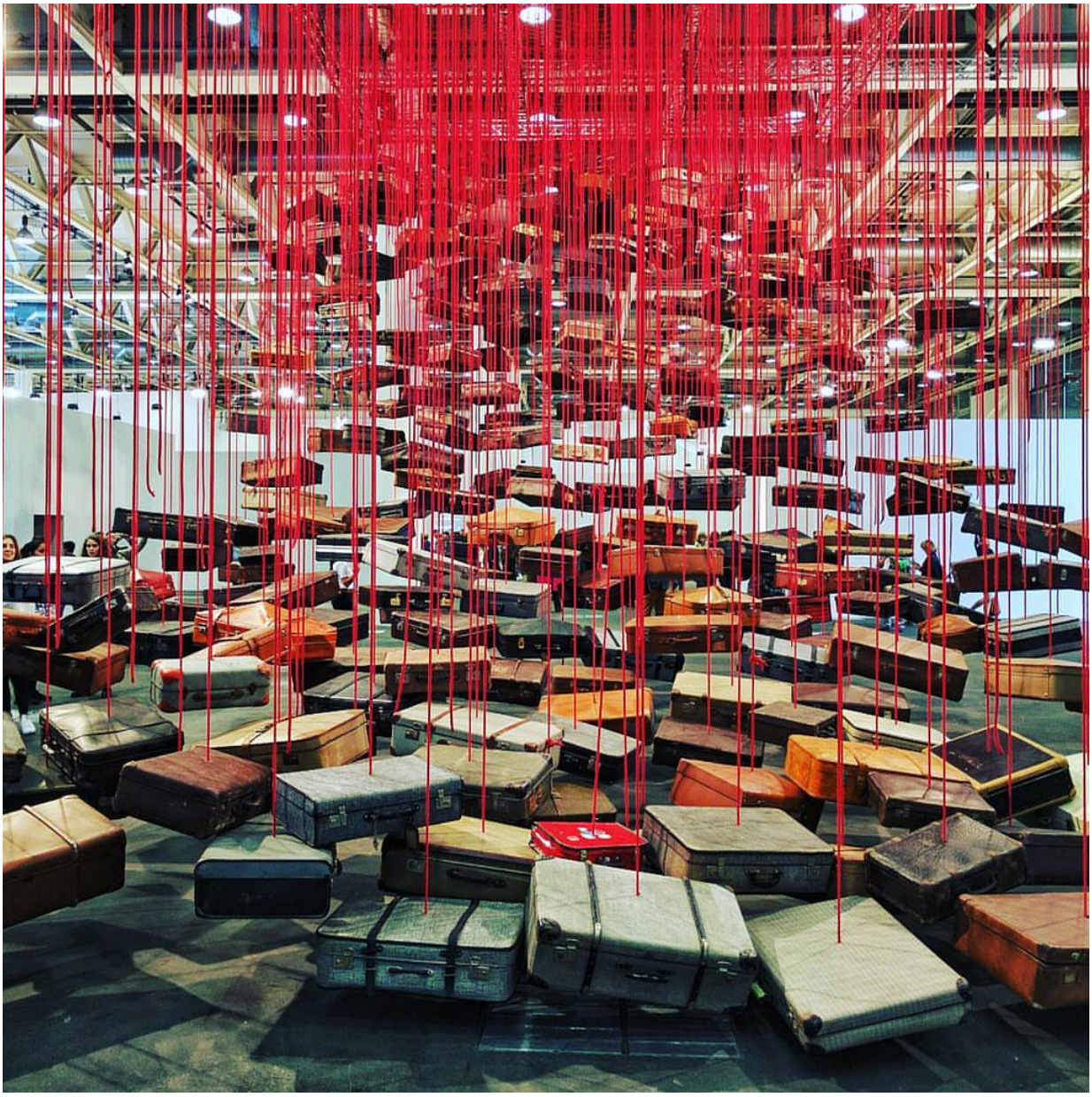


Figure 9.4.1.44: *Accumulation: Searching for Destination* (2016, old suitcases, rope) (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

When Shiota was a child, her neighbor's home burned down, and only their charred piano remained in the silence of the ashes. She remembers the silence and the smell of the smoke, an image staying with her twenty years later. The silence of the piano significantly impacted her; the piano burned, and no longer able to make music. For her installation, *In Silence* (12.2.45), Shiota burned an old piano and the chairs and tied them together, never more to play, have people watching, singing, or talking, only silence. The black string covers and envelops the piano and chairs, trapping the sounds inside; now, everything is useless.



Figure 9.4.1.45: *In Silence* (2011, burned piano and chairs, black string) (玉心, CC BY-SA 2.0.)

Meet the Artists

This short film follows Chiharu Shiota as she takes us through her monumental installation Uncertain Journey at Blain|Southern Berlin. You can see the artist discussing the allusions to a journey, the symbolism of the interwoven strands and the importance she places on memory.



Anselm Kiefer

Anselm Kiefer (1945-) was born in Germany a few months before World War II ended. The city was heavily bombed, a difficult place to live. Kiefer attended the University of Freiburg, first studying languages before switching to art. In the first part of his career, he painted images based on themes from Nazi rule, the Holocaust, or spiritual poetry. Kiefer incorporated straw, clay, ashes, shellac, and lead in the mix of paint applied to the canvas. He used many of his painting concepts and techniques for the large installations. *Seven Heavenly Palaces* (8.2.30) was based on ideas from an ancient Hebrew writing. The seven towers were fourteen to eighteen meters high, and each weighed ninety tons. Kiefer used reinforced concrete for the towers. He inserted lead wedges between each level. The towers became a summation of Kiefer's life-long themes of the ancient Hebrews, World War II atrocities, the ruination of Western culture, and the possibilities in the future. He also added large paintings to reinforce his philosophies. Visitors walk through the space to view the towers and paintings, moving between spaces and media. Kiefer added different meanings to each tower. On one tower, he placed an ark representing the ark believed to rest on Ararat. At the base of another tower are small sheets of glass labeled with paper to represent celestial bodies.



Figure 9.4.1.30: Seven Heavenly Palaces (2004, reinforced concrete, 13 to 19 meters high) by HeinzDS, CC BY-SA 2.0

Breaking of the Vessels (8.2.31) is a massive installation weighing over seven tons. The bookcase is filled with forty-one lead book folios and interspersed with glass. The books reference Jewish culture and ancient mystical writings. A semicircular pane of glass is suspended above and is inscribed with Hebrew words translating to "Infinite Light ." According to the writings, the attributes of G-d's light were divided among ten vessels that were not strong enough to contain them and broke, bringing the Divine into an imperfect world.[9] Kiefer frequently referred to the atrocities of the Nazis against the Jews. In front of the bookcase are piles of broken glass, referring to Kristallnacht (The Night of Broken Glass). In November 1938, Nazis and civilians shattered the glass windows in thousands of Jewish-owned businesses and synagogues. The Nazis destroyed and burned all the books they found in Jewish homes, synagogues, schools, or businesses. The books are made from lead, impenetrable, hidden. Kiefer frequently used lead in his paintings and installations, lead representing a crushing, brutal force. He described lead as "the only material heavy enough to carry the weight of human history."[10]



Figure 9.4.1.31: Breaking of the Vessels (1990, lead, iron, glass, copper wire, charcoal, aquatec, 378.5 x 836.9 x 518.2 cm) by clio1789, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Kara Walker

Kara Walker (1969-) was born in California, her father a painter and professor. Walker said she used to sit on her father's lap and watch him draw, always wanted to become an artist. She received a BFA from Atlanta College of Art and an MFA from Rhode Island School of Design. Walker lived in California until she was thirteen in an integrated neighborhood surrounded by civil rights activists. When she moved to Georgia, Walker was shocked to discover the amount of discrimination, including the Ku Klux Klan rallies, still occurring. The discriminatory practices of the south highly influenced Walker, and her art focused on the brutalities of slavery. Walker is known for her panoramic silhouettes depicting racism, and the realities of life slaves endured. Her work was primarily black figures backed by a white wall using paper, video, shadow puppets, or other projections. Walker has also branched out and created oversized sculptures. Her silhouettes in *African't* (8.2.32) are almost life-sized. Men, women, and children who were black and white are depicted in different scenes before the civil war. The scenes present a diverse tableau of the white population's terror, violence, and inhumanity to the black people held in bondage. Walker displayed the spoken and unspoken of violence and sexual abuse. Each image has a specific interpretation, the details of a disturbing view of race relations in the

American south. Walker usually positioned her silhouettes strung out against the wall or running down a wall by stairs, spreading the work out to view each frame.



Figure 9.4.1.32: African't (1996, cut paper on wall, 365.7 x 2011.6 cm) by Ron of the Desert, CC BY-ND 2.0

Event Horizon (8.2.33, 8.2.34) is placed by the lobby's central stairway. The silhouettes represent the Underground Railroad and the African American's struggles for freedom, the installation resembling an Asian scroll. The first image depicts the man releasing a shackled woman who loses her hold of the child, all of them falling into the dark abyss. Walker's work is very detailed; the small fingers, braided hair, or ragged hem of the dress are all visible in the black cutouts. In any of Walker's images, the people's faces are not visible; the people's emotions are built into their body positions and interactions. The strong context of the black silhouettes against the stark white background removes all ideas of gray areas to explain the sinister horror of slavery.



Figure 9.4.1.33: Event Horizon (part 1) (2005, latex paint) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0



Figure 9.4.1.34: *Event Horizon* (part 2) (2005, latex paint) by rocor, CC BY-NC 2.0

In 2014, the massive sugar factory in Brooklyn, New York, would be demolished. Walker designed a monumental sculpture to represent the exploitation of the people throughout the history of the sugar trade. The building was constructed in the late nineteenth century to store the raw sugar from the Caribbean before the sugar was refined and packaged; sugar was a luxury. Hundreds of thousands of slaves were taken to the Caribbean to work on the vast sugar plantations, building the sugar market on the backs of Africans shipped across the Atlantic. Sugar was also known as blood sugar, defining how humans bled through the exploited work in the fields or under the brutality of the overseers. Walker designed an immense sphinx-like woman, representing the building and the history of sugar. *A Subtlety or the Marvelous Sugar Baby* (8.2.35) is located between two rows of steel columns, the Sugar Baby appearing as a colossal goddess.



Figure 9.4.1.35: A Subtlety or the Marvelous Sugar Baby (2014, polystyrene blocks, sugar, 22.8 meters long, 10.6 meters high) by Inhabitat, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The sculpture was created from 330 huge polystyrene blocks and then covered with eighty tons of sugar—the sugar coating over the blocks allowing the seams of the polystyrene to show like quarried stone. When the Sugar Baby is approached from the front (8.2.36), her enlarged hands appear foreshortened, her pendulous breasts filling the space and her enigmatic face.



Figure 9.4.1.36: A Subtlety front view, by Inhabitat, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Walking around to the back of the statue (8.2.37), the viewer comes upon her buttocks jutting up from the shortened spine, thighs, and calves. "A powerful personification of the most beleaguered demographic in this country — the black woman — shows us where we all come from, innocent and unrefined."[11]



Figure 9.4.1.37: A Subtlety back view, by BC. LBCo, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Around the Sugar Baby were thirteen small molasses-colored boys (8.2.38) standing about one and a half meters high. The statues were made from cast resin and covered in molasses or cast sugar, some light, others darker colors. The figures are carrying bananas or baskets, appearing to bring offerings, or they were only tired workers coming back from the cane fields. The whole installation remained in place for a little over two months. The building was open to the elements, and the weather eroded the sculptures before they were taken down.



Figure 9.4.1.38: The Subtley figure (cast resin and sugar) by gigi_nyc, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Urs Fischer

Urs Fischer (1973-) was born in Switzerland; his parents were doctors. At first, Fisher studied photography before opening his studio. Today, his work includes sculpture, drawing, painting, and his first interest in photography. Fisher's work is frequently classified as subversive and non-traditional, often creating oversized installations. *Get Up Girl a Sun Is Running the World* (8.2.42) is an installation based on 2,000-year-old olive trees found in the Italian countryside. He cast the trees in aluminum and covered them with white enamel. The natural trees' gnarled trunk and twisted branches are captured and frozen in time, then installed in an

abnormal setting of concrete and glass, the beauty of the natural setting lost. Fischer said, "What interests me about the 2000-year-old olive trees is the fact that once they are cast bare naked, they become Memoriam of condensed time. Through a cast olive tree, you can not only experience the lapse of real-time, that is lived time, frozen in its given form but through this transformation also a different calibrated temporality."[13]



Figure 9.4.1.42: Get Up Girl a Sun Is Running the World (2007, cast aluminum, white enamel) by dalbera, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Fischer invited 1,500 people to help make clay structures for his exhibition of *Yes* (8.2.43, 8.2.44). The clay was provided for the people, and they were able to use all the clay needed and create anything they wanted. The people were from all walks of life, no experience required, and the results from the people were varied; some sculptures were polished, others were crude; they were large and small, made by young and old. The exhibit covered all of the floor space, and some people even used the walls. Objects included an array of unfired clay skulls, humble pretzels, Batman's head, octopi, dogs, birds, life-sized nudes, a bathtub, a fireplace, a tiny smartphone, a tombstone for chivalry (hah), a bowl of ramen, and an impressively giant and accurate Jabba the Hutt.[14]



Figure 9.4.1.43: Yes (view 1) (2013, clay) by andydr, CC BY 2.0.



Figure 9.4.1.44: Yes (view 2) (2013, clay) by andydr, CC BY 2.0

Fischer worked beside the people making his sculptures, including the immense wax sculpture *Untitled* (8.2.45), an image resembling Giambologna's Rape of the Sabine Women from the 1500s. Fischer placed wicks throughout the wax sculpture and then burned them to achieve the dripping and melted look of the statue. His oversized sculpture contrasted the smaller creations of the people, and the exhibition has the look of disparate pieces in a landscape of ruins, broken figures, and unassociated images.



Figure 9.4.1.45: Untitled (2013, wax) by andydr, CC BY 2.0

Fischer used the concept of ordinary objects to create the absurd. His monumental work, *Untitled (Lamp/Bear)* (8.2.46), is an image of a child's bright yellow teddy bear as part of a desk lamp. The mammoth bear is about two stories high as it sits, flopping forward. The bear appears to be sitting on the lamp as the light sits above his head, the giant lamp providing light for the outdoor space. The bear is wrinkled and looks cozy, ready to be held by a child. However, the bear is not made from soft fur as it appears; instead, it is cast of bronze and weighs about seventeen tons.



Figure 9.4.1.46: Untitled *(Lamp/Bear)* (2005, painted/lacquered cast bronze, acrylic glass, LED lights, stainless steel interior framework, 700 x 650 x 749.9 cm) by Dan Nguyen, CC BY-NC 2.0

Olafur Eliasson

Olafur Eliasson (1967-) was born in Denmark, although his parents had recently emigrated from Iceland. His father was an artist and moved back to Iceland after divorcing Eliasson's mother. Eliasson studied art at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and then moved to Germany. His artwork is large and complex, so Eliasson collaborates with a team of architects and engineers, and other artists. He is also a professor at Berlin University, where he works with spatial experiments. Eliasson is well-known for creating multi-sensory exhibitions and combining scientific phenomena, environmental concerns, and art.

The weather has always been part of everyday conversation, will it be hot or cold or when the rain might start. Eliasson created *The Weather Project* (8.2.47) to bring the experience of the sun and sky. A fine mist is felt throughout the day as though coming from outside. At the end of the hall, hundreds of mono-frequency lamps, as installed in a semicircle, reflected in a huge mirror. The lamps contain a light restricted to a very narrow frequency, so they only emit yellow and black; any other colors become invisible. The result is a perfect sun seemingly static and unmoving, its light turning viewers into small black shadows. Eliasson has constructed the exhibition so viewers can also walk behind the sun and view how the electrical wiring, sub-structure, and misting machines are assembled and function. Aluminum frames were lined with the mirrored foil to create the reflective sun with the 200 lights in the semicircle.



Figure 9.4.1.47: The Weather Project (2003, mono frequency lights, projection foil, haze machines, mirror foil, aluminium, scaffolding, 26.7 x 22.3 x 155.4 meters) by Istvan, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The New York City Waterfalls (8.2.48) were a temporary installation during the summer of 2008 in New York City. The four waterfalls were situated on the East River at each bridge. The waterfalls were meant to enhance the public space and give people a sense of relationship with their surroundings. The basic structure was a set of scaffolding as the backbone for each separate fall, along with water pumps and hoses. The waterfalls were powered by electricity from "green power" and illuminated with LED lights. The fish were protected with special filters and intake pools to make the entire project environmentally sensitive. The cascading water brought a feeling of mountains and natural places in the middle of a congested urban area. The sound of falling water provides a softer sound among the harsh din of the city.

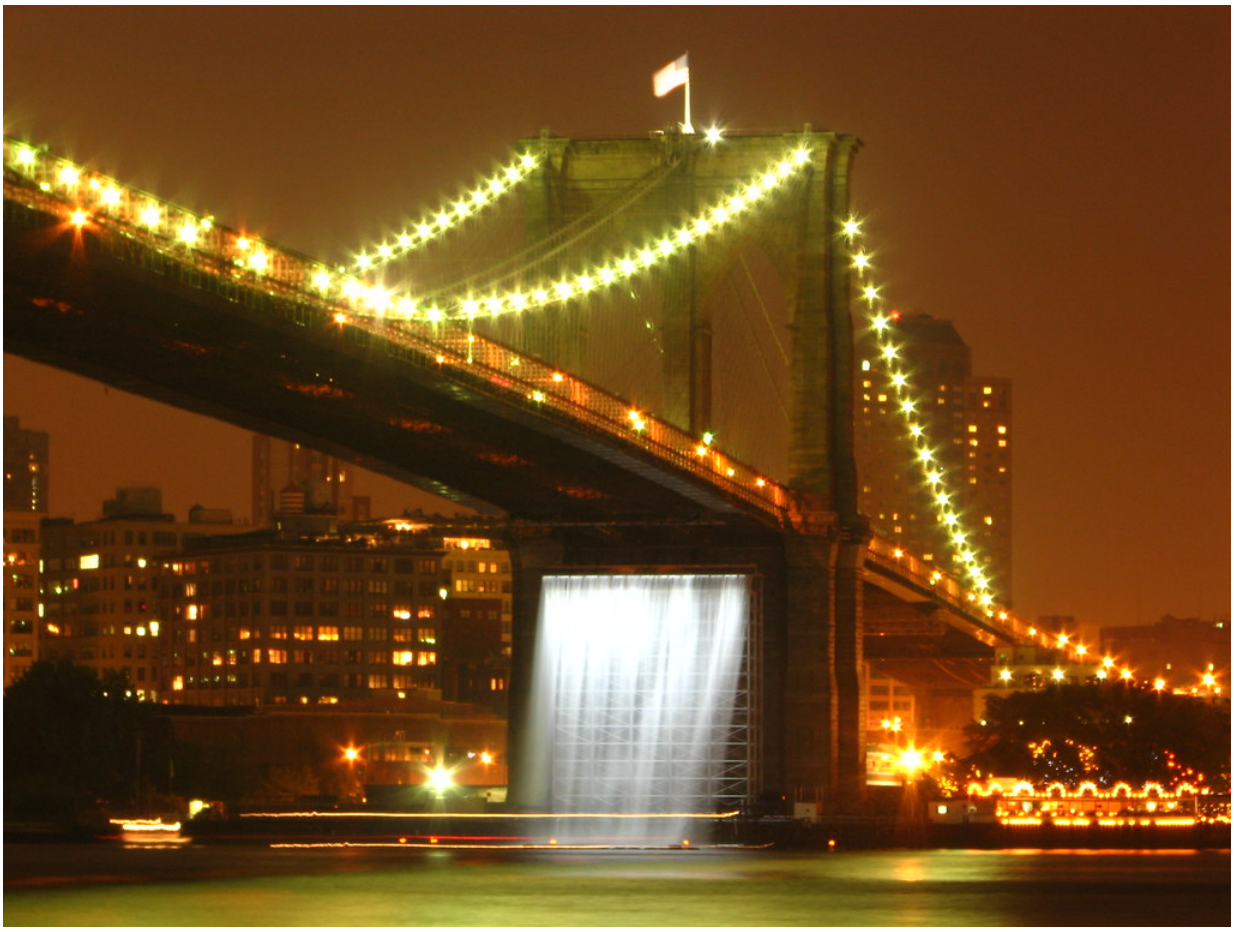


Figure 9.4.1.48: New York City Waterfalls (2008, water, scaffolding, steel grill, troughs, pumps, piping, pool filters, LED lights, ultra-violet filters, concrete, switch gears, electrical equipment, wiring, control modules, anemometers, 30-40 meters high) by epicharmus, CC BY 2.0

Eliasson wanted to bring the experience of the perspective of the horizon. He didn't think of the horizon as a line; instead, he felt it was a dimension. Eliasson explained, "Questioning one's horizon requires us to question linearity and create a new horizon."[15] His exhibit *Inside the Horizon* (8.2.49) is a series of forty-three triangular columns with varying widths running beside a grotto. Two sides of every column are covered with mirrors, and one side is clad in yellow glass tiles. The columns are illuminated from the inside. Each column is a different size and positioned at a different angle. Viewers walk through the columns, and their reflections create endless diffracted reflections on the water, building columns, and even themselves. The space becomes filled and changes with hundreds of facets and surprising visuals, much like a kaleidoscope.



Figure 9.4.1.49: Inside the Horizon (2013, Stainless steel, aluminium, LED light system, colored glass, mirror, 5.4 x 91 x 5.2 meters) by beatrice.boutetdemvl, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Bharti Kher

Bharti Kher (1969-) was born in England and received her BA from Newcastle Polytechnic. She moved to India in 1993, where she still lives. Her art is based on a relationship of an object and its metaphysical and material dimensions and how she repositions the concepts and thoughts the viewer previously held. Most of her work includes the *bindi*, the red dot women in India apply to their forehead between the eyebrows. The red dot contains significant traditional and religious meanings and is generally associated with the Hindu definition of the third eye. Kher explained, "Many people believe it's a traditional symbol of marriage while others, in the West particularly, see it as a fashion accessory… But actually the bindi is meant to represent a third eye – one that forges a link between the real and the spiritual-conceptual worlds."[16] Kher uses the bindi as part of her art, shifting the meaning. Her sculptures are generally fantastical, blurring the lines between real and mythical, typically made from found objects with their own definition, which becomes changed. Kher makes her objects open to misinterpretation, magical thinking of abstract forms.

The Skin Speaks, a language not its own (8.2.50), is Kher's most well-known work. She became interested in the concept of elephants after seeing a photograph of a collapsed elephant being put into a truck, an image she remembered for a long time before making her elephant. The life-sized elephant is made from fiberglass and lies on the ground on its stomach with its head turned. If

an elephant dies, it falls to the ground on its side, and this elephant is sited differently. The elephant is covered with white bindis forming unending patterns on the elephant. Kher used the bindi to act as a skin on the elephant giving life to something dying. The heavy elephant appears to be lifted by the thousands of bindis as the bindi do not stop while they move over the elephant's skin. The elephant's head is turned, and the eye appears to look at the viewer.



Figure 9.4.1.50: The Skin Speaks a Language Not Its Own (2006, fiberglass, bindi, 142 x 456 x 195 cm) by Mel Hodgkinson, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Kher wanted to create the heart of the massive blue sperm whale; however, she did not find enough scientific documentation about the construction of the whale's heart, so she invented her version in *An Absence of Assignable Cause* (8.2.51). Kher designed the life-sized heart and added veins and arteries jutting out from the enormous heart. The entire sculpture is covered with colored bindis, which Kher applies individually to create precise patterns and create movement. The monumental installation also reflects the position of the immense whale in the disintegrating environment.



Figure 9.4.1.51: An Absence of Assignable Cause (2007, bindis on fiberglass, 173 x 300 x 116 cm) by Anosmia, CC BY 2.0

Installation art is based on multiple earlier movements, including the reuse and small installations of Dada or Performance Art creatively using and interpreting space, even conceptual art and the focus on the ideas over the aesthetic.

[1] Retrieved from https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tat...unflower-seeds

[2] Retrieved from https://www.magasin3.com/en/artwork/world-map-2/

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[15] Retrieved from https://www.fondationlouisvuitton.fr...de-the-horizon

[16] Retrieved from https://www.hauserwirth.com/artists/2793-bharti-kher/

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9.4.1.1: Ai Wei Wei, Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)

by MEGAN LORRAINE DEBIN

Page ID
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Video 9.4.1.1.1: Video from **Tate**

Subversive seeds

Ai Weiwei often uses his art to critique political and economic injustice. This can be seen in work such as his 2010 installation, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)* at Tate Modern, London.



