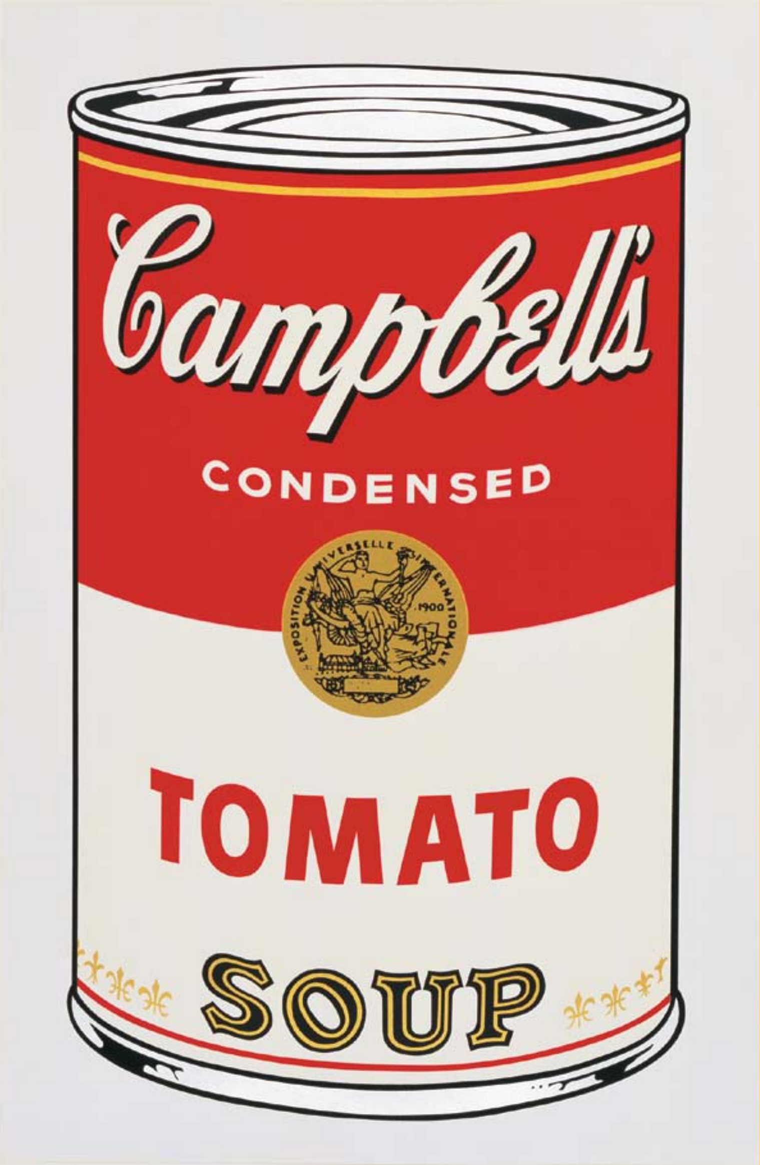
MoMA Highlights


Campbell's
CONDENSED
TOMATO
SOUP

350 Works from The Museum of Modern Art

New York

MoMA Highlights

350 Works from
The Museum of Modern Art, New York

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Introduction

What is The Museum of Modern Art? At first glance, this seems like a relatively straightforward question. But the answer is neither simple nor straightforward, and any attempt to answer it almost immediately reveals a complex institution that, from its inception, has engendered a variety of meanings.

For some, MoMA is a cherished place, a sanctuary in the heart of midtown Manhattan. For others, it is an idea represented by its collection and amplified by its exhibition program. For still others, it is a laboratory of learning, a place where the most challenging and difficult art of our time can be measured against the achievements of the immediate past.

MoMA is, of course, all of this and more. Yet, in 1929, its founders dreamed, and its friends, trustees, and staff have dreamed since, that its multiple meanings and potential would ultimately be resolved into some final, fully formed equilibrium.

In 1939, for instance, in the catalogue for the Museum's tenth anniversary exhibition, the Museum's president, A. Conger Goodyear, proudly proclaimed that the institution had finally reached maturity. As we now realize, despite the achievements of the Museum's initial years, he could not have anticipated the challenges to come. The Museum was still at the beginning of an adventure that continues to unfold more than half a century later. At the age of ten the Museum was (and at eight times ten moves onward as) an exploratory enterprise whose parameters and possibilities remain open.

From temporary quarters at 730 Fifth Avenue to its current building occupying most of a city block at 11 West 53rd Street, from a single curatorial department to seven (including the most recently established one, Media and Performance Art, founded in 2006), and from a program without a permanent collection to a collection of over 100,000 objects, MoMA has regularly grown, changed, and rethought itself. In doing so it has undergone seven major architectural expansions and renovations since the completion of its first building in 1939, with its most recent expansion, designed by the celebrated Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi, finished in late 2004. This virtually continuous process of physical growth reflects the institution's ongoing efforts to honor its own changing programmatic and intellectual needs by constantly adjusting, and frequently rethinking, the topography of its space. Each evolution has opened up the possibility for the institution's next iteration, creating a kind of permanent self-renewing debate within MoMA about both its future and its relationship to the past. With each change have come new expectations and challenges, and this is especially true today.