Figure 9.4.1.1.1 : Ai Weiwei, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)*, 2010, one hundred million hand painted porcelain seeds (photo: **Drew Bates**, CC BY 2.0)

Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds) consists of more than 100 million tiny, handmade porcelain sunflower seeds, originally weighing in at 150 tons. They filled the enormous Turbine Hall at Tate Modern, an industrial building-turned-contemporary art space. Sunflower seeds evokes a warm personal memory for the artist, who recalls that while he was growing up, even the poorest in China would share sunflower seeds as a treat among friends. The use of sunflower seeds as the basis of his installation was also designed to subvert popular imagery rooted in the artist's childhood. Communist propaganda optimistically depicted leader Mao Zedong as the sun and the citizens of the People's Republic of China as sunflowers, turning toward their chairman. Ai Weiwei reasserts the sunflower seed as a symbol of camaraderie during difficult times.



Figure 9.4.1.1.2: Ai Weiwei, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)*, 2010, one hundred million hand painted porcelain seeds (Tate Modern, London)

Though each of the 100 million carefully crafted individual seeds can draw the viewer's attention, once arranged together in a neat rectangle, or covering the floor of an entire room, the hyper-realistic seeds create a sense of vastness. In the Tate installation, there was a sense of precision in the arrangement of the seeds, creating visual order and uniformity. The individual seed is lost among the millions, a critique of the conformity and censorship inherent in modern China.



Figure 9.4.1.1.3: Ai Weiwei, *Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds)*, 2010, one hundred million hand painted porcelain seeds (Tate Modern, London) (photo: **Waldopepper**, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Made In China

More than 1,600 artisans worked to make the individual porcelain seeds by hand in Jingdzhen, the city known as the "Porcelain Capital," where artists have been producing pottery for nearly 2000 years. Porcelain, first produced during the Han dynasty in about 200 B.C.E. and later mastered during the Tang dynasty, is made by heating white clay (kaolin) to a temperature over 1200 degrees Celsius. The fusion of the particles within the clay during firing allowed artists to create vessels with thin but strong walls. Porcelain— a symbol of imperial culture in China—was also made for export via the Silk Road and became important to the creation of the idea of China in the West.



Figure 9.4.1.1.4: Some of the 1,600 highly skilled craftspeople from Jingdezhen hired to create and paint porcelain sunflower seeds

Ai Weiwei's use of porcelain comments on the long history of this prized material while also rejecting the common negative connotations of the modern term "Made in China." Utilizing skilled artisans known for their exquisite craftsmanship to make objects that can only be differentiated one from another upon close inspection, alludes to the important porcelain tradition in Jingdzhen, as well as to the uniformity and diffusion of modern (cheap and fast) labor that is responsible for China's hard-won place in the world economy. *Sunflower Seeds* asks us to examine how our consumption of foreign-made goods affects the lives of others across the globe.

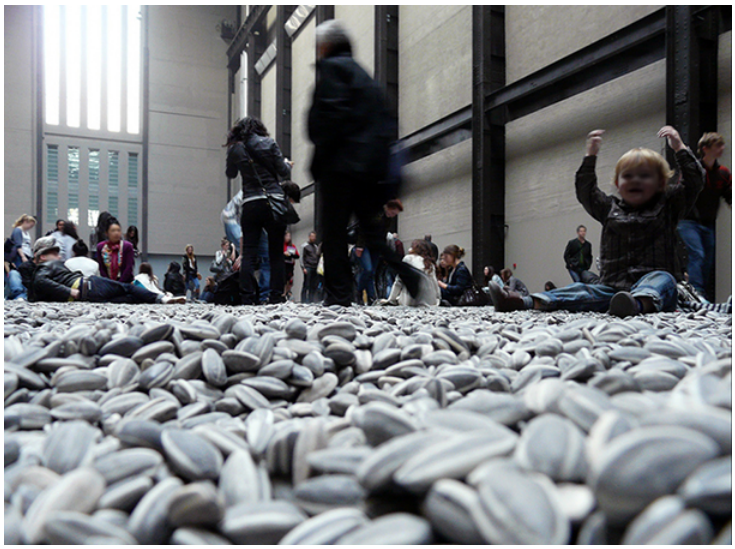


Figure 9.4.1.1.5: Ai Weiwei, Kui Hua Zi (Sunflower Seeds), 2010, one hundred million hand-painted porcelain seeds (Tate Modern, London) (photo: **Loz Flowers** CC BY-SA 2.0)

How we experience an artwork impacts our perception of the work. In the tradition of participatory contemporary art, *Sunflower Seeds* asks the public to physically interact with the art. Initially, Tate visitors were invited to walk over and lie on the seeds, though the museum, in consultation with the artist, suspended this opportunity about a week into the exhibition because of safety concerns.

Art and activism

Ai Weiwei was arrested at the Beijing Capital International Airport on April 3, 2011 during his Tate exhibition.[1] He was detained for 81 days. The artist, along with many in the international community, asserted that his true offense was his political activism for democracy and human rights. Ai Weiwei had blogged for four years—investigating cover-ups and corruption in the government's handling of a devastating 2008 earthquake in Sichuan and the country's hosting of the Olympics. Ai Weiwei's blog was shut down in 2009. Since then, he has turned to Twitter and Instagram. During his detention, the international community, including major US

art institutions, rallied for his release. Officials eventually released him, charging Ai Weiwei with tax evasion, but his passport was withheld, preventing him from leaving the country for four years. It was returned in 2015.



Figure 9.4.1.1.6: Ai Weiwei's continues to address issues of human rights in his work. The 2015 exhibit *@Large*, installed on Alcatraz, the former island prison in the San Francisco Bay, comments on surveillance, freedom, and political prisoners by mixing fine and traditional arts with pop culture materials including silk dragon kites and Lego portraits (above).

[1] Andrew Jacobs, "**China Takes Dissident Artist Into Custody,**" *The New York Times*, 4/3/11, A4

Additional resources:

You can follow Ai Weiwei on Instagram and Twitter @aiww

More information on Ai Weiwei's Sunflower Seeds

Sunflower Seeds exhibition at the Tate

Ai Weiwei from art21

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9.5: Installation Art (21st Century)

Introduction

Installation art is a relatively new genre for the millennium defined as large-scale constructions, usually mixed media, and installed for a specified period. The artwork usually fills the space, and viewers must walk through the exhibit, often becoming part of the installation. However, some installations might be fragile or installed along a wall. A sculpture is generally one piece of art displayed in separate or individual spaces. An installation is a more unified experience, engaging the viewer in most of the environment. Technology has also contributed to the ability of artists to create large installations involving LEDs, computerized movement, unusual formations, and even environmentally supported projects. One attribute of installation art is its immersive properties, how the art appears depending on the viewer's position. The works are also significant in scale and site-specific, made to fit into the gallery and museum or outdoor space. Generally, they are placed in unique surroundings to complement the artwork. The video is focused on Maya Lin and how she overcame being a young female architect. Artists in this section:

- Yayoi Kusama (1929-)
- Jean Shin (1971-)
- Kara Walker (1969-)
- Bharti Kher (1969-)
- Dominque Gonzalez Foerster (1965-)
- Suzanne Lacy (1945-)
- Maya Lin (1959-)

Yayoi Kusama

Yayoi Kusama (1929-) was born in Japan, where her parents owned a nursery for plants and seeds. Kusama started drawing pumpkins from the time she was a child. She said she drew from hallucinations she observed, a concept that followed throughout her life. Kusama's childhood was traumatic; her mother did not support her art and was abusive. Her father had continual extramarital affairs, which her mother made Kusama follow him and spy, reporting back. By the time Kusama was ten, her hallucinations had included flashing lights and fields of dots she believed engulfed her. She studied the traditional Japanese Nihonga style, finding it unsatisfactory, and studied Western avant-garde. After success in Japan, at twenty-seven, she went to the United States from 1957 to 1972, believing Japan was too disparaging of women and too feudalistic.

In the United States, Kusama developed her reflective mirror rooms, complex installations with mirrors, colored balls, and lights. She worked successfully with other artists in New York City; however, financial success eluded her. During this period, Kusama became heavily involved with the anti-Viet Nam war protesters, often doing unusual things to draw attention to her demonstrations, including painting polka dots on nude protesters. When Kusama returned to Japan in 1973, mentally ill and suicidal, she checked herself into a hospital. Since that period, she has resided in the psychiatric hospital, creating her art in a nearby studio.

Dots have become Kusama's obsession in all her artwork and installations, with dots covering everything in repetitive patterns. Kusama said, "A polka-dot has the form of the sun, which symbolizes the energy of the whole world and our living life, and the form of the moon, which is calm—round soft, colourful, senseless, and unknowing. Polka-dots can't stay alone; like the communicative life of people, two or three and more polka-dots become movement. ...Polka-dots are a way to infinity." [1] Her work is based on the repetitive use of dots, beloved pumpkins, and mirrors in her installations.

Dots Obsession (10.3.1) is like Kusama's hallucinations in childhood, believing her space was covered in patterns. In this installation, she used red and highly contrasting white dots for the base color. The room was enclosed with mirrors, multiple lights, and large balloon-like structures, giving the viewers an immersive involvement. *Repetitive Vision* (10.3.2) creates a startling strange, and disorienting environment. The black mirrored walls and ceiling reflect the mannequins covered in red dots. The mirrors present views of the front, back, and sides of the mannequins confusing the viewer, impossible to know the limits of the room or the number of mannequins. The red dots on the floor, mannequins, and reflections add to the confusion of the room's boundaries. Kusama said, "A mirror is a device which obliterates everything, including myself and others in the light of another world or a gallant apparatus which creates nothingness." [2]



Figure 9.5.1: *Dots Obsession* (2011, red paint, white dots, giant balloons, mirrors) (CC BY-ND 2.0)



Figure 9.5.2: *Repetitive Vision* (1996, adhesive dots, Formica, mirrors, mannequins) (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Later in her career, Kusama's infinity rooms expanded, including her trademark dots and pumpkins. The mirrored and lighted ceiling and walls infinitely reflect the dotted pumpkins in *All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins* (10.3.3). The illusion of the installation stretched the concept of ad infinitum. Kusama has placed rows of yellow pumpkins painted with strips of black dots, making the room's depth impossible to judge. The space reflects Kusama's obsessive-compulsive disorder through the repetition of polka dots enclosing the person in the room, the pattern wrapping around and surrounding the viewer.



Figure 9.5.3: *All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins* (2016, wood, mirror, plastic, acrylic, LED) (CC BY-SA 2.0)

In Japan, pumpkins are known as kabocha; an image Kusama spent hours drawing as a child. Pumpkins represented stability and comfort and were attractive in color and shape. By the late 1970s, she started to include pumpkins in some of her work, covering

them with dots and incorporating them into the themes of her mirrored rooms. Pumpkins became major subjects by the new millennium, and Kusama made enormous sculptures. The *Red Pumpkin* (10.3.4) and the *Orange Pumpkin* (10.3.5) were made from fiberglass for installation on Naoshima Island in Japan. The oversized red pumpkin sits on the edge of a protected inlet. The sculpture is hollow inside, made from fiberglass, and covered with large black dots. The orange pumpkin with a different set of black vertical dots was installed on the end of a pier adjacent to the water. The pumpkin was dislodged when a typhoon swept the island in 2021, and waves took it into the sea. The sculpture cracked but was recovered and will be repaired. Kusama also made immense pumpkins from stainless steel (10.3.6, 10.3.7). The metal is shiny and reflects light and images like her mirror rooms. The dots on the pumpkins were made with long-lasting urethane paint. The video discusses the work of Kusama.



Figure 9.5.4: *Red Pumpkin* (1994, reinforced fiberglass, 3.9 meters high x 7 meters wide) (CC BY 2.0)



Figure 9.5.5: *Orange Pumpkin* (1994, reinforced fiberglass, 1.8 meters high x 2.4 meters wide) (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)



Figure 9.5.6: *Pumpkin* (2010, stainless steel, urethane paint, 220 cm high x 220 cm diameter) (CC BY-NC 2.0)



Figure 9.5.7: *Pumpkin* (2015, stainless steel, urethane paint, 173.7 x 182.2 x 167.6 cm) (CC BY 2.0)

Jean Shin

Jean Shin (1971-) was born in Korea, where her parents were professors. When she was six years old, they moved to the United States. Shin graduated with a BFA from Pratt Institute and an MS in History. Her artwork is made from cast-off materials she collects and forms into installations. She is not particular in accumulations, including one sock or a broken ceramic, discarded lottery tickets, and even old pill bottles. Shin creates large-scale sculptures and needs large numbers of any one element. She believes the object in an installation may all look the same until closer observation reveals individuality and variety. Shin wants the viewer to continually shift between the group and the individuals within the group, some things more intimate and others appearing excessive.

Huddled Masses (10.3.8) connects the idea of the environmental waste of technology and the desire from society for more and more technological products. The sculpture is made of old cell phones, obsolete by the following year's model. Meters of old, no longer viable computer cables encircle the structure capturing the phones into piles of meaninglessness. The toxic waste now sits, planned obsolescence forcing the new technology to the detriment of the environment from the masses of unusable waste. Large forms jut out of the middle like the ancient rocks of Chinese art, the purity of natural, long-lasting stones of the past, now covered by today's pollution. Oddly, the sounds on the phones made to carry the noise and discourse of society are now silent in their obsolesce. The most significant part of the sculpture is 2.28 meters tall. Shin collected over 3,000 different styles of phones, some as long as twenty years ago, for the sculpture.



Figure 9.5.8: *Huddled Masses* (2020, cellphones and computer cables) (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Chance City (10.3.9, 10.3.10) was constructed from thousands of losing scratch-and-win lottery tickets, discarded as useless. People purchase them hoping to make money; the losing tickets reveal the unfulfilled dream someone had when they bought the ticket. The worthless tickets are the blocks Shin uses for her colorful house of cards; it is also a temporary structure full of chance and optimism. She uses no glue when erecting the house of cards, only balancing one on top of another. Although the sculpture looks fragile, gravity and friction hold the cards in place. Shin believes, "Picking up your life and moving to the city and giving I all you can, your dreams may change-transform. But somehow, I think all of us retain that memory of something that they wanted to do, and against all odds, are able to succeed." [3] The ticket may not bring instant riches, but our odds of success are achievable. The video is an interview with Shin.



Figure 9.5.9: *Chance City* (2001, raffle tickets) (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Figure 9.5.10: *Chance City* closeup (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Kara Walker

Kara Walker (1969-) was born in California; her father was a painter and professor. Walker said she used to sit on her father's lap and watch him draw and always wanted to become an artist. She received a BFA from the Atlanta College of Art and an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. Walker lived in California until she was thirteen in an integrated neighborhood surrounded by civil rights activists. When she moved to Georgia, Walker was shocked to discover the amount of discrimination, including the Ku Klux Klan rallies, still occurring. The discriminatory practices of the South highly influenced Walker, and her art focused on the brutalities of slavery. Walker is known for her panoramic silhouettes depicting racism and the realities of life enslaved people endured. Her work was primarily black figures backed by a white wall using paper, video, shadow puppets, or other projections. Walker has also branched out and created oversized sculptures.



Figure 9.5.11: *African't* (1996, cut paper on wall, 365.7 x 2011.6 cm) (CC BY-ND 2.0)

Her silhouettes in *African't* (10.3.11) are almost life-sized. Men, women, and children who were black and white are depicted in different scenes before the civil war. The scenes present a diverse tableau of the white population's terror, violence, and inhumanity to the black people held in bondage. Walker displayed spoken and unspoken violence and sexual abuse. Each image has a specific interpretation, the details of a disturbing view of race relations in the American South. Walker usually positioned her silhouettes strung out against the wall or running down a wall by stairs, spreading the work to view each frame. *Event Horizon* (10.3.12, 10.3.13) is placed by the lobby's central stairway. The silhouettes represent the Underground Railroad and the African American's struggles for freedom, the installation resembling an Asian scroll. The first image depicts the man releasing a shackled woman who

loses her hold of the child, all falling into the dark abyss. Walker's work is very detailed; the tiny fingers, braided hair, or ragged hem of the dress are all visible in the black cutouts. In any of Walker's images, the people's faces are not visible; their emotions are built into their body positions and interactions. The strong context of the black silhouettes against the stark white background removes all ideas of gray areas to explain the sinister horror of slavery. The video contains an interview with Walker.



Figure 9.5.12: *Event Horizon* (part 1) (2005, latex paint) (CC BY-NC 2.0)



Figure 9.5.13: *Event Horizon* (part 2) (2005, latex paint) (CC BY-NC 2.0)

In 2014, the massive sugar factory in Brooklyn, New York, would be demolished. Walker designed a monumental sculpture to represent the exploitation of the people throughout the history of the sugar trade. The building was constructed in the late nineteenth century to store raw sugar from the Caribbean before the sugar was refined and packaged; sugar was a luxury. Hundreds of thousands of enslaved people were taken to the Caribbean to work on the vast sugar plantations, building the sugar market on the backs of Africans shipped across the Atlantic. Sugar was also known as blood sugar, defining how humans bled through the exploited work in the fields or under the brutality of the overseers. Walker designed an immense sphinx-like woman, representing the building and the history of sugar.

A Subtlety or the Marvelous Sugar Baby (10.3.14) is located between two rows of steel columns; the Sugar Baby appearing as a colossal goddess. The sculpture was created from 330 huge polystyrene blocks and then covered with eighty tons of sugar—the sugar coating over the blocks allowed the seams of the polystyrene to show like quarried stone. When the Sugar Baby is approached from the front (10.3.15), her enlarged hands appear foreshortened; her pendulous breasts and her enigmatic face fill the space. Walking around the back of the statue (10.3.16), the viewer comes upon her buttocks jutting up from the shortened spine, thighs, and calves. "A powerful personification of the most beleaguered demographic in this country — the black woman — shows us where we all come from, innocent and unrefined." [4]



Figure 9.5.14: *A Subtlety or the Marvelous Sugar Baby* (2014, polystyrene blocks, sugar, 22.8 meters long, 10.6 meters high) (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Figure 9.5.15: *A Subtlety* front view (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

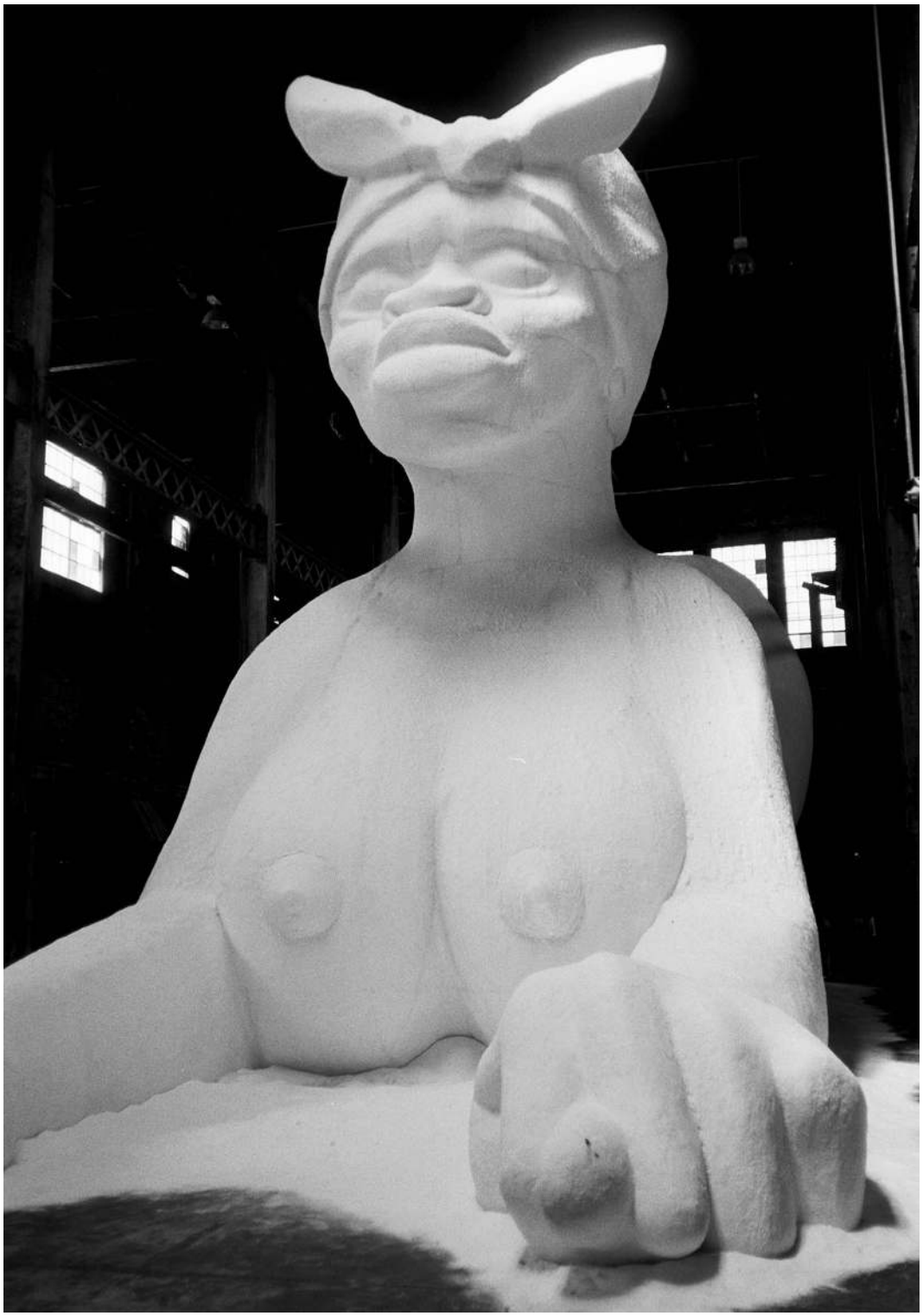


Figure 9.5.16: *A Subtlety* back view (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Around the Sugar Baby were thirteen small molasses-colored boys (10.3.17) standing about one and a half meters high. The statues were made from cast resin and covered in molasses or cast sugar, some light, others darker colors. The figures carried bananas or baskets, appeared to bring offerings, or were the only tired workers returning from the cane fields? The whole installation remained in place for a little over two months. The building was open to the elements, and the weather eroded the sculptures before they were taken down. The video describes Walker's work on the statute and her approach.



Figure 9.5.17: *The Subtley* figure (cast resin and sugar) (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Bharti Kher

Bharti Kher (1969-) was born in England and received her BA from Newcastle Polytechnic. She moved to India in 1993, where she still lives. Her art is based on a relationship between an object and its metaphysical and material dimensions and how she repositions the concepts and thoughts the viewer previously held. Most of her work includes the *bindi*, the red dot women in India apply to their forehead between the eyebrows. The red dot contains significant traditional and religious meanings and is generally associated with the Hindu definition of the third eye. Kher explained, "Many people believe it's a traditional symbol of marriage while others, in the West particularly, see it as a fashion accessory… But actually, the bindi is meant to represent a third eye – one that forges a link between the real and the spiritual-conceptual worlds." [5] Kher uses the bindi as part of her art, shifting the meaning. Her sculptures are generally fantastical, blurring the lines between real and mythical, typically made from found objects with their definition, which becomes changed. Kher makes her objects open to misinterpretation and magical thinking of abstract forms.

The Skin Speaks, a language not its own (10.3.18), is Kher's most well-known work. She became interested in the concept of elephants after seeing a photograph of a collapsed elephant being put into a truck, an image she had remembered for a long time before making her elephant. The life-sized elephant is made from fiberglass and lies on the ground on its stomach with its head turned. If an elephant dies, it falls to the ground on its side, and this elephant is sited differently. The elephant is covered with white bindis forming unending patterns on the elephant. Kher used the bindi to act as a skin on the elephant giving life to something dying. The heavy elephant appears to be lifted by the thousands of bindis as the bindi do not stop while they move over the elephant's skin. The elephant's head is turned, and the eye looks at the viewer.

Kher wanted to create the heart of the massive blue sperm whale; however, she did not find enough scientific documentation about the construction of the whale's heart, so she invented her version in *An Absence of Assignable Cause* (10.3.19). Kher designed the life-sized heart and added veins and arteries jutting out from the enormous heart. The sculpture is covered with colored bindis, which Kher applies individually to create precise patterns and movement. The monumental installation also reflects the position of the immense whale in the disintegrating environment. The video describes the installation of Kher's installation.



Figure 9.5.18: *The Skin Speaks a Language Not Its Own* (2006, fiberglass, bindi, 142 x 456 x 195 cm) (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)



Figure 9.5.19: *An Absence of Assignable Cause* (2007, bindis on fiberglass, 173 x 300 x 116 cm) (CC BY 2.0)

Dominque Gonzalez-Foerster

Dominque Gonzalez-Foerster (1965-) was born in France. She studied at the École du Magasin of the National Centre of Contemporary Art in Grenoble and the Institute des Hautes Études en Arts Plastiques in Paris. Although Gonzalez-Foerster started

in film and video, she quickly expanded to photography and large art installations. Today, she works in both Paris and Rio de Janeiro. Gonzalez-Foerster creates her art based on exploring different relationships of bodies in space, the organic or inorganic, or the sensory effect on cognitive understanding. She likes to build interactive spaces and rooms, transforming public and private places, hoping to impact the viewer's mood, generate new perceptions, or trigger forgotten memories. Gonzalez-Foerster stated, "I always look for experimental processes. I like the fact that at the beginning I don't know how to do things and then, slowly, I start learning." [6]

Gonzalez-Foerster's installation, TH.2058 (10.3.20), is the creation of the city of London undergoing perpetual rainfall, never stopping and creating flooded, miserable conditions. The setting is in a museum now used to shelter people, store art, and warehouse what remains of the outside culture. The immense Turbine Hall is turned into the feeling of a sci-fi movie. Replicas of well-known sculptures like Louise Bourgeois' giant spider or the Flamingo by Alexander Calder tower over the installation create a disturbing feeling for the viewer. Viewers must push through a set of highly contrasted red and green curtains made from plastic as they walk into the hall. The sound of unending rain is playing, adding to the feeling of entering the unknown. On the hard cement floor, rows and rows of bunk beds are lining the area, all scattered with books. An oversized screen continually loops clips from science-fiction movies, visually presenting different catastrophes. The video shows Gonzalez-Foerster describing the installation.



Figure 9.5.20: TH.2058 (2008) (CC BY 2.0)

Gonzalez-Foerster created Pynchon Park (10.3.21) as an enclosed and controlled space where extraterrestrials could stand above and watch the humans playing belong. The optimal conditions of play and fun allow the aliens to see human behavior in a favorable situation. The installation covers a thousand square meters. Viewers could either stand on the balcony above the installation as an extraterrestrial would or enter under the netting and play with the mats and balls as a human under the microscope. Gonzalez-Foerster used balls because humans like balls and books. Both items encourage humans to assume different positions depending on how they feel and want to use the books or balls in their space. The aliens knew human's preference for balls and books and set up this environment to better observe them relaxed and at play.



Figure 9.5.21: *Pynchon Park* (2016) (CC BY 2.0)

Suzanne Lacy

Suzanne Lacy (1945-) is an artist-activist with a particular emphasis on art. She selects her medium based on the event or activity and says her primary medium is time, whose story it is, and what they mean. Lacy was born in the United States and graduated from California State University at Fresno. She became an activist early in life and worked with Judy Chicago and others shortly after graduating. They were creating a performance art about rape and rape victims' experiences. One of her early installations was about the invisibility of older women and how society's beauty standards affect and isolate them.

Lacy's installation entitled *Three Weeks in January* (10.3.22) was a reenactment of her show *Three Weeks in May,* some thirty-five years earlier. Large maps stood outside the Los Angeles Police Department's main office, and each time a rape occurred, it was painted on the map. Public events and speakers came on the platform to talk about rape, its effect on women, and how survivors cope. The soundtrack in the background ran with survivors talking. At the actual site of the rape, the crimes were written in chalk on the sidewalks. The entire installation and performance show ran for three weeks. Lacy has long been an advocate for women and particularly raising their voices about rape. Her inspiration for the show led her to state, "I've never been raped as that is defined now. But I, like every woman I know, have experienced an attempted assault. … Obviously there are social constraints and moral constraints to what I do, but I don't think there ought to be constraints based on the fact that I'm female. … The threat of me not being able to drive down the street at night on a lonely avenue or walk down the street is a circumscription of my freedom." [7]

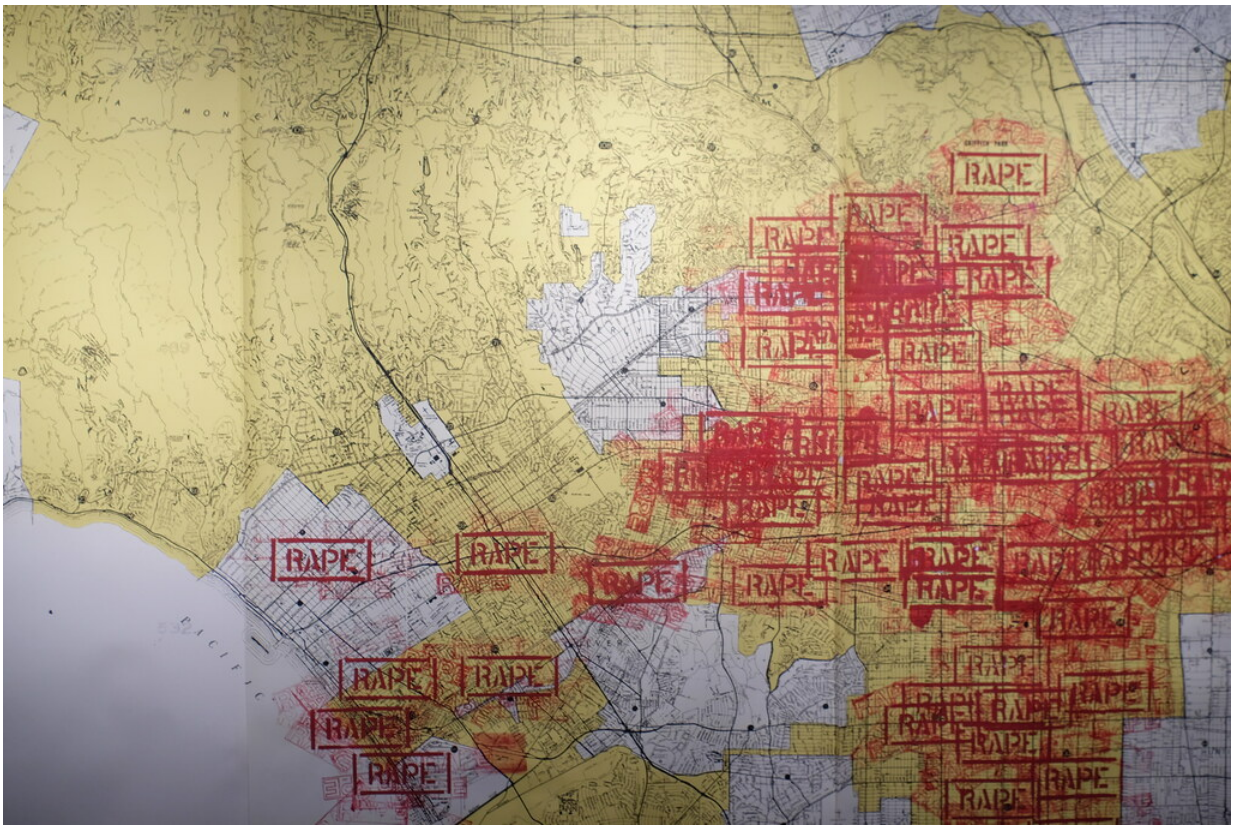


Figure 9.5.22: *Three Weeks in January* (2012) (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

At the Brooklyn Museum, Lacy created her work *Between the Door and the Street* (10.3.23). Almost four hundred women, representing a cross-section of ages, races, and backgrounds, sat on sixty different front porches. They were located in a residential block in Brooklyn and carried on conversations about issues related to gender politics as they viewed the problems today. The topics included equity, changing gender roles, labor, violence, poverty, and migration.[8] The participants wore yellow pashinas, the street curbs were painted yellow and yellow flowers in pots lined the way. As part of the discussions, the public was encouraged to walk about the neighborhood and listen to the views of the people speaking and deciding how different ideas fit into their own beliefs and value systems. The questions were placed on the steps to the museum. Anyone who saw the questions could engage in their conversations. In the video, Lacy discusses her work.



Figure 9.5.23: *Between the Door and the Street* (2013) (CC0 1.0)

Maya Lin

Maya Lin (born 1959) was born in Ohio after her parents emigrated from China. Both of her parents were professors at Ohio University. In high school, Lin studied bronze casting methods at a nearby university. After high school, she attended Yale University and earned Bachelor's and master's degrees. Lin was always interested in the environment, respecting nature, and balancing the man-made and the natural world. The video discusses Lin's projects.

Lin was a university student studying architecture when she submitted her design for a nationwide competition for concepts of a new memorial to Vietnam veterans. Her design was very unusual and unlike the general tradition of memorial tributes. She proposed to build a V-shaped granite wall wh the names of every soldier who was killed or still missing inscribed on the wall. One end of the V-shape pointed towards the Washington Monument and the other towards the Lincoln Memorial, tying the design into existing structures. The black granite walls mirror each other as they slope below ground level with a long walkway in front of the polished, reflective wall (10.3.24). The new, controversial wall has become an accepted and essential tribute to the veterans of the contentious war, attended by many to visit a fallen soldier, lay flowers, or hang flags. The wall designed by Lin became a model for new and unusual memorials and sculptures. The names of the fallen (10.3.25) are inscribed on the highly polished wall as a man in uniform stands at attention. The man's reflection becomes part of the wall as though he was one with the other fallen names. The video describes her ideas for the Vietnam War Memorial.



Figure 9.5.24: *Wall at the memorial* (CC BY-SA 3.0)



Figure 9.5.25: *Reflection on the wall* (Public Domain Mark 1.0)

Systematic Landscapes was a series of different installations Lin created to give viewers unusual sights of the earth and how it looks. She used today's technologies to build the installations and generate unique views of the physical world. Lin stated, "I would

say that I'm no different than an eighteenth-century landscape painter, but I have more than my eyes to take a look at nature." [9] Lin created multiple diverse exhibits using different technologies. *Water Line* (10.3.26) appears as an outline in space. Using aluminum tubing, Lin positions the frames as they would trace mountains buried deep underwater. The strong lines forming the contours give the viewer an intimate view of a previously unseen mountain range. The sculpture hangs from the ceiling, presenting a vision of walking on the ocean floor and looking skyward. Lin brings ambiguity to the image, blurring the concepts of where the sky and water intersect and challenging the viewers' idea of distinct environments. In the foreground, *Blue Lake Pass* (10.3.27) represents mountains cut into segments. The viewer can walk through the exhibit, experiencing the different valleys and peaks, a feeling of walking under the earth's crust. Lin was always interested in the various geological forces creating other regions, and she incorporated unusual views of the earth.



Figure 9.5.26: *Systematic Landscape* series *Water Line* (aluminum tubing and paint, 2006, 579.1 x 914.4 x 1,059.2 cm) (CC BY-NC 2.0)

When Lin was growing up, she watched her father start an experimental glass studio. Her father even brought her a box of marbles; she thought they were like opening a water container. In her installation, *Folding the Chesapeake* (10.3.27), Lin used the same fiberglass material her father used in his experiments. Lin studied the Chesapeake Bay region and its changes over the decades. She used the water-colored marbles to recreate the region, installing the marbles up and down the walls and across the floor, appearing to be floating. Lin used 54,000 marbles to create the installation and bring the ecological importance of the entire waterway as a totality, a complete living system. The video described Lin's ideas when she made the installation.

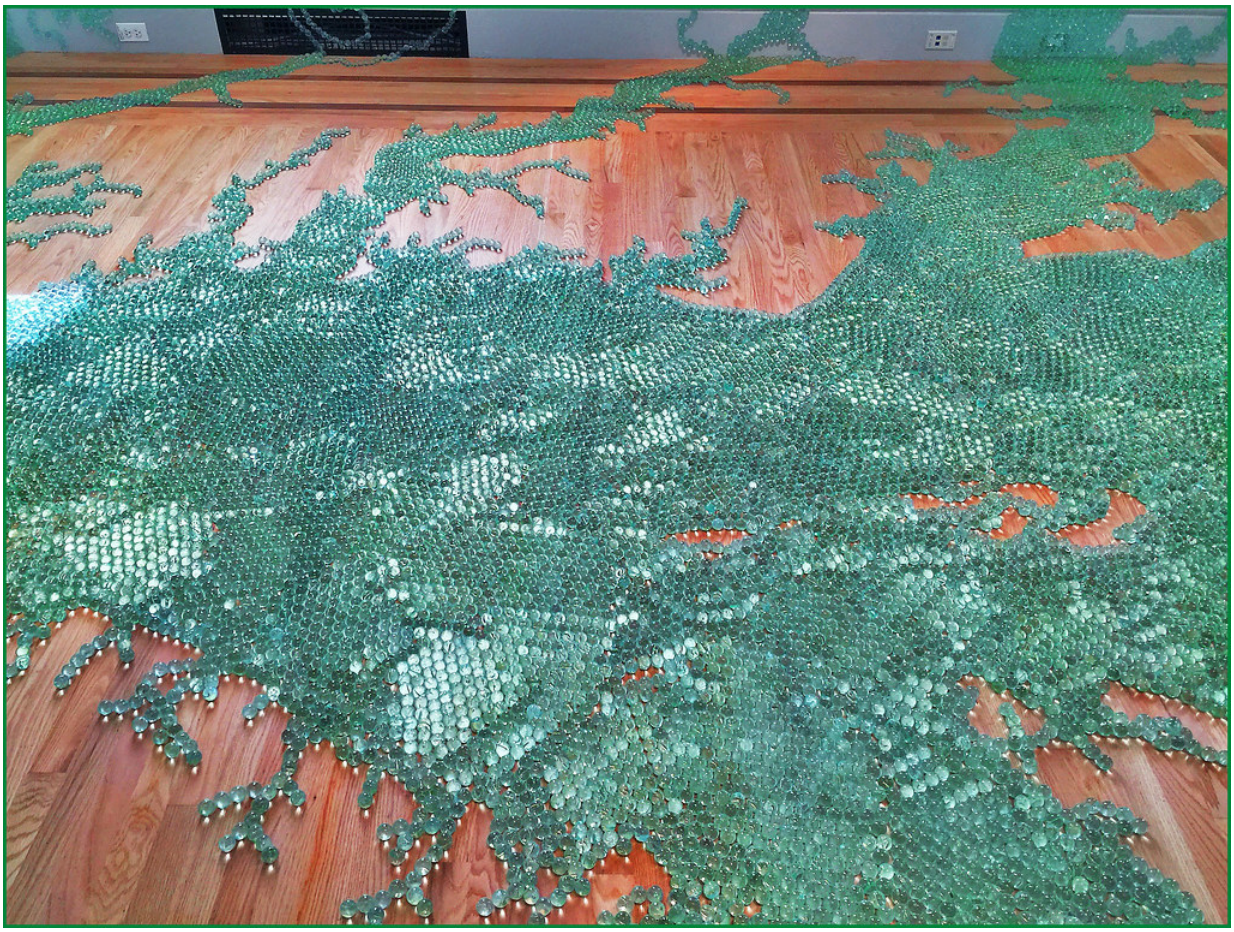


Figure 9.5.27: *Folding the Chesapeake* (glass marble, 2015) (CC BY-NC 2.0)

[1] Retrieved from https://www.gap.net.au/yayoi-kusama

[2] Retrieved from https://mattress.org/works/infinity-...mirrored-room/

[3] Retrieved from https://www.npr.org/templates/story/...ryId=103674782

[4] Retrieved by https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/12/a...ino-plant.html

[5] Retrieved from https://www.hauserwirth.com/artists/2793-bharti-kher/

[6] Retrieved from https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/...foerster-10354

[7] Retrieved from https://www.wbur.org/news/2014/12/01/suzanne-lacy

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9.5.1: Theaster Gates on collecting

- by **ART21**

Page ID

342210



By art21. From his Chicago studio, Theaster Gates reflects on the various collections he has acquired and created artworks with, including the Jet magazine archives and the inventory of an entire hardware store. In addition to serving as source material for the artist, the collections provide Gates with insight into how one person or institution sees the world. “It’s like this little time capsule of things that were important to someone,” he says. The majority of the collections come from his immediate surroundings on Chicago’s South Side. “How do you catalog the everyday, especially as the phenomena of the everyday is changing?” Gates asks, “And is this another way of tracking Black space?” The materials function as an archive when shown in their original state, or they can be amalgamated and transformed into a painting or sculpture. “It’s the thing, and it’s the thing that makes the thing,” says the artist. Theaster Gates creates sculptures with clay, tar, and renovated buildings, transforming the raw material of urban neighborhoods into radically reimagined vessels of opportunity for the community. Establishing a virtuous circle between fine art and social progress, Gates strips dilapidated buildings of their components, transforming those elements into sculptures that act as bonds or investments, the proceeds of which are used to finance the rehabilitation of entire city blocks. Many of the artist’s works evoke his African-American identity and the broader struggle for civil rights, from sculptures incorporating fire hoses, to events organized around soul food, and choral performances by the experimental musical ensemble Black Monks of Mississippi, led by Gates himself.

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9.5.2: Danh Vo Interview- Art Should Estrange

- by **ART21**

Page ID

342211



“There’s all this bullshit that art is bridging!” Meet the Danish-Vietnamese artist Danh Vo in his studio located between a chicken farm and a compost station outside Berlin.

In Danh Vo’s art you’ll find religious sculptures that are cut up, old American flags and his grandmother’s laundry machine. By using objects from his upbringing in a strict Catholic household and presenting them in a white cube gallery he wishes to alienate people and make them question what they know: “Everybody is born under systems,” Vo says and continues: “Somebody has created what you should do and think. And I’m very skeptical towards that.”

Often in Vo’s work, you’ll find a juxtaposition of objects. “Contradictions are very real in everybody’s life.” Danh Vo argues that we learn that life should be harmonies, which it rarely is. This is what he’s trying to project into contrasting pieces such as in the work Your Mother Sucks Cocks in Hell (2015) where an old, wooden, religious sculpture has been merged together with a piece of marble sculpture.

Even though Danh Vo uses personal objects, the goal is not to reveal any intimacy with the viewer. “I was interested in the distance between different social groups,” he says. “I wanted to deal with estrangement, when you would come in a white cube where information is amputated. That you would just not understand.” To Vo art should not be bridging, it should estrange.

Danh Vo (b. 1975) is a Danish-Vietnamese artist. Vo has presented solo shows at several prominent art institutions, including The Royal Academy of Arts in London, Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, and Museo Jumex in Mexico City. In 2015, Vo represented Denmark in the Venice Biennial’s Danish pavilion. Vo is the recipient of prestigious awards a.o. the Hugo Boss Prize (2012).

Danh Vo was interviewed by Roxanne Bagheshirin Lærkesen in June 2020 at his studio Guldenhof in Germany.

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9.5.3: James Turrell, Skyspace, the way of color

by **DR. BETH HARRIS** and **DR. STEVEN ZUCKER**

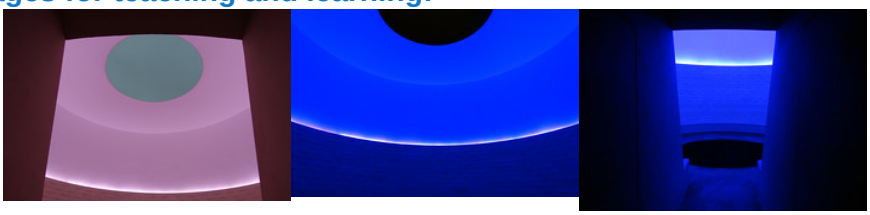
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James Turrell, *Skyspace*, *The Way of Color*, 2009, stone, concrete, stainless steel, and LED lighting 228 x 652 inches © James Turrell (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas). Speakers: Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker

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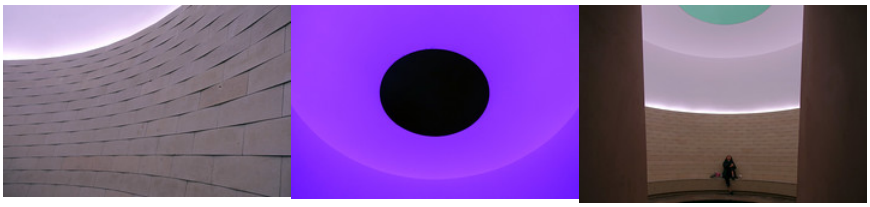
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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

10: Assemblage and materiality

10.1: El Anatsui
10.1.1: El Anatsui, Untitled
10.1.2: El Anatsui, Old Man’s Cloth

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10.1: El Anatsui

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10.1.1: El Anatsui, Untitled

by DR. PERI KLEMM and DR. STEVEN ZUCKER

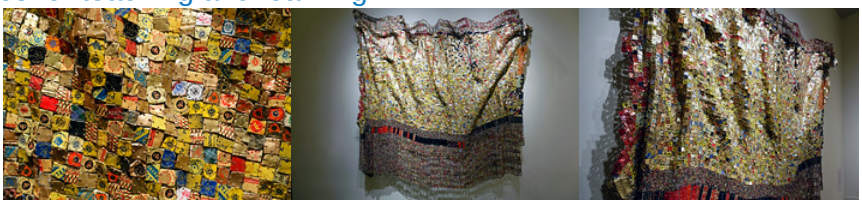
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The artist transforms metal from alcohol bottles into textiles that represent libations for ancestors.

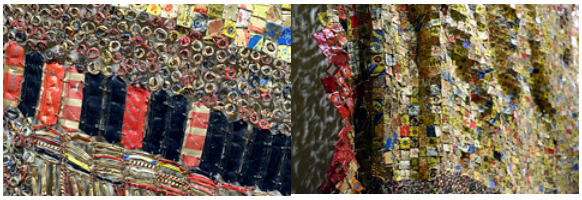


Video 10.1.1.1: El Anatsui, *Untitled*, 2009, repurposed printed aluminum, copper, 256.5 × 284.5 × 27.9 cm as installed (Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C.)

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10.1.2: El Anatsui, Old Man's Cloth

by DR. ALLISON YOUNG

Page ID 342222

Old Man's Cloth hangs like a large tapestry, but when we look closer, it's easy to become captivated by the small metal fragments that comprise the work in hundreds. Arranged within a shifting grid of stripes and blocks of color, the components form their own internal maps across the surface, melding into vertical gold bands, interlocking black and silver rows, or a deviant red piece floating in a field of black. While *Old Man's Cloth* would have been laid flat during its construction, it is contorted and manipulated during installation, so that the individual metal pieces can catch the light from every angle. This brilliant visual effect makes its humble origins all the more impressive.



Figure 10.1.2.1: El Anatsui, *Old Man's Cloth*, 2003, aluminum and copper wire, 16′ x 17′ 1″ / 487.7 x 520.7 cm (Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL)

The Medium or the Message?

Old Man's Cloth has been constructed from flattened liquor bottle labels that the artist collects near his home in Southern Nigeria. While critics often write about Anatsui's metal wall hangings using the language of textiles, the labels and bottle caps are typically fastened together with copper wire and attached corner-to-corner. As such, the issue of medium is one of the first to inspire debate amongst viewers—are the wall hangings two-dimensional or three-dimensional? Are they sculptures, even as they hang against the wall like paintings? Are they individual works or immersive installations? Lastly, are they "fine art" or simply an innovative form of "craft"?

Purposefully disregarding the limited categories imposed by Western art history, Anatsui's practice emerges from a more expanded understanding of what art can be that stems from both the radical practices of the late-1960s, and from a vantage point outside of the Western tradition completely. As scholar Susan Vogel has explained, "such categories did not exist in classic African traditions, which made no distinction between art and craft, high art and low."

Anatsui's choice of discarded liquor bottle caps as a medium has as much to do with their formal properties as with their historical associations. As an African artist whose career was forged during the utopia of mid-century African independence movements, his work has always engaged his region's history and culture. The bottle caps, for Anatsui, signify a fraught history of trade between Africa and Europe. As he explained,

Alcohol was one of the commodities brought with [Europeans] to exchange for goods in Africa. Eventually alcohol become one of the items used in the transatlantic slave trade. They made rum in the West Indies, took it to Liverpool, and then it made its way back to Africa. I thought that the bottle caps had a strong reference to the history of Africa.



Figure 10.1.2.2

The luminescent gold colors also recall the colonial past of Anatsui's home country—modern Ghana was previously a British colony called The Gold Coast until its independence in 1957. The fluid movements of the work's surface remind us of the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, which carried slave-ships and traders between Africa, Europe and the New World. By bestowing his works with titles such as Man's Cloth and Woman's Cloth, Anatsui also makes reference to the significance of textiles in African societies, and their own historical role in trade networks.

Old Man's Cloth was included in one of Anatsui's first exhibitions of hanging metal sculptures. Held at London's October Gallery in 2004, the show was entitled "Gawu," which means "metal cloak" in Ewe. Old Man's Cloth is unique for its uneven and jagged edges as well as the "rough texture" of the recycled labels that are incorporated into the piece.

Modernism in Africa

El Anatsui was born in Ghana in 1944, and was trained in an academic European curriculum. In 1964, when he began his studies, many parts of Africa were experiencing a cultural renaissance associated with decolonization movements. Anatsui himself joined the unofficial "Sankofa" movement, which was invested in unearthing and reclaiming Africa's rich indigenous traditions and assimilating these with the European-influenced aspects of society. His earliest works, for example, included a series of wooden market trays into which he burned designs inspired by African graphic systems and adinkra motifs (symbols widely used by the Akan people of Ghana).

In 1975, Anatsui joined the faculty at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Nsukka was a vibrant creative capital for African artists and writers in the 1970s, many of whom spearheaded the Zaria Rebellion in the early 1960s and revived the traditional art form of uli wall and body painting in their contemporary works.

Anatsui's work differed slightly from that of his colleagues in his insistence on abstraction. In some of his first mature works, he used an electric chainsaw to slash geometric patterns into wood. Though abstract, these works were metaphorically rich; Anatsui chose woods of different colors to represent the diversity of African cultures, while the violence of the chainsaw enacted the ruptures imposed by European imperialist expansion.



Figure 10.1.2.3: El Anatsui, *Hovor II* (detail), 2004 showing tiny bits of scrap tin, woven pieced together with wire (Photo: Amy M. Youngs, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

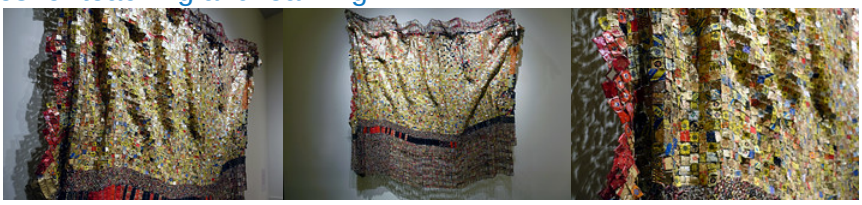
Critical Reception: African or Contemporary?

When two of Anatsui's metal wall hangings appeared in the 2007 Venice Biennale, they were lauded by the public and swiftly cemented his place as a leading international contemporary artist. He had, in fact, already shown in Venice almost two decades earlier in 1990, when he participated in a small exhibition surveying contemporary African art. During the time that lapsed between the two exhibitions, the art world became more receptive to artists outside of its Western centers, and by 2007, Anatsui could exhibit not only as a representative of the continent, but as an individual artist whose work was significant in its own right.

As such, his work provides an excellent opportunity for discussion about the relationships between artists at the center and at the periphery, and between the West and the Global South. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, for instance, has now acquired two of Anatsui's metal wall hangings, but they are owned by two different curatorial departments: the Arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, and Modern and Contemporary Art. Both were recently on view at the same time, but in separate galleries. Visitors, students, and art historians should continue to ask themselves which designation seems more appropriate, and for what reasons. Should we understand his art as a product of its place, its time, or both? What do we see in Anatsui's work when it is placed among African masks and ritual objects, and how do our impressions change when this work is placed beside contemporary art from around the world?

There are no correct answers to these questions, but they are indicative of the changes that have taken place both in the art world, and in today's increasingly connected society at large.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

11: Fiber Arts

11.1: Textiles (Ongoing)
11.2: Quilting

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11.1: Textiles (Ongoing)

All cultures have used textiles for over 5,000 years or more, not only as a necessity but also as a decorative art form. Some textiles have been prized and traded for centuries as the silk from China by the Silk Road. During the 18th Century, explorers, traders, and settlers collected and traded textiles from different parts of the world, encouraging the growth of the raw materials in the expanded lands. The raw material was harvested from animals, plants, and even insects, then cleaned, sorted, spun, and woven to create a fabric with elaborate or straightforward designs.

The industrial revolution eventually changed the way fabric was processed, and machines took over for the hand labor, producing thousands of meters of fabric in the time it would take one weaver to create a meter. Sewing machines emerged during the 19th century and spawned a new production line of textile manufacturers. However, in most of the world, in homes and by artists, textiles are still made traditionally by hand on small looms. Almost every culture has unique and specific methods and outcomes for creating fabric based on natural materials available and historical traditions and definitions. Weaving is the art of textile production when two yarns are woven at a right angle to each other, producing some type of fabric or cloth. The warp is the yarn attached to the loom, and the weft is the yarn woven through the alternating warp yarns to create a pattern.

Scotland

Country	Fiber	Origin	Type
Scotland	Wool	Sheep	Tartans

Scotland is known for its green grassy lands with roaming sheep (10.36) grazing. It is also known to be bitter cold and their solution was to weave a heavy tartan wool cloth for clothing and blankets. The plentiful sheep provided the wool (10.37) for spinning (10.38) and dyeing it multiple colors. Tartans were woven from six to eight colors forming a unique plaid pattern (10.39) created by local weavers who designed the special patterns for a family or small town. These distinct designs are traditionally passed down for centuries.



10.36 Sheep



10.37 Before and after cleaning



10.38 Combing and spinning



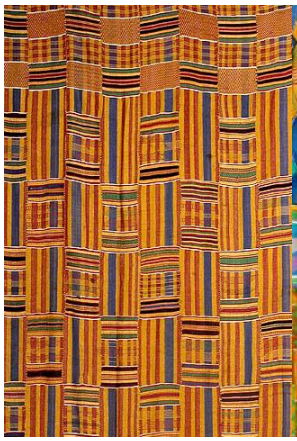
10.39 Tartan



Ghana

Country	Fiber	Origin	Type
Ghana	Cotton	Plant	Kente

Ghana is located on the west coast of Africa, almost on the equator, a climate suitable to grow cotton, the material used in kente cloth. Using strip hand looms the brightly colored strips (10.40) of cotton are woven into patterns of geometric designs. Each design has a story the weaver artistically designs into the pattern and every color has a meaning that is part of the design and story of the fabric. Originally the patterned fabric was reserved for royalty, today kente cloth (10.41) is the traditional garment of Ghana.



10.40 Kente cloth



10.41 Kente cloth variations



Mali

Country	Fiber	Origin	Type
Mali	Cotton	Plant	Bogolan

Bogolan is Malian cotton fabric dyed with mud. The cotton is woven in narrow strips (10.42), sewn together and dyed in a bath of mashed leaves to turn it yellow. When it is dry, the artist has to visualize the pattern and fill it in with mud around the planned images or concepts, pressing the mud into the cloth to totally penetrate the fabric (10.43). Sometimes multiple coats of mud are used to achieve the proper color and look before the material is stored in jars to ferment for a year. They create elaborate patterns (10.44) that have been designed over the years, originally used in rituals or as status, today as traditional fabric for clothing.



10.42 Weaving cotton



10.43 Cloth drying



10.44 Bogolan cloth

China

Country	Fiber	Origin	Type
China	Silk	Worm	Silk

Silk weaving in China is a centuries old process and has been an economic staple of China and a desired fabric for trade along the Silk Road. Silk is derived from worms that feast on mulberry leaves and then spin a silk cocoon (10.45). The silk cocoon is boiled (10.46) to kill the worm and the cocoon unwound into thin strands. The strand is combined with other threads of silk (10.47) to make it stronger and are ready to be dyed in any color. Once the silk is dyed, it is woven into elegant fabric. Silk has a shimmer to the surface of the cloth because the structure of the fiber is a triangular prism that catches the reflecting light, causing a shimmer (10.48). Silk weaving is one of China's greatest inventions and has been around for over 4,000 years.



10.45 Worm and cocoon



10.46 Boiling silk



10.47 Silk thread



10.48 Silk fabric



Japan

Country	Fiber	Origin	Type
Japan	Cotton	Plant	Kasuri

Kasuri (10.49) is a Japanese fabric dyed with specific patterns, usually geometric in design. The formal name for the pattern is ikat, a technique to make the pattern look blurred and is achieved during the weaving process. The pattern may only be dyed on the weft threads and when the other thread is added during the weaving process, it creates the blurred pattern (10.50). Kasuri is a traditional folk-art process starting in the middle of the 18th century and refined over the last century. Although the technique did not originate in Japan, it became a popular and traditional fabric (10.51).



10.49 Kasuri



10.50 Kasuri pattern



10.51 Weaving Kasuri

New Guinea

Country	Fiber	Origin	Type
New Guinea	Tapa	Tree	Tapa

New Guinea, a large island located in the South Pacific, is the second-largest island after Greenland. Indigenous people have lived in the area for more than 40,000 years and some traditions, including making tapa cloth, continue today. Tapa cloth is a unique New Guinea product made from bark (10.52). The bark is removed from the mulberry tree, and the outer bark is stripped off leaving a white sheet (10.53) that is soaked in water and dried in the sun. The bark is beaten with wooden mallets called “ike” (10.54) until it is thin and then several layers are combined and beaten again into a large sheet. The final step in the process is to paint the large sheets with island designs. (10.55).


10.52 Stripping bark


10.53 Beating bark


10.54 Rubbing patterns


10.55 Tapa cloth



Peru

Country	Fiber	Origin	Type
Peru	Wool	Alpaca	Ponchos

High up in the Andes Mountains, the Peruvian people domesticated the alpaca (10.56) and used the wool to weave their outstanding blankets, ponchos, and hats. The wool is collected, carded and spun into yarn for weaving. Alpaca fleece is a silky, long and lustrous fiber and when woven, can be flame-resistant. Weaving is not about just the final utilitarian product but is deeply ingrained in the culture and society of the people. They use rich colors to dye the wool and weave with the bold colors to create brightly colored clothing. The Aguayo (10.57) is the most common item of clothing, a long rectangular cloth used to carry any item or a small child on their back.



10.56 Llamas



10.57 Aguayo

United States

Country	Fiber	Origin	Type
United States	Wool	Sheep	Blankets

The Navajo people have occupied the Southwestern United States for thousands of years creating their own style of weaving designs. They raise dibe (sheep) in the arid land (10.58) and harvest their wool as well as growing cotton. The Navajo use an upright loom (10.59) to weave the fibers from cotton and wool. The textiles have strong geometric designs and the complex designs (10.60) were usually created in the maker's head as she let her strings and spirit guide the design. Originally, the blankets and rugs were utilitarian and could be found in most Navajo homes or were traded with nearby tribes, today they are highly regarded and bring a high price at market.



10.58 Dibe (sheep)



10.59 Weaving rugs



10.60 Navajo pattern



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11.2: Quilting

Quilting is the use of fabric scraps stitched together into a design and sandwiched together with some type of paddings like wool or cotton and a backing fabric. The sandwiched fabric is then stitched together through all three layers and bound around the edges with a second piece of fabric for strength and durability. Many people believe it dates back to ancient Egypt; however, the fabric does not last long in the desert or against the elements, lasting maybe 2-300 years unless found inside a tomb. The first use of quilting in Europe was during the Crusades in the 12th century when they made quilted tops to be worn under armor to protect the wearer. Later it was worn as a doublet or coat. Although quilting has been in existence for a few centuries, during this period, quilting moved from organized and prescribed patterns and forms to abstract expressions, following the changes in painting.



The earliest surviving quilt is the *Tristan Quilt* (14.44) made in the late 14th century. The quilt depicted scenes from the romance story of Tristan and Isolde and was constructed by sewing two layers of linen with wadding in-between and stitched in brown thread. The scene in this picture is King Mark from scene seven.



14.44 *Tristan Quilt*

Early whole-cloth quilts were made from one solid piece of fabric or strips of fabric, sewn together, to appear as one piece. Because looms were not wide enough to make fabric for the surface of a bed, the central section was printed and the rest surrounded by other fabric pieces. The filler or padding was often wool as it was warmer in winter and cooler in summer. The quilt top, filler, and bottom were hand-stitched together, and over time, this hand stitching became an art form. This *Whole-Cloth Quilt* (14.45) was made in the 18th century in the Netherlands from textile made in India.



14.45 *Whole-Cloth Quilt*



14.46 *Medallion Quilt*

The Industrial Revolution gave people more time, and with more time, and quilting art began to flourish. Women did not have to shear sheep, spin the wool, or weave the cloth, and it was all available in the mercantile in town. Quilts went from utilitarian one-piece tops for beds to intricate piece tops sandwiched with backing and padding inside to be hand-stitched together. Instead of a functional straight stitch, stitching on top of the quilt was sewn in the form of designs.

Medallion quilts were made around a large-scale motif like the tree of life or an eagle or flowers in the center surrounded by pieced or appliques designs and two or more borders. The *Medallion Quilt* (14.46) was made by **Elizabeth Welsh** in 1830 from cotton fabric and is an example of a patriotic quilt used as bedding.

The civil war brought many changes in quilting. Quilts were stitched and auctioned to raise funds for the war costs at fairs the abolitionists held. Other quilts were shipped to the soldiers who were fighting the war and equipped with few supplies. This quilt (14.47) was made for a civil war soldier. Since the cots the soldiers used in the field were narrow, the women made narrow quilts so it would not drag on the floor. The quilt for the soldiers on both sides of the war received much heavy use, and very few survive today. This traditional pattern was the 'nine patch' because it could use small scraps from used clothing of any color.



14.47 *Nine patch quilt*

Harriet Powers (1837–1910) was an African-American slave who was considered a folk artist who made quilts. She recorded local legends, Bible stories, and astronomical occurrences on her traditionally appliqued quilts. The two quilts, *Bible Quilt 1896* (14.48) and the *Pictorial Quilt 1898* (14.49), are the only two of her quilts that have survived. Both quilts were machine and hand-stitched with applique. Through letters she wrote in the late 1800s, she describes other quilts she made, but they have not been located.



14.48 *Bible Quilt*



14.49 *Pictorial Quilt*

The Amish people are a religious community that settled in the Northeast part of the United States over 200 years ago. Quilts made in patterns and fabrics associated with individual communities were constructed from wool in Pennsylvania and cotton in Ohio. Quilting became a part of social life for the women and they made quilts to celebrate special occasions as well as everyday uses. The Amish women make bold designs (14.50) with distinctive color combinations and hand stitch the quilting patterns.



14.50 *Log cabin, barn raising variation*

A remarkable group of women from **Gee's Bend, Alabama**, have lived and quilted their entire life on the Alabama River. Isolated from much of the world, a small group of African-American people lived in the hamlet of Gee's Bend. Their contributions to quilting and art are considered to be one of the most exceptional and significant visual and cultural contributions to the history of art. The ancestors of Gee's Bend people were brought there as slaves to work the cotton plantation. After slavery ended, the people stayed on as freed slaves, growing and harvesting cotton until the 1930s, when the government purchased the land and allotted small parcels back to the people.



14.51 *Quilting in 1937*

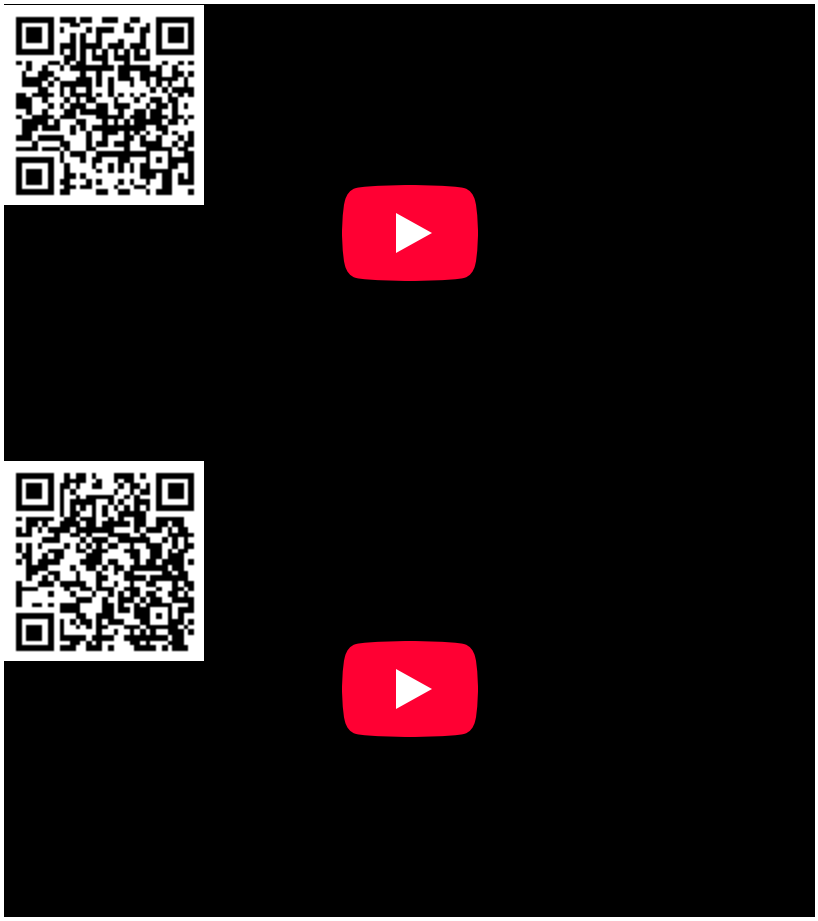


14.52 *Quilting bee*

https://human.libretexts.org/@go/page/342100



14.53 *Pieced Quilt*





Quilting started in the 19th century when they would piece strips of fabric (14.51) together to make bedding and quilts to keep their families warm on cold nights. Isolated from most people, they developed a lifestyle different from the surrounding areas. Their quilts became geometric and creative improvisations (14.52), depending on the materials at hand. Today, they sell quilts (14.53) to raise money to support themselves, and the quilts are shown in museums around the world.

The 20th century ushered in a consumerist society, and after the 1950s, most people would just buy a blanket and comforter from the local department store. Quilting became a dying art form in most places (except in isolated areas like Gee's Bend and the Amish), almost lost to future generations. During the 1990s, quilting made a resurgence, and the traditional quilt gave way to art quilts. The traditional three-piece quilt (top, padding, and bottom layers) to keep you warm at night, was replaced with wall art quilts. These smaller, usually landscapes, imagery, or abstracts became a sensation, and the world of quilting never looked back. The art quilt also evolved from the traditional form of quilting, combining known quilt patterns with art styles.



Quilting in America today is a $3.76-billion-dollar annual industry and has more than 16 million quilters or 1 of every 20 people in America quilts. Quilt shows have become increasingly common, and people will travel to shows around the world. Quilts entered into shows earn cash prices and ribbon awards. Contemporary art quilting is a fine art style of quilting, which can be abstract or photo quality. Many artists dye their fabrics or use alternative mediums to achieve the appearance as in the *Aspen Trees* (14.62) quilt; the fabric was painted before being cut apart. *Bivium* (14.63) is an example of using digital images and free-form cut fabric, placing the fabric as the quilt was created.



14.53 *Aspen Trees*



14.54 *Bivium*

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

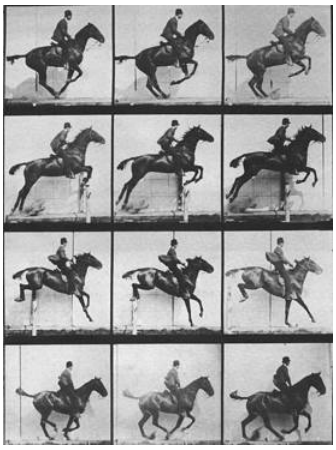
12: New Media

12.1: Time-Based Media- Film and Video
12.2: Digital Technology and Art of the 21st Century
12.2.1: Krzysztof Wodiczko, Monument

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12.1: Time-Based Media- Film and Video

With traditional film, what we see as a continuous moving image is actually a linear progression of still photos on a single reel that pass through a lens at a certain rate of speed and are projected onto a screen. We saw a simple form of this process earlier in the pioneering work of Eadweard Muybridge.



Eadweard Muybridge, Sequence of a Horse Jumping,
1904. Image is in the public domain

The first motion picture cameras were invented in Europe during the late nineteenth century. These early "movies" lacked a soundtrack and were normally shown along with a live pianist, organ player or orchestra in the theatre to provide the musical accompaniment. In the United States, film went from being a novelty to an art form with D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* in 1915. In it Griffith presents a narrative of the Civil War and its aftermath but with a decidedly racist view of American blacks and the Ku Klux Klan.

Film scholars agree it contains many new cinematic innovations and refinements, technical effects and artistic advancements, including a color sequence at the end. It had a formative influence on future films and has had a recognized impact on film history and the development of film as art. In addition, at almost three hours in length, it was the longest film to date (from *Filmsite Movie Review: The Birth of a Nation).*

Unique to the moving image is its ability to unfold an idea or narrative over time, using the same elements and principles inherent in any artistic medium. Film stills show how dramatic use of lighting, staging and set compositions are embedded throughout an entire film.

Video art, first appearing in the 1960s and 70s, uses magnetic tape to record image and sound together. The advantage of video over film is its instant playback and editing capability. One of the pioneers in using video as an art form was Doris Chase. She began by integrating her sculptures with interactive dancers, using special effects to create dreamlike work, and spoke of her ideas in terms of painting with light. Unlike filmmakers, video artists frequently combine their medium with installation, an art form that uses entire rooms or other specific spaces, to achieve effects beyond mere projection. South Korean video artist Nam June Paik made breakthrough works that comment on culture, technology and politics. Contemporary video artist Bill Viola creates work that is more painterly and physically dramatic, often training the camera on figures within a staged set or spotlighted figures in dark surroundings as they act out emotional gestures and expressions in slow motion. Indeed, his work The Greeting reenacts the emotional embrace seen in the Italian Renaissance painter Jocopo Pontormo's work *The Visitation* below.



Jacopo Pontormo, The Visitation, 1528, oil on canvas. The Church of San Francesco e Michele, Carmignano, Italy. Image is in the public domain.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: http://pb.libretexts.org/aapp/?p=270

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- Bill Viola - The Greeting (1995). **Authored by**: snakeBISHOP. **Located at**: https://youtu.be/Dg0IyGUVXaQ. **License**: *All Rights Reserved*. **License Terms**: Standard YouTube license

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12.2: Digital Technology and Art of the 21st Century

image
” src=”https://web.archive.org/web/20140215...a-thatgirl.jpg” alt=”Visitors at The Museum of Modern Art in front of Julie Mehretu, Empirical Construction, Istanbul, 2003. Ink and synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 10′ x 15′ (304.8 x 457.2 cm). ” width=”560″ height=”420″> Visitors at The Museum of Modern Art in front of Julie Mehretu, Empirical Construction, Istanbul, 2003. Ink and synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 10′ x 15′ (304.8 x 457.2 cm). Photo: thatgirl

Introduction

Twenty-first-century art is a burgeoning field of practice, research, and publication, making it an incredibly dynamic field of study. Many important topics have been resonating in the new century and inspiring new thinking and scholarly debate, such as the surge of bio art in response to scientific research in the life sciences, and the critical theory known as relational aesthetics that developed in response to an increase in art that invites viewers’ participation and interaction. Other topics that were much-discussed in the late twentieth century remain vital for the analysis of twenty-first-century art and visual culture, including semiotics, post-modernism, and feminism.



Wangechi Mutu, Complete Prolapsus of the Uterus, 2004, Glitter, ink, collage on found medical illustration paper, 46 x 31cm

Art of the twenty-first century emerges from a vast variety of materials and means. These include the latest electronic technologies, such as digital imaging and the Internet; familiar genres with a long history that continue to be practiced with great vigor, such as painting (see, for example, the work of Julie Mehretu and Shahzia Sikander); and materials and processes once associated primarily with handicrafts, re-envisioned to express new concepts. Many artists regularly and freely mix media and forms, making the choices that best serve their concepts and purposes. Activities vary from spectacular projects accomplished with huge budgets and extraordinary production values to modest endeavors that emphasize process, ephemeral experiences, and a do-it-yourself approach. The notion of influences has also shifted with changes in communications and technology; every location around the world has artists who respond to local geographies and histories as well as the sway of global visual culture.

Computers and digital technology

Like the camera did more than one hundred and fifty years ago, computers and digital technology have revolutionized the visual art landscape. Some artists now use digital technology to extend the reach of creative possibilities. Sophisticated software allows any computer user the opportunity to create and manipulate images and information. From still images and animation to streaming digital content and digital installations, computers have become high tech creative tools.

In a blending of traditional and new media, artist Chris Finley uses digital templates—software-based composition formats—to create his paintings.

The work of German artist Jochem Hendricks combines digital technology and human sight. His eye drawings rely on a computer interface to translate the process of looking into physical drawings.

Digital technology is a big part of the video and motion picture industries with the capability for high definition images, better editing resources and more areas for exploration to the artist.

The camera arts are relatively new mediums to the world of art but their contributions are perhaps the most significant of all. They are certainly the most complex. Like traditional mediums of drawing, painting and sculpture they allow creative exploration of ideas and the making of objects and images. The difference is in their avenue of expression: by recording images and experiences through light and electronics they, on the one hand, narrow the gap between the worlds of the "real" and the "imagined" and on the other offers us an art form that can invent its own reality with the inclusion of the dimension of time. We watch as a narrative unfolds in front of our eyes. Digital technology has created a whole new kind of spatial dimension: cyberspace.

Globalization

A key feature of the art scene in the twenty-first century (and of many sectors of twenty-first-century life) is the impact of globalization – the accelerating interconnectivity of human activity and information across time and space. Aided by the internet and mass media, awareness of the vitality of contemporary art in localities around the globe has grown exponentially. Anyone with access to the internet can follow developments in Shanghai, Sydney, São Paulo, or Nairobi. Simultaneously the increased movement of artists across borders and oceans has added to the intermixing of influences and artistic vocabularies. For example, Wangechi Mutu, originally from Kenya, pursued further education in South Wales and then in the United States. Her collaged images of women are informed by African tribal arts, 20th-century European and American collage artists, and the latest illustrations from fashion, pornography, and medical sources.

The meaning and consequences of globalization are much debated by scholars. Economically and politically, is globalization a force for growth and freedom in societies everywhere, or does it contribute to further exploitation of developing regions by the wealthy? Does globalization work in different ways in different localities?

Regarding globalization and art, do practices in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and elsewhere challenge the traditional assumptions and value judgments that are the basis of the Western canon? Are Western institutions rethinking that canon or simply adding art from other places to their rosters in a token and uncritical gesture of inclusivity? How do curated exhibitions that address themes of globalization represent artists from various parts of the world? The expanding art market and the proliferation of biennials and art fairs helped a select group of artists from every continent to gain an international presence; but have the underlying structure and values of the art market changed otherwise?

Visual Culture

In the twenty-first century visual culture has grown as a recognized interdisciplinary field of study, taking a multifaceted approach to understanding how images of all types communicate and participate in the construction of identity, gender, class, power relationships, and other social and political meanings and values. Medicine, science, politics, consumer culture, and religion and spirituality are some of the arenas that visual culture studies examine along with art. Visual culture scholars analyze film, television, graphic novels, fashion design, and other forms of popular culture in addition to established fine art media such as painting, and they draw upon many methodologies and theories, including semiotics, sociology, psychoanalysis, reception theory, feminism, and the concept of the gaze, to name a few.

Just as visual culture scholars are examining images and media of all types so, too, are twenty-first-century artists drawing inspiration, imagery, materials, and concepts from diverse areas of culture, moving well beyond influences from the history of fine art and design. The world of professional sports and fanatic fans has been a topic for Paul Pfeiffer, while the commercial television industry has informed various video installations by Christian Jankowski.

Most contemporary artists do not draw rigid distinctions between high art and popular culture. For instance, a number of contemporary artists embrace traditional techniques of fiber art but use them to create unorthodox forms or address current social and political issues. Along these lines, Ghada Amer has used thread to embroider on canvas repeated motifs of nude women engaged in sexual acts, then partially obscured the embroidered images with gestural painted brushstrokes. Her themes include the expression and repression of female sexuality and eroticism in both Western and Islamic societies. Another example of intermixing visual cultures is the complex array of interactions between science and contemporary art, with many artists engaging with scientific imagery and ideas in their practice. For example, Wim Delvoye's ongoing series called Cloaca imagines humans as cyborgs, representing the human digestive system as a kind of biomechanical contraption. Finally, many twenty-first-century artists are deeply affected by their immersion in global visual culture, which is now made vividly present through online networks. Many artists maintain a personal website, and some create art expressly for dissemination through social media. As always, new technologies provide new opportunities and challenges.

Public and Participatory Art

Public art was a well-established genre by the late twentieth century, attracting both traditional and experimental practitioners. Public art in the twenty-first century has expanded even more as a field of activity in which creative investigation can take place. In addition to continuing familiar forms such as site-specific monuments, murals, graffiti, and collaborations between artists, engineers, and architects, public art encompasses new purposes, forms, and locations, including pop-up art shops, street parades, and online projects. Public artists in the twenty-first century might use established approaches such as installation and performance but introduce new variations. For instance, it is now common for artists to hire other people, sometimes with special skills, to undertake performances on their behalf. In this vein, Vanessa Beecroft hired fashion models for performances, and the collaborative artists Allora & Caldazilla directed professional athletes as performers in some of their installations.

A pronounced tendency in the twenty-first century has been art that is participatory, in which the social interactions prompted by a work become its content. Often called relational art, the work literally engages the public in some way. For instance, Carsten Höller has installed giant slides in museums for visitors to slide down, and Rirkrit Tiravanija has prepared Thai food and served it to gallery goers. Artists attracted by the immediacy and connectivity of globally networked media often create online projects that invite social interaction. Relational aesthetics has developed (and been contested) as a critical theory for analyzing and evaluating such undertakings. Key questions in these debates include: Does it matter if the social interactions prompted by such works promote a better world or are conviviality and entertainment sufficient goals? To what extent should the physical products of relational art (such as Höller's slides) be evaluated aesthetically as well as for their social effects?

The twenty-first century is just beginning – issues and ideas are evolving rapidly and new artists are constantly gaining attention and influence.

*The content was first developed for Oxford Art Online and appears courtesy of Oxford University Press. Visit to learn more about contemporary art and see a list of significant twenty-first-century artists.

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12.2.1: Krzysztof Wodiczko, Monument

- by **ART21**

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From art21, March 18, 2020.

Video and installation artist Krzysztof Wodiczko amplifies the voices of refugees with “Monument,” his 2020 site-specific commission for Madison Square Park in New York City. From his Manhattan apartment, Wodiczko shares his early drawings of the project, where he conceived of how he would project video onto a prominent 1881 monument to Civil War admiral, David Glasgow Farragut. “It was very important for me to imagine how this statue can be animated with the projection,” says the artist. Monuments carry special significance for Wodiczko, as sites for public gatherings and protests, witnesses and recorders of history, and blank canvases upon which new narratives can be painted.

With “Monument,” Wodiczko decided to project video likenesses and spoken narratives of resettled refugees onto the Farragut statue. As Wodiczko explains, “There are more than 70 million refugees; people who are forced to leave their home countries because those countries are engaged in wars…to actually see a refugee speaking is a very rare opportunity for the public.” During a video mapping projection test in the park before the opening of the installation, Wodiczko makes sure that the faces and hands of the refugees from his recorded interviews with them align with the Farragut statue’s own body. As the final work plays in the darkened park each evening, passersby hear the refugees’ difficult and at times heartbreaking stories. The artist sees this as both a moment of catharsis for the refugees who collaborated with him for this project, but also a way to make monuments relevant to contemporary life, “so that we can build a better future, maybe a future in which some of those monuments, like war memorials, will never need to be built, because there will be no wars and no refugees.”

By appropriating public buildings and monuments as backdrops for projections, Krzysztof Wodiczko focuses attention on ways in which architecture and monuments reflect collective memory and history. Projecting images of community members’ hands, faces, or entire bodies onto architectural façades, and combining those images with voiced testimonies, Wodiczko disrupts our traditional understanding of the functions of public space and architecture. He challenges the silent, stark monumentality of buildings, activating them in an examination of notions of human rights, democracy, and truths about the violence, alienation, and inhumanity that underlie countless aspects of social interaction in present-day society.

Learn more about the artist: **https://art21.org/artist/krzysztof-wodiczko/**

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13: Architecture

Related to sculpture, architecture creates three-dimensional objects that occupy a given space and create a visual relationship with the space around them. The differences between the sculpture and architecture are in their scale and utility. Early human structures provided shelter from the elements. As hunter-gatherer societies transitioned to farming they made more permanent shelters, eventually formed communities, towns and cities. For thousands of years, architecture reflected the specific environment and materials available in any given region, including rock caves or huts of wood, soil and brick. Many were assemblages of materials like grasses, leaves and animal hides.



"Mammoth House", Frozen Woolly Mammoth Yuka Exhibit, Yokoyama, Japan, Summer 2013. This replica was made for the exhibit with real mammoth fossils and tusks. Author: Nandaro

Nomadic peoples in some parts of the world still utilize similar materials and techniques.



Turkman woman standing at the entry to a grass and hide covered yurt. Collection of the Library of Congress Prints and Images File

These are examples of **"skin and skeleton" construction**. In the case of the mammoth, literally. Any building that has an internal structure of one material and a cladding, or exterior, of another might be referred to as "skin and skeleton." Another structural system is the **"shell"** system in which the exterior cladding and the load-bearing structure are the same material. A log cabin would be an example of a "shell" structural system.

In simple design terms, architecture adheres to Louis Sullivan's dictum that "form follows function". Architecture's function reflects different human needs. For example, warehouses take the shape of large squares or rectangles because they need only to enclose a space that protects and stores products and materials in the most efficient manner. A home is designed with other functions in mind, including cooking, resting, cleaning and entertaining. So the interior design of a home includes specialized areas for these different functions. A church or school design would have their own set of spatial requirements because they provide for large groups of people at once.

Architecture solves problems concerning the use of space, interior design and the landscape that surrounds it. The limitations imposed on architecture by the laws of physics are solved to a large extent by engineering. The greatest limitations on design are the physical loads exerted by a structure's weight. **Compression** loads refer to vertical weight and **shear** loads travel at an angle or horizontally. Buildings need stable foundations and framing systems that support the spanning of open space.

Methods and Materials

The basic methods in building design and construction have been used for thousands of years. Stacking stones, laying brick or lashing wood together in one form or another are still used today in all parts of the world. But over the centuries, innovations in methods and materials have given new expression to architecture and the human footprint on the landscape. We can look to historical examples for clues that give context to different style periods.

In western culture, one of the earliest settlements with permanent structures was discovered at Catalhoyuk in Turkey (pictured below). The rich soil that surrounds the settlement indicates the inhabitants relied in part on farming. Dated to about 7500 BCE (Before Common Era), the dwellings are constructed from dried mud and brick and show wooden support beams spanning the ceilings. The design of the settlement incorporates a cell-like structure of small buildings either sharing common walls or separated by a few feet. The roofs are flat and were used as pathways between buildings.



Stipich Bela, 'Restoration of interior, Catalhoyuk, Turkey'

A significant advance came with the development of the **post and lintel system**. With this, a system of posts – either stone or wood – are placed at intervals and spanned by beams at the tops. The load is distributed down the posts to allow for areas of open space between them. Its earliest use is seen at Stonehenge (below), a prehistoric monument in southern England dating to about 3000 BCE.



Stonehenge, 30 July 2007 Source https://www.flickr.com/photos/gareth...n/photostream/ Author garethwiscombe CC-BY 2.0



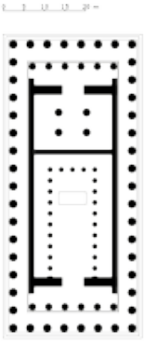
Post and lintel support in contemporary use; Image by Chris Gildow, Used with Permission

A **colonnade** continues the post and lintel method as a series of columns and beams enveloping larger areas of space. Colonnades can be free standing or part of a larger structure. Common in Egyptian, Greek and Roman architectural design, their use creates visual rhythm and implies a sense of grandeur. Over time columns became categorized by the capital style at their tops. The smooth and unadorned **Tuscan** and fluted **Doric** columns give way to more elaborate styles: the scrolled **Ionian** and the high relief **Corinthian**.

The Parthenon, a Greek temple to the mythic goddess Athena, was built in the 5thcentury BCE in Athens and is part of a larger community of structures in the Acropolis. All are considered pinnacles of classic Greek architecture. Ionic colonnades march across all sides of the Parthenon, the outer boundary of a very ordered interior floor plan.



Parthenon, Athens, Greece, Image by Onkel Tucal, CC-BY-SH 3.0



Floor plan of the Parthenon. Licensed through Creative Commons

The dots are columns in the colonnade.



The Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak, Luxor, Egypt. C. 19th Dynasty. Covers 54,000 sq. ft. An example of post and lintel construction. The columns are close together to support the weight of the lintel and the roof. CC PD, Free for personal and commercial use, No attribution required

The colonnade is part of our contemporary surroundings too. Parks and other public spaces use them to the same effect: providing visual and material stability in spanning areas of open space.



Chris Gildow, 'Contemporary colonnade'. Used with Permission

The development of the **arch** gave architecture new alternatives to post and lintel construction. Arches appeared as early as the 2nd millennium BC in Mesopotamian brick architecture. They supply strength and stability to walls without massive posts and beams because their construction minimizes the shear load imposed on them. This meant walls could go higher without compromising their stability and at the same time create larger areas of open space between arches. In addition, the arch gave buildings a more organic, expressive visual element. The Colosseum in Rome (below), built in the first century CE, uses repeated arches to define an imposing but decidedly airy structure. The fact that it's still standing today is testament to the inherent strength of the arch.



The Colosseum, 1st Century CE. Rome. Photo by David Illiff, image licensed through Creative Commons

Roman aqueducts are another example of how effectively the arch was used. Tall and graceful, the arches support themselves in a colonnade and were used to transport a network of water channels throughout ancient Rome.



Roman Aqueduct, c. 1st century CE. PD

From the arch came two more important developments: extending an arch in a linear direction – basically putting one arch right after another – formed a **vault**, encapsulating tall, narrow spaces with inverted "U" shaped ceilings. The compressive force of the vault required thick walls on each side to keep it from collapsing. Because of this many vaults were situated underground – essentially tunnels – connecting areas of a larger building or providing covered transport of people, goods and materials throughout the city. Roman basilicas, public spaces used for law courts and other assemblies, were basically long arched, vaulted buildings.

An arch rotated on its vertical axis creates a **dome**, with its curving organic scoop of space reserved for the tops of the most important buildings. The Pantheon in Rome sports a dome with an oculus – a round or elliptical opening at the top, that is the massive building's only light source. The dome of the Pantheon was made with unreinforced concrete, a process that was lost to the West after the fall of Rome until modern times. It was the largest dome for centuries and remains the largest unreinforced concrete dome in the world.



Dennis Jarvis, Dome of the Pantheon with oculus, 126 CE. Rome. PD

These elements combined to revolutionize architectural design throughout Europe and the Middle East in the form of bigger and stronger churches, mosques and even sectarian government buildings. Styles changed with technology.

Romanesque architecture was popular for nearly three hundred years (800 – 1100 CE). The style is characterized by **barrel or groin vault ceilings**, thick walls with low exterior buttresses and squared off towers. Buildings reached a point where they struggled to support their own weight. The architectural solution to the problem was a **flying buttress**, an exterior load-bearing column connected to the main structure by a segmented arch or 'flyer'. Even with exterior buttresses the Romanesque walls were thick and didn't allow for large openings.

St. Foy at Conques, France, is an example of Romanesque church architecture. Note the thickness of the walls and buttresses and the relative small size of the windows.



Abbey Church of St. Foy de Conques, France, 12th c. Image by Marc Figueras, CC BY-SH 3.0

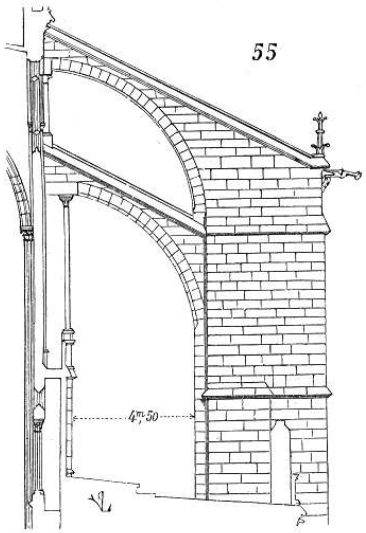


Diagram of a flying buttress from St. Denis basilica, Paris. From the Dictionary of French Architecture from 11th to 16th Century, 1856. Licensed through Creative Commons

Flying buttresses became a kind of exoskeleton that transferred the heavy weight of Romanesque stone roofs through their arches and into the ground, away from the building. They became catalysts for the later **Gothic** style based on higher, thinner walls, **pointed arches**, **ribbed vaults**, and spired towers. Also, the thinner walls of the Gothic style allowed for more stained glass windows and interior illumination.



Church of St. Denis, 7th -12th centuries CE. Saint-Denis, France; Image by Mossot; PD

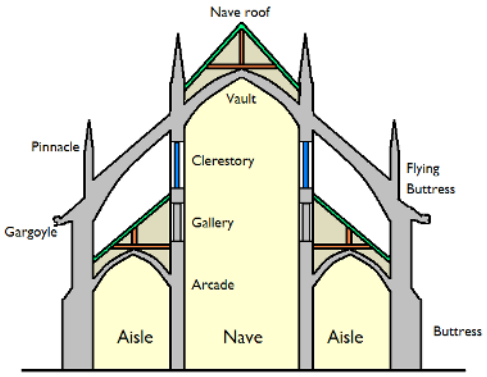
St. Denis basilica in France (above) is one of the first Gothic style churches, known for its high vaulted ceilings and extensive use of stained glass windows. The architecture of the church became a symbol of spirituality itself: soaring heights, magnificently embellished interiors and exteriors, elaborate lighting and sheer grandeur on a massive scale. Abbot Suger in the 12th century in Paris inspired master masons to build higher and to allow for bigger windows and more light to echo the grandeur of Heaven. This style was made possible by the pointed arches, pointed vaults, and flying buttresses that characterize Gothic architecture.[1]

By the 12th century the High Gothic style in France was developed and would inspire architecture in many other European countries – Italy remained an outlier for the most part into the Renaissance. In France, Chartres Cathedral about 50 miles southwest of Paris exhibits the Gothic style as it developed. Begun as a Romanesque church in 1145, the rebuilding of Chartres in the High Gothic style began in earnest in 1194 after a fire in that year. It continued through the 12th and 13th centuries and exhibits the hallmarks of High Gothic style: high nave with pointed arches, elaborate flying buttresses, thin walls with large, ornate stained glass windows.



Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, Image by MathKnight, Feb. 15, 2016; CC BY-SH 4.0

The parts of a Gothic basilican church are diagrammed below.



Gothic Cathedral, section with architectural labels, image by TTaylor, Sept. 1, 2007. CC BY-SH 3.0

The Doges Palace in Venice, Italy (pictured below) housed the political aristocracy of the Republic of Venice for a thousand years. Built in 1309 CE, its rhythmic levels of columns and pointed arches, divided by fractals as they rise, give way to elaborate geometric patterns in the pink brick façade. The ornamental additions at the top edge reinforce the patterns below.



Emustonen, 'The Doges Palace', 1309 CE, viewed from St. Mark's Square, Venice, Italy. Image by Martti Mustonen and licensed through Creative Commons

By the end of the High Gothic phase most of the innovations that drove architecture and building styles were in place. There wouldn't be a real change until the material discoveries of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. We will look at those transformations next.

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1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suger

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13.1: Modern Architecture

Building materials spawned by the Industrial Revolution, such as iron, steel, and sheet glass, determined new architectural techniques.

Key Points

- Among the common themes of modern architecture was the use of industrially produced materials.
- The Crystal Palace by Joseph Paxton, which housed the Great Exhibition of 1851, was an early example of iron and glass construction.
- Around 1900 a number of architects and designers around the world began developing new solutions to integrate traditional precedents (classicism or Gothic, for instance) with new technological possibilities.

Key Terms

- **Industrial Revolution**: The major technological, socioeconomic, and cultural change in the late 18th and early 19th century when the economy shifted from one based on manual labor to one dominated by machine manufacture.
- **William Le Baron Jenney**: (1832–1907) An American architect and engineer who is known for building the first skyscraper in 1884.
- **Louis Sullivan**: (1856-1924) An American architect who also pioneered urban steel-framed architecture and is also known, along with Jenney, as the Father of the Skyscraper and the Father of American Modernism. “Form follows function” is attributed to him although he credited the origin of the concept to an ancient Roman architect.
- **Crystal Palace**: A cast-iron and plate-glass building erected in Hyde Park, London, England, to house the Great Exhibition of 1851. More than 14,000 exhibitors from around the world gathered in the Palace’s 990,000 square feet (92,000 m2) of exhibition space to display examples of the latest technology developed in the Industrial Revolution. Designed by Joseph Paxton, the Great Exhibition building was 1,851 feet (564 m) long, with an interior height of 128 feet (39 m).

Modern Themes

Common themes of modern architecture include:

- The notion that ” form follows function,” a dictum originally expressed by Frank Lloyd Wright’s early mentor Louis Sullivan, meaning that the result of design should derive directly from its purpose
- Simplicity and clarity of forms and elimination of “unnecessary detail”
- Visual expression of structure (as opposed to the hiding of structural elements)
- The related concept of “truth to materials,” meaning that the true nature or natural appearance of a material ought to be seen rather than concealed or altered to represent something else
- Use of industrially produced materials
- Adoption of the machine aesthetic, particularly in International Style modernism
- A visual emphasis on horizontal and vertical lines

Application of Themes

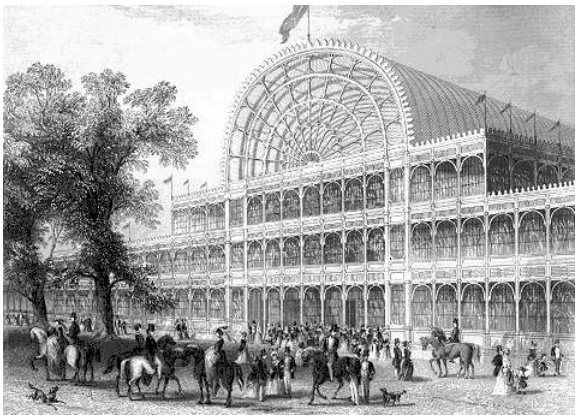
With the Industrial Revolution, the increasing availability of new building materials such as iron, steel, and sheet glass drove the invention of equally new building techniques. In 1796, Shrewsbury mill owner Charles Bage first used his “fireproof” design, which relied on cast iron and brick with flagstone floors. Such construction greatly strengthened the structure of mills, which enabled them to accommodate much bigger machines. Due to poor knowledge of iron’s properties as a construction material, a number of early mills collapsed. It was not until the early 1830s that English engineer Eaton Hodgkinson introduced the section beam, leading to widespread use of iron construction.

This kind of austere industrial architecture and the rolling steel mills that filled the sky with black clouds of smoke and coal dust utterly transformed the landscape of northern Britain, leading the poet William Blake to describe places like Manchester and parts of West Yorkshire as “Dark satanic mills.” The Crystal Palace, designed by Joseph Paxton for the Great Exhibition of 1851, was an early example of iron and glass construction. It was followed in 1864 by the first glass and metal curtain wall. A further development was that of the steel-framed skyscraper in Chicago, introduced around 1890 by William Le Baron Jenney and Louis Sullivan.

Modernist Schools

Around 1900, a number of architects and designers around the world began developing new solutions to integrate traditional precedents (i.e. classic Greek and Roman style, or Gothic) with new technological possibilities. The work of Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago, Victor Horta in Brussels, Antoni Gaudi in Barcelona, Otto Wagner and the Vienna Secession in Austria, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh in Glasgow, among many others, can be seen as a common struggle between old and new. The work of some of these were a part of what is broadly categorized as *Art Nouveau* ("new art").

Note that the Russian word for Art Nouveau, *StilModern*, and the Spanish word for Art Nouveau, *Modernismo*, are cognates of the English word "Modern," though they carry different meanings. The aftermath of the First World War would result in additional experimentation and ideas. Following the experiments in Art Nouveau and its related movements around the world, modernism in architecture and design grew out of stylistic threads originating throughout the world.



The transept façade of the Crystal Palace; PD-US. Original source www.uh.edu; originally from Tallis' History and Criticism of the Crystal Palace. 1852

The Crystal Palace, 1851, was one of the first buildings to have vast amounts of glass supported by structural metal, foreshadowing trends in Modernist architecture.

Modern Architecture: Form Follows Function

Modern architecture adhered to Louis Sullivan's famous precept, "form follows function," which called for an absence of ornamentation beyond functional necessity.

A Revolution in Scale and Form

The great 19th century architect of skyscrapers, Louis Sullivan, promoted an overriding precept to architectural design: "Form follows function." While the notion that structural and aesthetic considerations should be entirely subject to functionality was met with both approval and skepticism, it had the effect of introducing the concept of "function" in place of "utility." "Function" came to be seen as encompassing all criteria of the use, perception, and enjoyment of a building, not only practical but also aesthetic, psychological, and cultural.

Modern architecture is generally characterized by simplification of form and by the creation of ornament from the structure and theme of the building. It is a term applied to an overarching movement, with its exact definition and scope varying widely. In a broader sense, early modern architecture began at the turn of the 20th century with efforts to reconcile the principles underlying architectural design with rapid technological advancement and the modernization of society. It would take the form of numerous movements, schools of design, and architectural styles, some in tension to one another, and often equally defying classification.

The Industrial Revolution introduced and popularized the use of steel, plate glass, as well as mass-produced components in architecture. These new materials opened up a new world for bold structural frames, with clean lines and plain or shiny surfaces. In the early stages of modern architecture, a popular motto was "decoration is a crime." In Eastern Europe, the Communists rejected the West's decadent ways, and modernism developed in a markedly more bureaucratic, somber, and monumental fashion.

Some historians regard Modernism as a matter of taste, a reaction against eclecticism and the lavish stylistic excesses of Victorian and Edwardian architecture. Around the turn of the 20th century, a general dissatisfaction with the emphasis on revivalist architecture and elaborate decoration of Arte Nouveau gave rise to many new lines of thought that served as precursors to Modern Architecture. Notable among these are the philosophies of the Deutscher Werkbund and the Bauhaus School.



The AEG Turbinenfabrik (“turbine factory”), 1909, designed by Peter Behrens, illustrating the combination of industry and design. Behrens’s turbine factory reflects the absence of decorative elements typical of modern architecture. Photo Doris Antony, CC BY-SA 3.0

The approach of the Modernist architects was to reduce buildings to pure forms, removing historical references and ornament in favor of functionalist details. Buildings displayed their functional and structural elements, exposing steel beams and concrete surfaces instead of hiding them behind decorative forms.

Chicago School of Architecture

The Chicago School of architecture is famous for promoting steel-frame construction and a modernist spatial aesthetic.

Key Points

- While the term ” Chicago School ” is widely used to describe buildings in the city during the 1880s and 1890s, Chicago buildings of the era displayed a wide variety of styles and techniques.
- One of the distinguishing features of the Chicago School is the use of steel- frame buildings with masonry cladding (usually terra cotta), allowing large plate-glass window areas and limiting the amount of exterior ornamentation.
- The “Chicago window” originated in this school. It is a three-part window consisting of a large fixed center panel flanked by two smaller double-hung sash windows.

Chicago’s architecture is famous throughout the world and one style is referred to as the Chicago School. It is also known as Commercial style. In the history of architecture, the Chicago School was a school of architects active in Chicago at the turn of the 20th century. They were among the first to promote the new technologies of steel-frame construction in commercial buildings, and developed a spatial aesthetic that co-evolved with, and then came to influence, parallel developments in European Modernism.

While the term Chicago School is widely used to describe buildings in the city during the 1880s and 1890s, this term has been disputed by scholars, in particular in reaction to Carl Condit’s 1952 book *The Chicago School of Architecture*. Historians such as H. Allen Brooks, Winston Weisman, and Daniel Bluestone have pointed out that the phrase suggests a unified set of aesthetic or conceptual precepts, when, in fact, Chicago buildings of the era displayed a wide variety of styles and techniques. Contemporary publications used the phrase Commercial style to describe the innovative tall buildings of the era rather than proposing any sort of unified school.

One of the distinguishing features of the Chicago School is the use of steel-frame buildings with masonry cladding (usually terra cotta), allowing large plate-glass window areas and limiting the amount of exterior ornamentation. Sometimes elements of neoclassical architecture are used in Chicago School skyscrapers. Many Chicago School skyscrapers contain the three parts of a classical column. The first floor functions as the base, the middle stories, usually with little ornamental detail, act as the shaft of the column, and the last floor or so represent the capital, with more ornamental detail and capped with a cornice.



The Chicago Building, photo J. Crocker, taken March 3, 2-10, CC BY

The Chicago Building by Holabird & Roche (1904–1905) : This steel frame building displays both variations of the Chicago window; its facade is dominated by the window area (limiting decorative embellishments) and it is capped with a cornice, elements that are all typical of the Chicago School.

The “Chicago window” originated in this school. It is a three-part window consisting of a large fixed center panel flanked by two smaller double-hung sash windows. The arrangement of windows on the facade typically creates a grid pattern, with some projecting out from the facade forming bay windows. The Chicago window combined the functions of light-gathering and natural ventilation; a single central pane was usually fixed, while the two surrounding panes were operable. These windows were often deployed in bays, known as oriel windows, that projected out over the street.



Chicago School window grid: The Chicago window combined the functions of light-gathering and natural ventilation; a single central pane was usually fixed, while the two surrounding panes were operable. Photo by J. Crocker, taken March 30, 2006. CC BY

Architects whose names are associated with the Chicago School include Henry Hobson Richardson, Dankmar Adler, Daniel Burnham, William Holabird, William LeBaron Jenney, Martin Roche, John Root, Solon S. Beman, and Louis Sullivan. Frank Lloyd Wright started in the firm of Adler and Sullivan but created his own Prairie Style of architecture.



The Home Insurance Building in Chicago, Illinois: Some regarded the Home Insurance Building, designed by architect William Le Baron Jenney, as the first skyscraper in the world. It was built in Chicago in 1884 and was demolished in 1931. PD-US Chicago Architectural Photographing Company – This image is available from the United States Library of Congress's National Digital Library Program

European Expressionist Architecture

Key Points

- The term Expressionist architecture initially described the activity of the German, Dutch, Austrian, Czech, and Danish avant-garde from 1910 until 1930.
- The style was characterized by an early modernist adoption of novel materials, formal innovation, and very unusual massing—sometimes inspired by natural biomorphic forms and sometimes by the new technical possibilities offered by the mass production of brick, steel, and glass.
- Expressionist architecture was individualistic and in many ways eschewed aesthetic dogma, but some aims common to its proponents include: the distortion of form, a striving for the new, the notion of architecture as a work of art, and the aim to express an inner experience.

Modern European Architecture

Expressionist architecture was an architectural movement that developed in Europe during the first decades of the twentieth century in parallel with the expressionist visual and performing arts. The term Expressionist architecture initially described the activity of the German, Dutch, Austrian, Czech, and Danish avant-garde from 1910 until 1930.

Subsequent redefinitions extended the term backwards to 1905 and also widened it to encompass the rest of Europe. Today the meaning has broadened even further to refer to architecture of any date or location that exhibits some of the qualities of the original movement such as: distortion, fragmentation, or the communication of violent or overstressed emotion.

Expressionism

The style was characterized by an early modernist adoption of novel materials, formal innovation, and very unusual massing—sometimes inspired by natural biomorphic forms and sometimes by the new technical possibilities offered by the mass production of brick, steel, and glass.

Many expressionist architects fought in World War I and their experiences, combined with the political turmoil and social upheaval that followed the German Revolution of 1919, resulted in a Utopian outlook and a romantic socialist agenda. Hence, ephemeral exhibition buildings were numerous and highly significant during this period.

Likewise, scenography for theater and films provided another outlet for the expressionist imagination, and provided supplemental incomes for designers attempting to challenge conventions in a harsh economic climate.

Features of Expressionist Architecture

Expressionist architecture was individualistic and in many ways eschewed aesthetic dogma. While the movement was very broad, some points can be found as recurring in works of Expressionist architecture, and are evident in some degree in each of its works.

- A distortion of form for an emotional effect.
- The subordination of realism to symbolic or stylistic expression of inner experience.
- An underlying effort at achieving the new, original, and visionary.
- A profusion of works on paper, and models, with discovery and representations of concepts being more important than pragmatic finished products.
- Often hybrid solutions, irreducible to a single concept.
- Themes of natural romantic phenomena, such as caves, mountains, lightning, crystal and rock formations.
- Utilizes the creative potential of artisan craftsmanship.
- A tendency towards the gothic than the classical.
- Draws as much from Moorish, Islamic, Egyptian, and Indian art and architecture as from Roman or Greek.
- Conceives architecture as a work of art.

Form also played a defining role in setting apart expressionist architecture from its immediate predecessor, art nouveau, or Jugendstil – the German version of arte nouveau. While art nouveau had an organic freedom with ornament, expressionist architecture strove to free the form of the whole building instead of just its parts.

An example of a built expressionist project that is formally inventive is Erich Mendelsohn's Einstein Tower. This sculpted building shows a relativistic and shifting view of geometry: devoid of applied ornament, form and space are shaped in fluid concrete to express concepts of the architect and the building's namesake.



The Einstein Tower: In Mendelsohn's design, form and space are shaped in fluid concrete and devoid of applied ornament. Photo by Doris Antony, taken Sept. 16, 2003, CC BY-SA 2.5

Expressionist architecture utilized curved geometries and a recurring form in the movement is the dome. Another expressionist motif was the emphasis on either horizontality or verticality for dramatic effect, which was influenced by new technologies like cruise liners and skyscrapers.

While the drawing of the design for a skyscraper by Mies van der Rohe is very much in keeping with German Expressionism, the actual skyscraper would also have been an expression of the new. The idea of a multistory building with glass cladding over a steel skeleton was new and daring in 1921. Even the steel-framed buildings of Louis Sullivan adhered to the convention of a solid masonry cladding which gave the public the feeling of solidity and reliability they were used to from 19th century materials.

Mies was interested in showing the load-bearing function of steel that allowed the exterior walls to be free of the support (non-load-bearing) and, in this case, translucent. His later work, like the Seagram Building in New York, would continue this idea of the glass curtain wall and would have an extraordinary influence on the cityscape of the 20th century.



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Friedrichstrasse Skyscraper Project: drawing Charcoal and graphite on paper mounted on board, Berlin-Mitte, Germany, 1921. PD-US

American Art Deco Architecture

Art Deco and Streamline Moderne were two key styles of early 20th-century American architecture.

Key Points

- Art Deco emerged from the Interwar period and combines traditional craft motifs with Machine-Age imagery and materials.
- Art Deco can be recognized by its heavy ornament, bold geometric forms, and rich colors.
- Streamline Moderne was an aesthetic first created by industrial designers who stripped Art Deco design of its ornament in favor of the aerodynamic pure- line concept of motion and speed developed from scientific thinking: it is embodied in cylindrical forms and long, horizontal windowing.
- The Streamline Moderne was both a reaction to Art Deco and a reflection of austere economic times. Gone was unnecessary ornament: sharp angles were replaced with simple, aerodynamic curves.

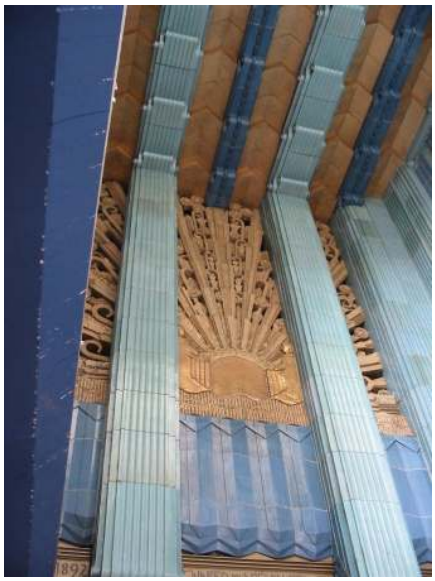
Modern American architecture is usually divided into the two styles of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne. Art Deco, which emerged in the 1920s and flourished in the 1930s to 1940s, is an eclectic style that combines traditional craft motifs with Machine Age imagery and materials.

Streamline Moderne, also known as Art Moderne, was a late type of the Art Deco design style that emerged during the 1930s. Its architectural style emphasized curving forms, long, horizontal lines, and sometimes nautical elements.

Art Deco

The Art Deco style is often characterized by its use of rich colors, symmetry, bold geometric shapes, simple composition, rectilinear rather than curvilinear shapes, and lavish ornamentation. Emerging during the Interwar period when rapid industrialization was transforming culture, one of the major attributes of Art Deco was its embrace of technology.

During its heyday, Art Deco represented luxury, glamor, exuberance, and faith in social and technological progress. The urban United States has many examples of Art Deco architecture, especially in New York, Chicago, and Detroit. The famous skyscrapers in these cities are the best known, but notable Art Deco buildings can be found in other neighborhoods.



Eastern Columbia Building entrance, Los Angeles, 1930: The sunburst design executed in terra cotta exemplifies Art Deco's characteristic combination of craft, ornament, and geometrical motif. Photographed by Binksternet in August 2002, PD-US



Spire of the Chrysler Building, New York: The opulent Art Deco spire of the Chrysler Building in New York City, designed by William Van Alen, was built 1928–1930 and reflects the earlier lavish ornamentation, yet simple and streamlined composition of the style. Photograph by Carol M. Highsmith, US Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division under the digital ID highsm.04444

Streamline Moderne

As the Great Depression decade of the 1930s progressed, Americans saw a new decorative element of the Art Deco style emerge in the marketplace: streamlining. Streamline Moderne was a concept first created by industrial designers, who stripped Art Deco design of its ornament in favor of the aerodynamic pure-line concept of motion and speed developed from scientific thinking.

This aesthetic was embodied through the use of cylindrical forms and long, horizontal windowing. An array of designers quickly ultra-modernized and streamlined the designs of everyday objects, such as toasters.

Streamline Moderne was both a reaction to Art Deco and a reflection of austere economic times. Gone was unnecessary ornament. Sharp angles were replaced with simple, aerodynamic curves. Exotic woods and stone were replaced with cement and glass.

Some common characteristics of Streamline Moderne include horizontal orientation, rounded edges, corner windows, glass blocks, porthole windows, chrome hardware, smooth exterior wall surfaces (usually stucco), horizontal wall grooves, and subdued colors.



Hecht Company Warehouse: The Hecht Company Warehouse (Washington, D.C.) is a Streamline Moderne style building. The building uses glass block extensively, culminating in a twelve-pointed star-shaped cupola at the corner, which is illuminated at night. Black brick interspersed with glass block spells out The Hecht Co. at the fifth floor. Photo by Superbass taken July 12, 2012. CC BY-SA 3.0



Hollywood Palladium: The Hollywood Palladium (in Hollywood, CA) was a dance hall built in the 1940s in the Streamline Moderne style. This picture depicts the Palladium in 2005, prior to its 2008 renovation. Released under CC BY-SH 2.0 on June 25th, 2005, orig. uploader R. 123 at English Wikipedia

However, Art Deco and Streamline Moderne were not necessarily opposites. Streamline Moderne buildings with a few Deco elements were not uncommon, and sometimes there is so much crossover that it can be difficult to differentiate between the two styles. Other examples of both Art Deco and Streamline Moderne can be found in New York, California, and especially Miami.

Europe in the 1920s was recovering from WWI. Many artists reacted to that cataclysm, some by searching for new forms that they hoped would help turn society away from the mistakes of the past and create a new utopian future. In architecture, Le Corbusier developed a style that would be highly influential.

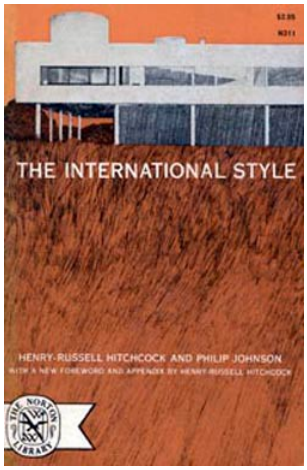
International Style

The International Style would become the face of modern architecture for decades after Le Corbusier's theories of the 1920s and 30s. The Getty Research Institute defines the primary attributes of International Style buildings as having an "emphasis on volume over mass, the use of lightweight, mass-produced, industrial materials, rejection of all ornament and color, repetitive modular forms, and the use of flat surfaces, typically alternating with areas of glass."[1]

[1]



Le Corbusier, Villa Savoye, Poissy, France, 1928-31. Photo by Valueyou, uploaded Oct. 7, 2008; CC BY- SA 3.0



Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, Front cover of the 1932 book The International Style, 1932. Source: WP:NFCC#4 Fair Use

Corbusier published a number of texts on architecture in which his largely utopian ideas were established. In *L'EspritNouveau* (New Spirit, 1918-22) and *Versunearchitecture* (Toward an Architecture, 1920-23) he outlined his five points which made up his philosophy that "Une maison est une machine-à-habiter" ("A house is a machine for living in").

These points were:

- Free façade
- Open floor plan
- Roof garden
- Pilotis which lift the living space off the ground
- Strip or ribbon windows

The Villa Savoye was begun in 1928 in a wooded landscape a short train ride from Paris. It was the summer retreat of a wealthy Parisian family and it gave Corbusier the freedom to express each of the five points exactly. The concrete pillars (pilotis) lift the

house off of the unhealthy ground and open that footprint for access by cars and other practical uses. It also allowed the healthy breezes to circulate through the ribbon windows which are also located so that the view of the surrounding trees makes the house seem to be a kind of treehouse. The façade is not linked to obvious supports (free) and the interior walls are also able to be placed wherever they were needed without reliance on obvious structure. The roof of the Villa is a kind of garden or recreational space. The Villa Savoye was the cover illustration for the Museum of Modern Art's architectural exhibition on what curators Hitchcock and Johnson would name the "International Style".

American Modernism and Frank Lloyd Wright



Frank Lloyd Wright, Fallingwater (Kaufmann House), Mill Run, Pennsylvania, 1937. Photo by Somach, May 30, 2010, CC BY_SH 3.0

Frank Lloyd Wright is possibly the most significant architect of the first half of Amerca's twentieth century. He was a prolific designer and had some 532 of his more than 1000 designs actually built. A student of Louis Sullivan, Wright would develop his own theories about what architecture should be – mainly that it should harmonize with human beings and with the landscape in which it was set. He called this *organic architecture*. While his forms were geometric like Corbusier's, his materials were often taken from the area in which the building was itself sited and always with the idea of nature in mind. He also established a school at his estate called Taliesin in Wisconsin, and later at Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona. Wright had a number of influences in his work including something of Sullivan, Japanese architecture, the English Arts and Crafts movement. However, nature was his greatest inspiration and his Prairie Houses, long low structures with cantilevered overhangs were meant to relate to the Midwestern landscape that inspired them.

One of his most famous houses, Fallingwater, at Mill Run in Pennsylvania was, like Corbusier's Villa Savoye, a summer retreat for a wealthy merchant, Philadelphia department store mogul Edgar Kaufmann, Sr. and his family. The unexpected thing about Fallingwater was Wright's genius in its siting. The conventional choice would have been to put the house on the other side of the water looking back toward the waterfall. Wright chose to locate it *over* the fall itself with open access to the water from the house and views of the water and nature beyond. Local materials were used in the construction along with Wright's reinforced concrete cantilevered patios making nature an integral part of the design.

Postmodernism

During the 1960s, 70s, and 80s architects began to turn away from the stark lines of the International Style with a return to ornamentation. This was part of the cultural zeitgeist of the time which seemed to be a kind of general exhaustion with the forms of modernism. Francis Fukuyama's essay *The End of History*, published in 1989, suggested that political systems had reached their final evolution with liberal democracies – Western culture had reached the end of history. This was echoed in Postmodern architecture by the incorporating, or appropriating, styles or ornament from the past and incorporating those forms onto new buildings. The idea of appropriation also made its way into painting and sculpture with artists literally using images already created by other artists and recreating them wholly or in part. Sherrie Levine rephotographed some of the iconic work of Edward Weston: https://smarthistory.org/sherrie-levine-untitled-after-edward-weston/

The Centre Georges Pompidou is in the Beaubourg area of the 4th arrondissement of Paris, near Les Halles, rue Montorgueil and the Marais and houses much of Paris' contemporary art.

Pompidou Center, Paris, 1971-11. Renzo Piano, Richard Rogers and Gianfranco Franchini architects. Accessed on Vimeo, posted by EcoworldReactor. Visit site and video at https://vimeo.com/197148859

It was designed by the architectural team of Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano, along with Gianfranco Franchini. While more high tech than Postmodern, the Beaubourg, as it is called, does seem to be a building turned inside out with the structures that are usually hidden made the primary exterior architectural features. In that way it participates in the Postmodern idea of "deconstruction" made popular during the 1980s by French philosopher and semiotician Jacques Derrida. Derrida analyzed texts by close readings meant to question the relationship between structure and language and ultimately the impossibility of meaning in language as he saw it. It has become an important theoretical underpinning of many disciplines including architecture, art, and critical theory.

In America the architects Philip Johnson and Frank Gehry along with Michael Graves and others also turned to ideas of Postmodernism in building. Gehry's work at the time is arguably more playful – another aspect of Postmodern architecture – but Johnson's skyscraper on Madison Avenue in New York was both reviled and celebrated for its appropriation of the cornice of an 18th century Chippendale cabinet on the top of the building.



550 Madison Avenue (formerly the AT&T Building), New York, 1982, Philip Johnson architect. Photo by David Shankbone, taken Feb. 19, 2007. CC BY-SH 3.0



Chippendale desk, CC PD-US

Green Architecture

Contemporary architects have become as concerned with sustainability and environmental issues as they are with form and ornamentation. Buildings are being designed integrating literal green spaces – some can even vertically farm their own food. Issues of material that is recycled or naturally integrated with the environment can be the starting place for architecture in the 21st century,

both domestic and commercial. Other buildings like tiny houses are created to leave as small a footprint on the land as possible, as well as being more affordable for an expanding population with shrinking resources for housing.



Tobalaba Subway Station, Santiago, Chile, 1980. Photo by Eduardo Zárate, taken on Nov. 21, 2009. CC BY-ND 2.0

1. [1] "International Style (modern European architecture style)". *Art and Architecture Thesaurus*. Getty Research Institute. http://www.getty.edu/vow/AATFullDisplay?find=international+style&logic=AND&note=&page=1&s ubjectid=300021472 ↵

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13.2: Architecture for the 21st Century

Introduction

Architecture is the art and process of designing and constructing buildings, both small and large. Architects accomplish practical and expressive requirements to provide both functional and artistic ends. Contemporary architecture is a compilation of many styles with no dominant hierarchy. From traditional to highly conceptional, the square buildings of the twentieth century have given way to buildings with the look of a sculptural piece of art. With the use of digital technology, the pencil has been replaced. We have entered a process of digitized architecture, transforming societies' way of life and raising awareness of the global environmental damage caused by the overuse of natural resources. New technologies challenge gravity as they spiral higher into the atmosphere as competitions become the highest.[1]

Architecture is one of the significant developments in building design in the new millennium, developing new concepts and designing mixed-use facilities to fit into compact settings with public transportation. The pressures of energy requirements to meet radical design turned the architects into efficient and functional artists. The concepts of immense towers caused adjustments in lifestyles and the concepts of where we live, work, transportation needs, and supporting public lands requirements.

The building materials of the new millennium are prefabricated on-demand using computer-aided machines to cut, construct, and process raw materials into pieces transported to the job site. The use of robotics guarantees the accuracy and continuity of the fabricated components and reduces human error. Testing labs for earthquake stability, wind stability, and fire prevention are essential for the design. More than half of the world's population resides in urban cities, and contextual models have become important.

The invention of CAD (computer-aided software) in 1961 had the most significant impact on architectural design. The realistic representations, speed, accuracy, and affordability make the CAD programs valuable for architects. Today's CAD programs incorporate 3D visualizations and simulations without the need to create physical models. Virtual tours offer exact views of the architectural design. Architects can draw a set of plans for the construction company to build the structure, also making a mock-up model in three dimensions as an example for the client to physically see the design. Today, architects use computers to help design and draw the final plans and make live 3-dimensional models viewable from different angles.

Contemporary Architecture design continues into the twenty-first century; however, the transformation from standard upright buildings to organically designed with diverse functions and connections to the surrounding environment takes precedent. Architects are challenged to create unusual designs using twenty-first-century materials and engineering techniques.

Zaha Hadid

Zaha Hadid (1950-2016) was an Iraqi-British architect artist and designer born in Baghdad, Iraq. She planned and pushed the boundaries of building design with computer-aided design technology. Hadid embraced new materials and designed intelligent buildings to represent the future. She was the first woman to win the Nobel Prize of Architecture, the *Pritzker Prize*, and the Queen of England made her a Dame in 2012 for her contributions to the art of Architecture. She has been described as the "Queen of Curve," liberating architectural geometry and giving architecture a new life and identity.[2]

Growing up in an upper-class Iraqi family, Hadid studied mathematics at the American University of Beirut and moved to London to study at the Architectural Association School of Architecture. After graduation, Hadid opened her firm, Zaha Hadid Architects, in London and continued her unique modern styles, setting her apart from other architects. Her pioneering vision redefined architecture worldwide as she transformed concrete, steel, and glass into free-flowing virtuosic construction. "Experiencing Hadid's architecture yields an understanding that the quest for beauty alone was not her modus operandi. Her buildings are beautiful—and beauty may account for their seductive urban presence, for their hold on the eye—but the beauty and virtuosity within her work are married to meaning. Her architecture is inventive, original, and civic, offering generous public spaces that are clearly organized and intuitive to navigate."[3]

The Phaeno Science Center (8.4.1) in Germany was completed in 2005 and is considered a "hypnotic work of architecture—the kind of building that utterly transforms our vision of the future." The building itself stands on stilts creating a covered plaza, allowing people to walk under the building. The structure is 27,000 square meters of concrete and steel girders laid out in distinct patterns and includes workshops, laboratories, theater, and shopping. The free-flowing space does not have any right angles, and the different floors are intertwined, giving the visitor a unique experience. It has been described as a spacecraft that has just landed

and put out the welcome mat. The original design used digital animation to conceptualize the spatial diagram of the building and its contents.



Figure 13.2.1: Phaeno Science Center (2005, Germany) by Nikola350, CC BY-SA 4.0

The interior (8.4.2) needed to house an exhibition space with plenty of room for young visitors to explore. The open floor arrangement encourages children's learning experience, free of dogmatism or any pedagogical paradigm based on the approach to learning.

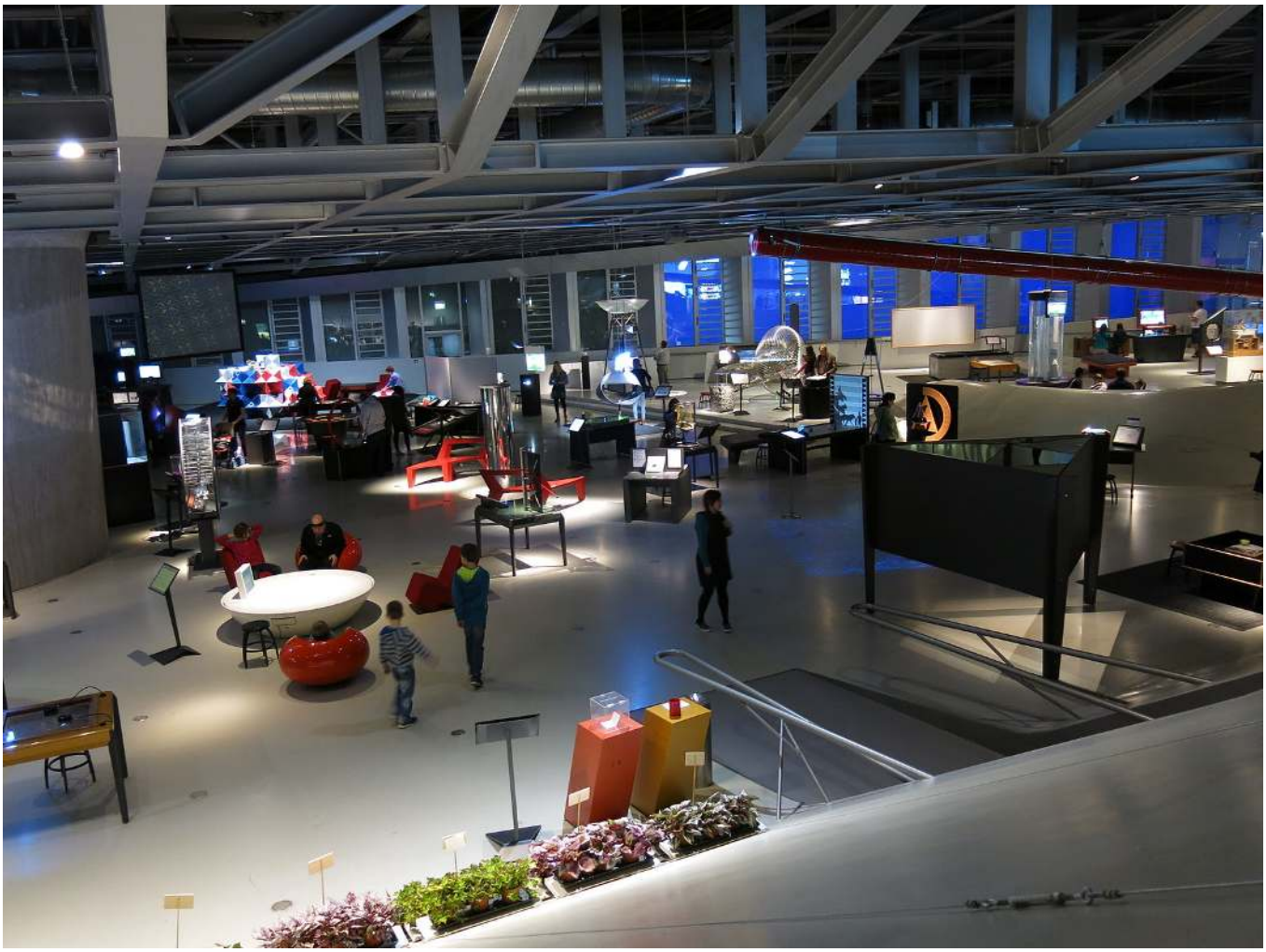


Figure 13.2.2: Interior of Phaeno Science Center by Florian-schäffer, CC BY-SA 3.0

The new Library and Learning Center of Vienna University (8.4.3) in Austria is one of the tallest and largest pieces of architecture on campus. The polygonal cube design has both inclined and vertical facades and two elements of contrasting colors separated by glass. However, as you move inside, it becomes curvilinear, creating a free-form inner canyon. The building contains classrooms, an auditorium, cafeteria, social rooms, administrative offices, and an extensive library. The multiple spaces are joined together with ramps and bridges overlooking the great hall filled with light. The operational plan was to define the different areas of use into blocks of sites. The library can accommodate 25,000 students and 1500 staff for gathering, learning, and meeting. The facade of the building is made from maintenance-free Corten steel, which will age over time. There are over 100,000 square meters of floor space with 4,000 rooms, 90 auditoriums and classrooms, and over 3,000 workstations.



Figure 13.2.3: Library and Learning Center of Vienna University (2013, Austria) by Böhringer Friedrich, CC BY-SA 3.0

The Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center (8.4.4), located in Azerbaijan, challenges the concepts of geometry and gravity, giving way to all form and no structure. The flowing architecture curves in sweeping shapes containing halls and a museum without a right angle in sight. As the fluid form of the outside topography merges, the entrances are found in the surface folds.



Figure 13.2.4: Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center (2012, Azerbaijan) Public Domain

When viewers enter the center, the building folds inside decrease, becoming part of the interior (8.4.5). The 57,506 square meters are made from glass-fiber-reinforced polyester panels, which are seamless as the building undulates like a giant wave. The interior is a large-scale column-free space created by a concrete structure and a space frame system showing off the hypermodern world wrapped inside. Inside the curved wave of white glass fiber, reinforced polyester plastic covers the visitors in the sense of comfort. Hadid's design continuously self-transforms into many different directions with no terminus and little sense of boundary.[4] The center is so large it can host several events simultaneously. The core of the building is a large atrium with floor-to-ceiling glass panels allowing sweeping views of the grass landscape.



Figure 13.2.5: Interior of center. CC BY-SA 3.0

Guangzhou Opera House (8.4.6) overlooks the Pearl River in Guangdong Province, China, and is one of China's most prominent theatres. Hadid designed the building to interplay between architecture and nature, engaging the ideologies of erosion, geology, and topography. The two buildings resemble two large rocks washed up on the river. The auditorium was made of concrete with large swaths of glass and granite blocks. The unique contoured twin boulder design has a promenade from the land across the water.



Figure 13.2.6: Guangzhou Opera House (2010, China) CC BY-SA 3.0

The 1800 seat auditorium (8.4.7) houses the latest acoustic technology and the smaller 400 seat performance hall for opera and concerts in the round. The cultural development will combine land and sea together in harmony.

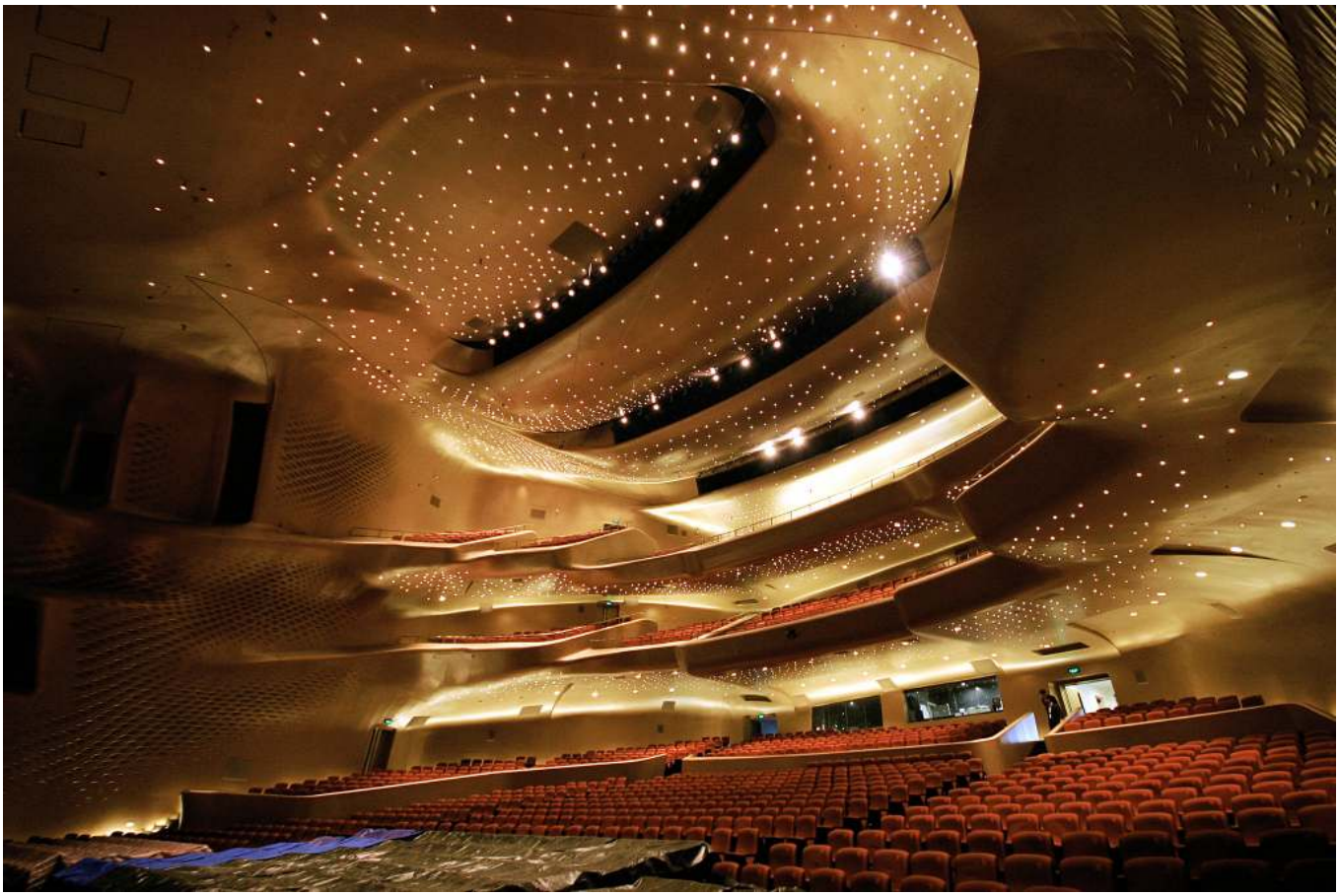


Figure 13.2.7: Interior of opera house. CC BY-SA 2.0

Ole Scheeren

Ole Scheeren (1971-) is a German architect and urbanist who creates contemporary architecture in large cities worldwide. He is the son of a German architect, Dieter Scheeren, and by the age of 14, he was working with his father designing furniture. He graduated from the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. After ten years, Scheeren started his own company, Buro Ole Scheeren Group. The Interlace (8.4.8) in Singapore won Scheeren the *World Building* in 2015. Scheeren employed a modernist style in many of his designs using Form Follows Function.[5] The Interlace is a vertical community of living and social spaces combined with the natural ecosystem. Completed in 2013 on eight hectares of property, it houses 1,040 families, amenities, parking, and retail over 170,000 square meters.

Instead of a stacked cube building, The Interlace incorporates thirty-one apartment blocks, six stories tall, stacked in a hexagonal arrangement around eight large courtyards. The blocks are arranged in three peaks of twenty-four stories to resemble the city's dramatic mountains. The six floors create picturesque terraced gardens giving the illusion the buildings are part floating, part resting on each other. This "interlaced" construction gives the residents choices for interacting with other inhabitants, projecting a sense of freedom. The central courtyard includes picnic areas, pet zones, organic gardens, tennis and basketball courts, and a one-kilometer running track. The building incorporates low impact passive energy using wind, solar, and daylight analysis, winning the *Urban Habitat Award.*



Figure 13.2.8: The Interlace (2005, Singapore) by Jérémy Binard, CC BY-SA 2.0

The CCTV Headquarters (8.4.9) in Beijing, China, became an icon when it was finished. It is not a predictable building; it is a three-dimensional experience of geometric and social connections. The Headquarters were completed in 2012 on a twenty-hectare site and are 599,000 square meters. The two towers rise from the ground and intersect at the top, producing a cantilevered connection. The two L-shaped high-rise towers are connected at the bottom and the top in a Z-crisscross. The building was difficult to engineer from the design of two 6-degree leaning towers, bent at 90-degrees at the bottom and the top providing a continuous loop. A diagrid exoskeleton construction system was adopted on the external faces of the building that resists gravity and other lateral forces.[6] A butterfly plate links perimeter columns, braces, and beams giving it stability to cope with different load conditions and earthquakes. The façade of the building is a network of diagonal steel beams with inlaid glass panels creating a soft grey color.



Figure 13.2.9:CCTV Headquarters (2012, Beijing) by Dayton12345, CC BY-SA 4.0

Eduardo Souto de Moura

Eduardo Souto de Moura (1952-) is a Portuguese architect and won the *Pritzker Prize* in 2011 for the Estadio Municipal de Braga, the home ground of the Sporting Clube d Braga. It is the largest stadium in Portugal. A graduate of the Porto School of Architecture, Souto de Moura began his career in the 1980s and is known for his formal yet straightforward, serious, and dramatic designs. He uses natural colors and materials mixed with versatile and contextual designs, seldom affected by contemporary trends.

In Portugal, the Municipal Stadium of Braga (8.4.10) was built in 2003, a striking, contemporary, and award-winning designed stadium. Capable of holding 30,286 fans, it was carved into the side of the mountain, a Monte do Castro quarry, a large part of the construction costs. Its organizational scheme is determined by two tribunes that face one another: one is carved into the rock, and

sixteen concrete ribs hold the other.[7] Large canopies connected by dozens of steel strings are between the seating, a design inspired by the Incan bridges in ancient South America. Souto de Moura designed a light, precision simplicity in form and details as he was determined to fit the stadium into the quarry.



Figure 13.2.10: Municipal Stadium (2003, Portugal) CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The site in Portugal for the Paulo Rego Museum (8.4.11) was a fenced forest area with a clearing in the center. An ideal spot for the new museum, Souto de Moura considered the terrain and the natural setting surrounding the museum. The eucalyptus and pine trees became essential elements during the project as the building was a configuration of four unique wings of different lengths. The museum's interior was subdivided into halls with an elevated central volume, and the natural colors contrast with the cold blue marble of Cascais. The interplay between the green forest and the red-orange of the exterior concrete are complimentary colors. A hierarchy was created with the two large pyramids at the entrance axis marking the gift shop, library, and restaurant locations. The pyramids are reminiscent of ancient Portuguese architects, like the chimney of the Alcobaca Monastery. All the exhibition halls have glass openings towards the green forest, which surrounds the building providing views of the natural versus the concrete and abstract contemporary building.



Figure 13.2.11: Paula Rego Museum (2008, Portugal) by visit welovelisbon.net, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Frank Gehry

Frank Gehry (1929-) is a Canadian American architect from Los Angeles, California. Gehry won the prestigious *Pritzker Prize* for the Walt Disney Concert Hall in 1989, located in Los Angeles. Gehry graduated from the School of Architecture at the University of Southern California. After service in the United States Army, Gehry established his architecture firm to design complex and unique buildings. Gehry believed there were too many cold and metallic modernist buildings dotting the skylines in cities worldwide. He wanted to build unique and quirky structures and approached architecture as a sculptural object, light and airy. By the 1990s, Gehry's trademark style was in high demand worldwide.

The Walt Disney Concert Hall (8.4.12) was completed in 2003 to great acclaim. The home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the concert hall is internationally acknowledged as one of the most acoustically sophisticated concert halls in the world. The stainless-steel curvature of the exterior embodies the energy and creative spirit of the building, while the interior, in contrast, is wood-paneled, creating a harmonic feeling. More than 6000 panels create the skin of the hall's exterior and reflect like silver sails. There are massive columns in the lobby which resemble tree trunks and serve as the house lighting, heating, and air conditioning systems.



Figure 13.2.12: Walt Disney Concert Hall (2003, California) Public Domain

The 2,265-seat auditorium (8.4.13) is an independent concrete box with vertical grain Douglas fir walls, while the floor is red oak. The large skylights allow natural light when used during the day. One of the focal points is a 50-foot organ with over 6,000 pipes ranging in size from a pencil to a telephone pole. The entire project cost well over 275 million dollars.

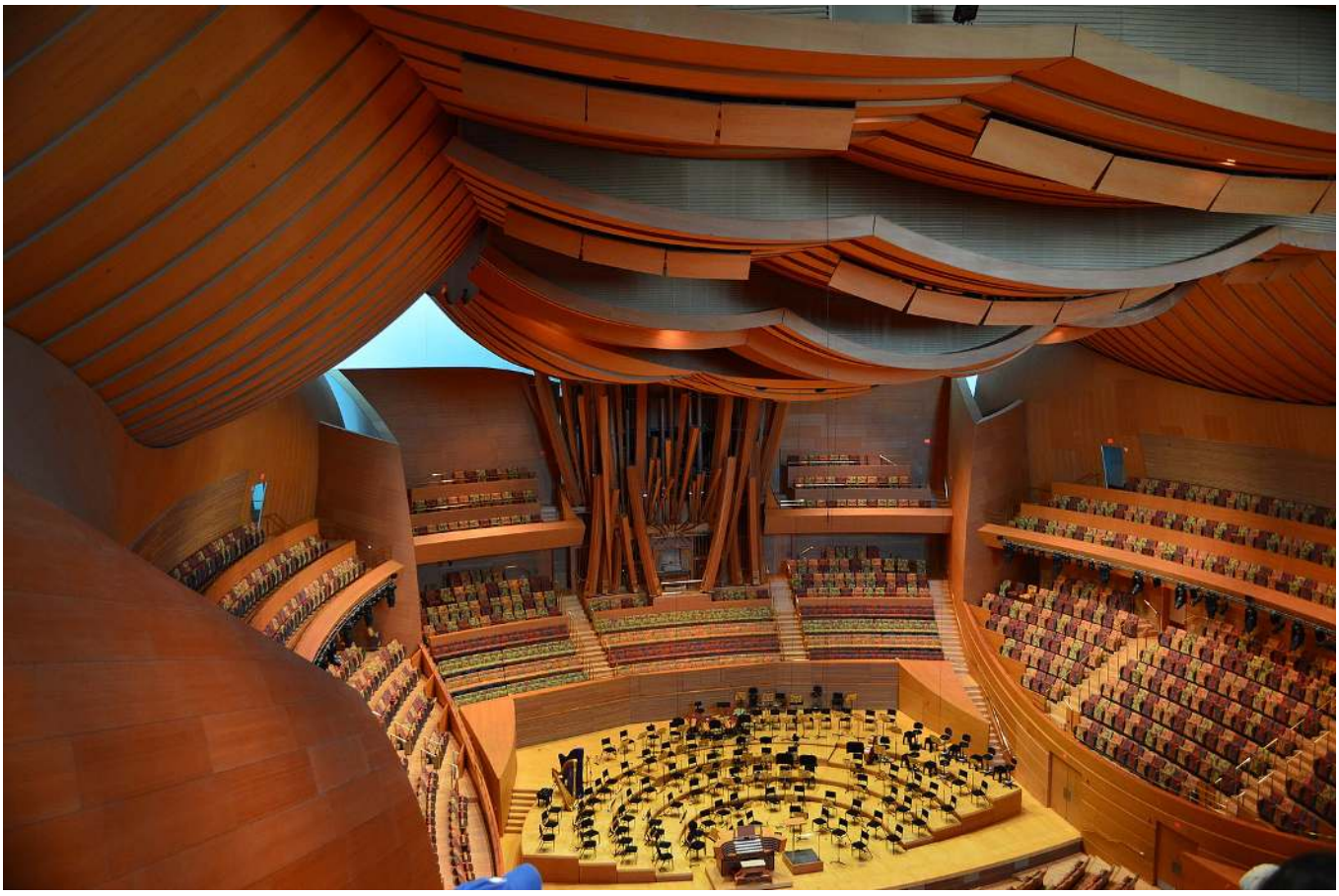


Figure 13.2.13: Interior Disney Concert Hall. CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The Biomuseo (8.4.14) is a natural history museum in Panama designed by Gehry. The museum opened in 2014 and is located on the Amador Causeway facing the Pacific Ocean. The museum provides panoramic views of ships entering the canal. Gehry donated his design to the people of Panama because his wife is a Panamanian. The museum concentrates on the history of the isthmus of Panama and how it changed the world. The heart of the building is a significant public atrium protected by large colorful metal canopies to ward off the frequent rain and contrast with the tropical green ecosystems. On the second-floor atrium level, visitors are treated to a view of the surrounding city and the Panama Canal. The colorful canopies are joined together by large I-beams of steel, like arms holding up the colorful steel plates. The fragmentation of the canopies is designed to be an independent roof hovering over the rest of the buildings.



Figure 13.2.14: Biomuseo (2014, Panama City) CC BY-SA 2.0

The Marques de Riscal (8.4.15) is a luxury hotel locate in Elciego, Spain, and is the crown jewel of the Marriot International hotel chain. The hotel is set in one oldest wineries in Spain, with traditions going back over 200 years. The surrounding sandstone buildings are an integral part of the heritage, and Gehry needed to marry the traditional with the future. The hotel combines the most profoundly rooted winemaking tradition with an avant-garde design, luxury, and the most advanced technology of the 21st century.[8] Finished in 2006, it stands out with its stunning forms and skyline. The building is only 35 meters tall, so it does not surpass the nearby church bell tower. It was essential to preserve the identity of the La Rioja region of grapes and peace. 100,000 square meters of the complex is devoted to producing the wine, two gourmet restaurants, and 44 exclusive hotel suites. Gehry's design mimics the form and gestures of the grapevines growing in the fields. The metal framework on the exterior provides shade in the hot summers of Spain. The colors of purple and green tones pay homage to the tradition of winemaking.

> *A marvelous creature, with its hair flying in all directions launching itself over the vineyards—Frank Gehry*



Figure 13.2.15: Marques de Riscal (2006, Spain) CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Kazuyo Sejima

Kazuyo Sejima (1956-) is a Japanese architect known for her clear modernist elements with shiny, slick, and clean surfaces. After graduating from Japan Women's University, she worked for another architect. Sejima founded Kazuyo Sejima and Associates (SANNA) as a studio for innovative building designs worldwide. Sejima redefined her style, and instead of narrowing down a design, she used models to finalize what she calls "process designs." Sejima was the second woman (Zaha Hadid was first) to win the coveted *Pritzker Prize* in 2012. In 2016, Fast Company named SANNA one of the 50 Most Innovative Companies.

The Sumida Hokusai Museum (8.4.16) in Tokyo is dedicated to the great print artist Katsushika Hokusai to celebrate his work. The monolithic block is five stories with angular cutouts bringing light into the museum's center. The building is surrounded by a patchwork of residential, commercial, and light industrial zones. She had to fit the building into an environment of the architectural hodgepodge. Sejima divided the building into several units of various sizes, so the entire building did not overwhelm the neighborhood.[9] The geometric forms continued inside, creating walkways with a triangular appearance. The outside of the structure is clad in aluminum panels that softly reflect the skies, and there are huge windows for natural light, producing a fluid passage between inside and outside. One of the design challenges Sejima confronted was to minimize the amount of sunlight to protect the delicate prints of Hokusai's artwork. Leveraging the slanted wall, she allowed sunlight into the building by utilizing the A-frame construction.



Figure 13.2.16: Sumida Hokusai Museum (2016, Japan) by Kakidai, CC BY-SA 4.0

In 2007, The New Museum of Contemporary Art (8.4.17) opened its doors to 5,453 square meters of changeable exhibition spaces and as an incubator for new ideas. The bold decision to stack boxes on top of each other gave Sejima the ability to create a harmonious symbiotic connection to the surrounding neighborhood. The seven boxes are of various sizes and heights (53 meters), giving the appearance of a child stacking blocks prior to it falling. The four public galleries are located on the first through the fourth floor, with educational centers and offices occupying the rest of the building. The light and airy spaces are covered in a seamless, anodized, and expanded aluminum mesh wrapped to mimic a soft, shimmering skin. Visitors are drawn into the museum through large 4.5-meter glass doors stretching the entire width of the building. The grey concrete sidewalks change into the grey concrete polished floors inside the doors.



Figure 13.2.17: New Museum of Contemporary Art (2007, New York) CC BY-SA 4.0

Moshe Safdie

Moshe Safdie (1938-) is a Canadian architect born in Israel and moved to Canada. Known for his designs that bend lines and curves to create geometry, the concept had never been defined before. "His designs emphasize the need to create meaningful, vital and inclusive spaces that enhance the community, with attention to the buildings particular locale, culture, and geography."[10]

Located in Singapore, Marina Bay Sands (8.4.18) is 845,000 square meters with three-tower structures containing a casino, hotel, mall, theatre, convention center, restaurants, and even an ice-skating rink. The resort is located on sixteen hectares of reclaimed

land and is fifty-five stories tall. Across the top of the three buildings is the 340 meters long cantilevered Sky Park to anchor all three buildings together.



Figure 13.2.18: Marina Bay Sands Hotel (2010, Singapore) by dronepicr, CC BY 2.0

The Sky Park (8.4.19) looks like a boat on top of the three buildings allowing people to view the surrounding landscape. A 150-meter infinity pool overlooks the bay. The sky park extends sixty-five meters beyond the buildings giving the building its graceful lines in the sky. The developers had originally requested a single large building, but Safdie convinced them to build three buildings with space between them so the city could still see out to the ocean. "There is no city if all we build is towers. We have to find a way to deploy towers in a way that creates public place, public realm," Safdie[11]. The Marina Bay Sands is a continuous ribbon of public spaces and waterfront activity in keeping with Singapore's image of a city in a garden. The Gardens by the Bay connect to the land with Marina Bay Sands.



Figure 13.2.19: Aerial view of rooftop. CC BY 2.0

Gardens by the Bay (8.4.20) sits on 101 hectares of land and contains conceptual designs to transform the city into a 'city in a garden.' The Park has three waterfront gardens and is part of the government's plan to create a garden in the city and enhance the quality of life with beauty, flora, and greenery. The central feature is the two column-less glasshouses made of sustainable materials covering the flower gardens.

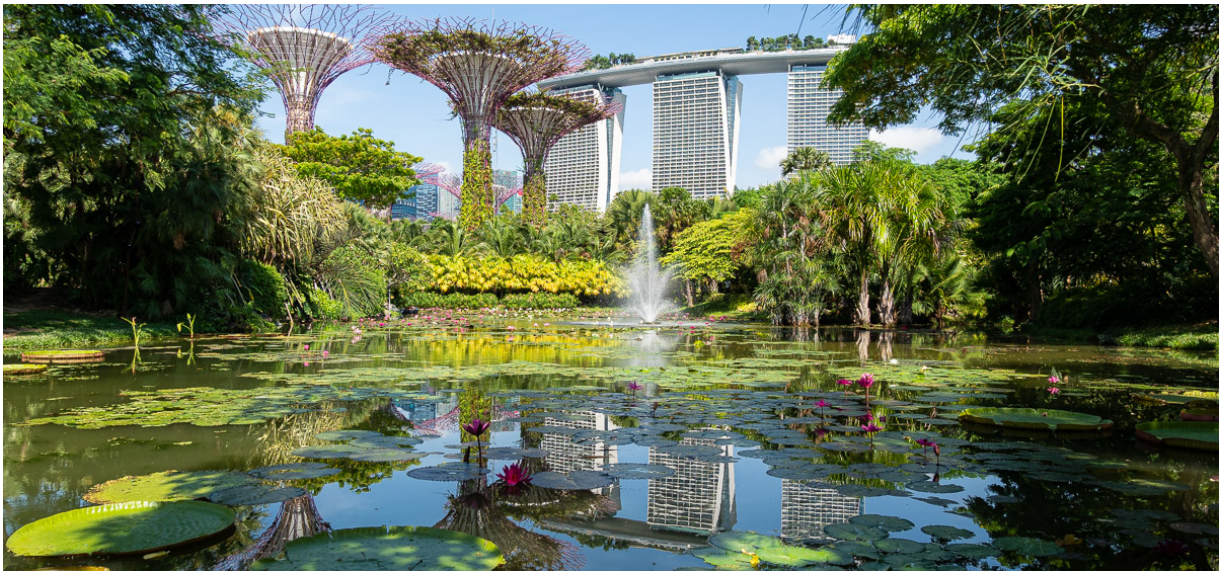


Figure 13.2.20: Garden by the Bay. CC BY-SA 4.0

The Super-trees include ferns, orchids, bromeliad, and other exotic plants. They function like regular trees and include photovoltaic cells to harness the sun's energy for lighting. The trees also collect rainwater used in the fountains and irrigation as part of the conservatories' intake and exhaust air system. Elevated between two Super-trees (8.4.21), the walkway gives visitors a panoramic view.



Figure 13.2.21: Overview of the gardens. CC BY-SA 4.0

Cloud Forest (8.4.22) is a garden replicating the colder moist conditions generally found 1000 meters above sea level. Rainwater is collected for the cooling system connected to the Super-trees and used to cool the circulated water and vent the hot air. The Super-trees are vertical gardens twenty to fifty meters high and planted as environmental engines for the gardens.



Figure 13.2.22: Cloud Forest. CC BY-SA 4.0

Safdie designed The Khalsa Heritage Memorial Complex (8.4.23), located in Anandpur Sahib, India, to celebrate over 500 years of Sikh history. The center was designed to be rooted in the surrounding landscape and seems to rise out of the grass, appearing as sand cliffs. The upwardly curving roof lines are like the traditional gold domes crowning Sikh buildings. The western complex houses galleries, a library, and a 400-seat auditorium connecting with reflecting pools—the eastern complex houses five galleries of Sikh history. The five virtues of the Sikh religion are incorporated into the museum, with symbolic themes of earth and sky, mass and lightness, and depth and ascension, all represented in the sandstone towers and reflective silver roofs.[12] The entire structure is covered with local sandstone and craftsmanship. The Khalsa Heritage Memorial Complex is a true pilgrimage destination.



Figure 13.2.23: Khalsa Heritage Memorial Complex (2009, India) by Sanyambahga, CC BY-SA 3.0

Norman Robert Foster

Norman Robert Foster (1935-) was born in England and studied architecture at the University of Manchester and Yale University. Foster designed Apple Park (8.4.24) in Silicon Valley, California, dubbed the spaceship. When Steve Jobs, the CEO of Apple, planned to build a new facility for the employees, he wanted the site to focus on the landscape with groves of trees, gardens, orchards, and meadows all designed to be environmentally friendly supportive. However, the enormous building still dominates the site, with a courtyard covering over twenty acres inside the center. The outer walls are a continuous wall of curved glass, the building powered by renewable energy with a solar roof covering the entire building.



Figure 13.2.24: Apple Park (2018, California) CC BY-SA 3.0

The unusual theater (8.4.25) has glass walls and no visible sign of supporting pillars with a facility for product launches, ample meetings, and press reviews.



Figure 13.2.25: Apple Park Theatre. CC BY-SA 4.0

Shigeru Ban

Shigeru Ban (1957-) is a Japanese architect born in Tokyo and attended the Southern California Institute of Architecture. Ban is known for his innovative and temporary prefabricated cardboard houses for disaster victims. In 2014, Ban was named the 37th recipient of the *Pritzker Prize* of modern architecture. "The Pritzker Jury cited Ban for his innovative use of material and his dedication to humanitarian efforts around the world, calling him "a committed teacher who is not only a role model for the younger generation but also an inspiration."[13] Marrying his Eastern philosophy with Western building materials, Ban creates minimalistic structures, unlike others.

The Aspen Art Museum (8.4.26) in Aspen, Colorado, is 10,058 square meters with four levels. The facility opened in 2014 with six gallery spaces, outdoor commons, and a rooftop sculpture garden. The Grand Stair covers three levels and intersects with a glass wall blending inside and outside spaces. The exterior wood screen is made from composite materials of paper and resin covered by a wood veneer. The roof deck has a sculpture garden and allows incredible views of the Rocky Mountains.



Figure 13.2.26: Aspen Art Museum (2014, Colorado) by Bkthomson16, CC BY-SA 4.0

The Nomadic Museum (8.4.27) is made from used shipping containers and large paper tubes, allowing it to be moved from city to city, usually constructed on a pier. The Canadian photographer Gregory Colbert wanted a traveling museum to display Ashes and Snow's art exhibition. He asked Ban to design a traveling building and first opened it on New York's Pier 54, then traveled to other cities. The containers are stacked in two parallel rows for 205 meters in a checkerboard pattern. A tubular triangle roof truss was erected to support the fabric roof panels giving the illusion of a European Gothic church nave.



Figure 13.2.27: Nomadic Museum (2005) CC BY-SA 2.0

A broad pathway of wooden flooring (recycled scaffolding wood) (8.4.28) defines the pathway for visitors. The remainder of the floor is covered with river rock, giving a sense of peace and continuity, further emphasizing the minimalist design Ban created to

focus on the art. The best part about the traveling museum is containers are standard sizes, and you can rent them in any port city where the museum is moved for the exhibition. Overall, the design is cost-effective as it utilizes recycled materials yet creates a visually powerful nomadic gallery.



Figure 13.2.28: Interior of Nomadic Museum. by PaoloMazzoleni, CC BY 2.0

Fernando Romero

Fernando Romero (1971-) is a Mexican architect who studied at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. Romero started his firm in 2000, designing elaborate homes for wealthy Mexicans. He is known for his focus on sustainability and environmental integrity, leaning toward urban cities to be vehicle-free. The Museo Soumaya is one of the most visited museums in the world. The museum is free to all visitors and houses some of the Romero family art they collected. The Museo Soumaya (8.4.29) is a museum in Mexico City housing over 66,000 pieces of art from over 30 centuries and opened in 2011. The finished building is 46 meters high and is covered with 16,000 hexagonal aluminum tiles.

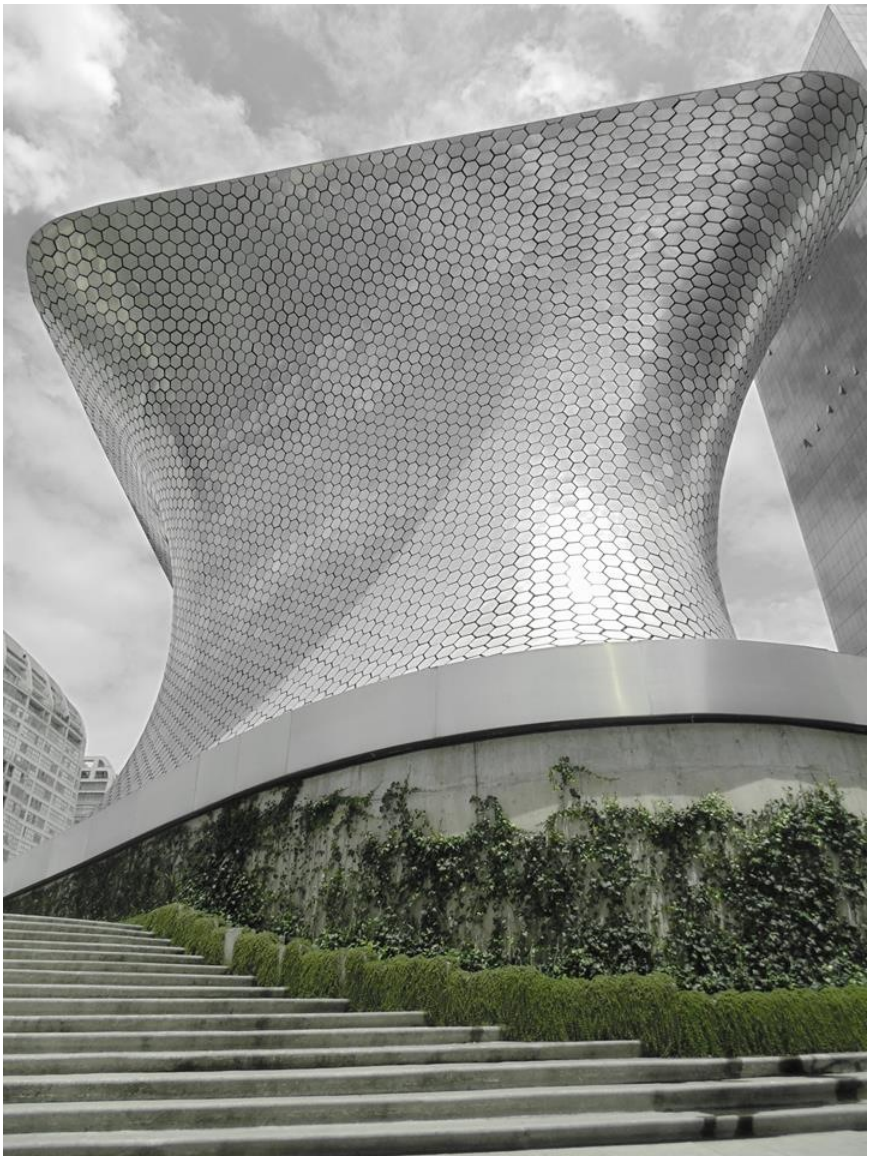


Figure 13.2.29: Soumaya Museum (2011, Mexico City) CC BY-SA 3.0

The form, a rotated rhomboid, is supported by a steel exoskeleton of twenty-eight vertical curved columns and seven beams that encircle the structure (8.4.30). The fabrication of the beams had zero tolerance for fitting together with the tiles, and laser topography was used for alignment. The exterior walls support the interior walls, but instead of aluminum tiles, there are several layers of gypsum panes, insulation, plaster, and then a product to weatherproof the building. The conceptual form of the building stands out when you first see the building. As you enter the museum, the interior stairs lead you around and around the exterior of the building on ramps with art at your fingertips. The building was constructed with locally sourced products, Mexican plaster, and aluminum.



Figure 13.2.30: Soumaya Museum Exterior during construction. CC BY 2.0

The millennial architecture demonstrates that "if you can dream it, we can build it" assertiveness. With the advent of CAD, laser scanning topography, and new materials, the sky is the limit and not the imagination of architects. The evolution of materials is taking architecture to new limits of design.

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13.3: Contemporary Native American Architecture

by DR. CAROL HERSELLE KRINSKY

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Figure 13.3.1: Fountain (detail), Douglas Cardinal, Louis Weller with GBQC and Polshek Partners, National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC, 2004 (photo: Gryffindor)

Design and heritage

You are a member of one of the midwestern nations of Native Americans. Your ancestors had no permanent architecture because they were nomadic hunter-gatherers (see photo below). But now you live on a reservation in South Dakota, or near the Twin Cities in Minnesota. You and your relatives want to establish a cultural center, or a day care, or health clinic for your people.



Figure 13.3.2: Cass Lake Health Clinic (Indian Health Service), Leech Lake Reservation (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe), Minnesota

Do you want it to look like the local museum or clinic (image left) built by the Federal or State government? Probably not, because in the post-modern era since about 1965, various groups have proclaimed their specific ethnic identity. Native Americans now reinforce cultural memory despite the near-eradication of their cultures by European-American governments and individual prejudice. This emphasis is now common among other minority and religious groups that have suffered under dominant cultures here and abroad.

Your native nation will seek an architect perhaps not of Native American ancestry; that will depend upon available talent and sensitivity to your culture, although increasing numbers of Native Americans have studied architecture. You will want the design to suggest something appropriate to your heritage.



Figure 13.3.3: Edward S. Curtis, *Moving camp* (detail), c. November 19, 1908, photographic print, Atsina on horses with travois behind them, tipis in background, Montana (Library of Congress)

Midwest

In the Midwest, the result might reflect local types of lodges, tipis, and ceremonial buildings of the past, but made of practical and accessible modern materials since an original tipi made of animal hides would be impermanent and lightweight. When the original hides no longer kept out the weather, they were easily replaced with new ones, but people today want durable materials and have time and funds for less frequent maintenance. The tipi has inspired versions in concrete, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Community Hall (1989) by Johnson, Sheldon, Sorensen, in glass, the Southern Ute Cultural Center (2011), by Jones & Jones* (see image below) and in rough stone with wood beams as in the Chief Gall Inn (1972) designed by Harrison Bagg at the Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota.

The Four Winds School (1983) at Fort Totten on the Spirit Lake Reservation in North Dakota by Charles Archambault, Denby Deegan* and Neil McCaleb,* has the overall round shape of a ceremonial lodge or tipi but in order to accommodate classrooms, a gymnasium and cafeteria, the interior is divided into rooms around a circular core containing a tipi for counseling sessions.



Figure 13.3.4: Jones & Jones, Southern Ute Cultural Center, 2011 (photo: NorthShore Productions, Southern Ute Cultural Center and Museum)

Northwest coast

Along the Northwest coast, the building will probably be a rectangle of logs or milled wood with a pitched roof, evoking ancestral longhouses made from trees in the dense local forests. Retaining the traditional long shape while using some reinforced concrete for the sake of permanence, the Makah nation in Washington State created a cultural center in Neah Bay (1979 by Fred Bassetti

architects) that has cedar cladding to harmonize with older buildings on the reservation. The Native American student center at Oregon State University uses logs and the longhouse form to accommodate members of several Native nations, without imitating buildings of one group (image below). The longhouse is a traditional form of architecture for several Native American nations in the coastal Northwest and was built to house extended families and community functions.



Figure 13.3.5: Jones & Jones*, Native American Longhouse (student center), 2013, Oregon State University (photo: Theresa Hogue, CC BY-SA 2.0)

At least one individual, Lawrence Joe,* of the Upper Skagit reservation in Washington has built a longhouse (1986) for therapeutic activities intended to accustom delinquent or disturbed youths to better ways of living according to traditional ethical standards. Northeastern forests, too, have provided logs for construction since ancient times, and various wood-covered buildings have been erected there for tribal offices, a student center at Cornell University (1991, by Flynn Battaglia, see detail below), museums and cultural centers. If there is insufficient money for a properly insulated wooden construction, a group may decorate a simpler building made of industrial materials with appropriate historically-based ornament, as in the Takopi Indian Health Center in Tacoma, WA (2002, by Mulvanny G2) or the Seneca-Iroquois National Museum in Salamanca NY (by Lloyd Barnwell,* designs by Carson Waterman*).

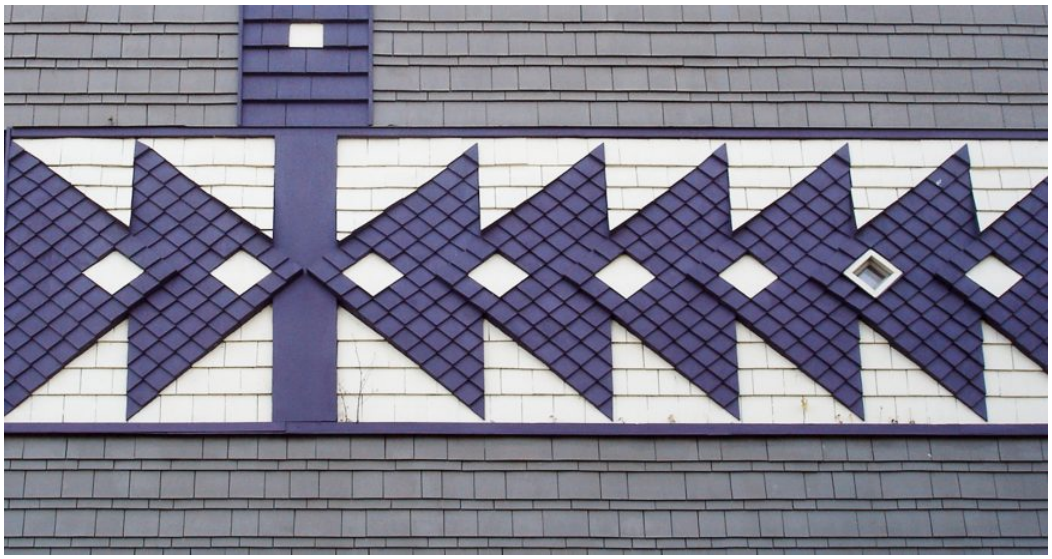


Figure 13.3.6: Haudenosaunee wampum belt design on exterior shingles (detail), Flynn & Battaglia, Akwe:kon (“all of us” in Mohawk), 1991, student residence and community center, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

Southwest

In the southwest, a structure might be made of adobe (earthen brick structures made of sand, silt, clay, and straw), with thick walls and small windows to moderate heat during the warm months. Adobe requires frequent maintenance, however, so new buildings are often made of reinforced concrete, a durable material that can be colored to match the local earth of which adobe is composed. The San Felipe Pueblo school in New Mexico (image below) has geometric forms, close to those of an adobe building but with larger windows to admit more natural light and with subtle colors to enhance the appeal of the building to its young users.



Figure 13.3.7: Michael Doody supervised by Robert Montoya,* The San Felipe Pueblo School, 1982, San Felipe Pueblo, New Mexico (photo: courtesy of the author)

A southwestern building may also be built primarily of other natural materials, such as stone or wood, roughly hewn as the ancestors would have left it. The Pojoaque Pueblo Council Chambers, a seriously impressive building of modest size, is one example. A stone post barely altered from its natural state supports the sapling ceiling of the principal room in a thick-walled adobe structure. The building owes its form to two designers, the pueblo's own governor, George Rivera* (also a sculptor) and Joel McHorse, Jr., as well as to its own construction organization—rather than to an imported designer. Along the highway entrance to the pueblo, Rivera* also designed a museum and cultural center using the solid, massive geometric forms customary in adobe building (see image below).



Figure 13.3.8: George Rivera with early assistance from Dennis Holloway, Poeh Cultural Center and Museum, 2012, Pojoaque (Po'su wae geh), New Mexico (photo: Howard Lifshitz, CC BY 2.0)

Urban centers

It is less easy to imagine an urban center where members of several native nations come together despite their varied cultural and architectural traditions. Whose culture will dominate? When it is impossible to find a site and funds for a new building, members must rent space in existing buildings that can be decorated inside with art or objects pertinent to the cultures in the area. The Minneapolis American Indian Center is a purpose-built center (see image below). The design connects the inside to nature through large glass windows. Woven wood designs by George Morrison* cover large parts of the outside. A ceremonial circle with stepped seating forms part of the entrance plaza. Inside, events take place below a ramp that replaces stairs or banked seating, to accommodate the customary ways of observing events—in small groups, spaced comfortably apart from one another. This building expresses Native life ways even though it does not imitate an indigenous building type.



Figure 13.3.9: Hodne-Stageberg Partners with Denby Deegan* and Dennis Sun Rhodes,* exterior wooden design at right by George Morrison,* Minneapolis American Indian Center, 1972 (photo: Bill Forbes, by permission, all rights reserved)

Natural forms

Several buildings for Native groups specifically evoke natural forms revered by the members of the nation. The Oneida in Wisconsin built a school with a plan in the form of a turtle (below left), and the same animal, sacred to the Iroquois confederacy, inspired the plan of a now-closed cultural center in Niagara Falls (below right).



Figure 13.3.10: Left: Aerial view, Richard Thern, Oneida Nation Elementary School, 1995, Oneida, Wisconsin (photo: ©Google). Right: Hodne-Stageberg with Dennis Sun Rhodes,* Iroquois Confederacy Cultural Center (closed), 1981, Niagara Falls, New York (photo: TC Fenstermaker, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0).

Left: Aerial view, Richard Thern, Oneida Nation Elementary School, 1995, Oneida, Wisconsin (photo: ©Google). Right: Hodne-Stageberg with Dennis Sun Rhodes,* Iroquois Confederacy Cultural Center (closed), 1981, Niagara Falls, New York (photo: TC Fenstermaker, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0).

The National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., opened in 2004, is the result of collaboration, first with Douglas Cardinal* and GBQC, then with a consortium headed by Louis Weller* and Polshek Partners. Donna House,* an ethnobotanist and others also contributed to the result. Unlike smooth white buildings on the Mall, this one has a rough yellow stone surface, and is surrounded by landscaping of only indigenous ornamental or food-yielding plants. The boldly contoured facade confronts the neoclassical design of the Capitol. Inside and out, curving lines dominate because some Native American design participants claimed that these contours were natural and indigenous; they saw rigid straight lines as imports from abroad. A domed rotunda just inside the entrance accommodates ceremonies that can be viewed both at ground level and from surrounding balconies. As a building in the nation's capital, the Museum reflects its position within the largely neoclassical context of the straight-sided Mall while accommodating various indigenous traditions.



Figure 13.3.11: Douglas Cardinal*, Louis Weller* with GBQC and Polshek Partners, National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, DC, 2004

The variety of native traditions, available materials, and architectural expertise has therefore given our continent new and culturally sensitive architectural forms during the last two generations.

*denotes Native American ancestry

Additional resources

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Joy Monice Malnar and Frank Vodvarka, *New Architecture on Indigenous Lands*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2013

Peter Nabokov and Robert Easton, *Native American Architecture*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1990

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