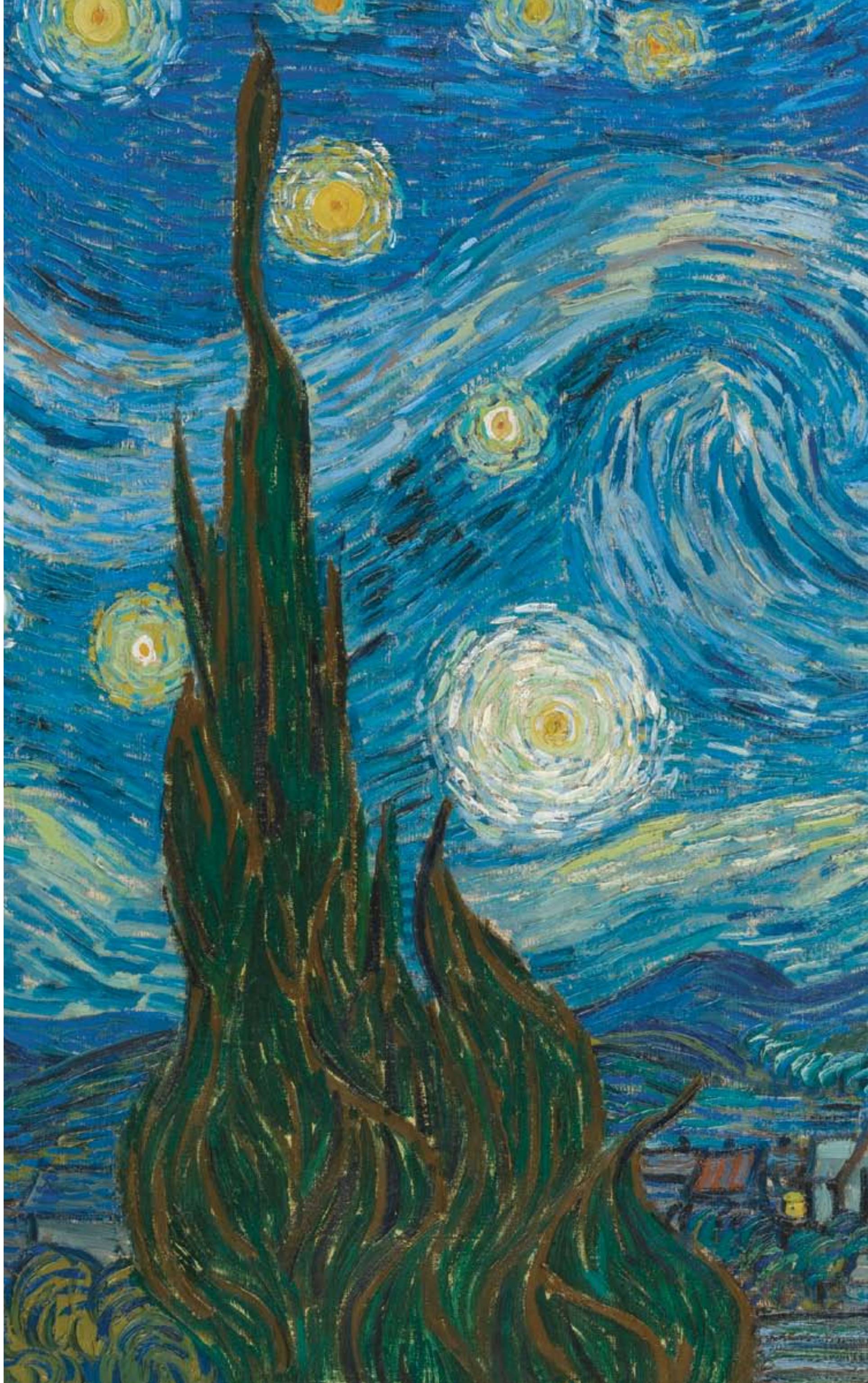
The Museum of Modern Art is predicated on a relatively simple proposition, that the art of our time—modern art—is as vital as the art of the past. A corollary of this proposition is that the aesthetic and intellectual interests that shape modern art can be seen in mediums as different as painting and sculpture, film, photography, media and performance, architecture and design, prints and illustrated books, and drawings—the Museum's current curatorial departments. From the outset, MoMA has been a laboratory for the study of the ways in which modernity has manifested itself in the visual arts.

There has been, of course, and there will continue to be, a great deal of debate over what is actually meant by the term “modern” in relation to art. Does it connote a moment in time? An idea? A particular set of values? Whatever definition is favored, it seems clear that any discussion of the concept must take into account the role MoMA has played in attempting to define, by its focus and the intellectual arguments of its staff, a canon of modern and contemporary art. These efforts at definition have often been controversial, as the Museum has sought to navigate between the interests of the avant-garde, which it seeks to promote, and the general public, which it seeks to serve.

The story of how MoMA came to be so intimately associated with the history of modern art forms a rich narrative that, over time, has acquired the potency of a founding myth. Like all such myths, it is part fiction and part truth, built upon the reality of the Museum’s unparalleled collection. Various accounts—from Russell Lynes’s 1937 book *Good Old Modern* to the Museum’s own volume of 1984, *The Museum of Modern Art, New York: The History and the Collection*—give MoMA’s story at length, and this is not the place to repeat or enlarge upon it. What is worth considering, however, is that over eighty years after the Museum first opened its doors, many of those associated with its beginnings—Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, a founding trustee; Alfred H. Barr, Jr., the first director; Philip Johnson, who established the architecture and design department; and Dorothy C. Miller, one of the Museum’s first curators, to name only a few—remain vivid figures whose ideas and personalities continue to reverberate through the institution. This is true, in part, because there are still many people involved with the Museum who knew them, and have preserved and burnished their memories, but it is also because they are, or were, such fascinating figures, whose vision and drive gave birth to an institution that was the first, and rapidly became the foremost, museum of its kind in the world.

Given the resonance of this founding legacy, the challenge for MoMA today is to build upon this past without being delimited or constrained by it. This is by no means a simple task. To keep the Museum open to new ideas and possibilities also means reevaluating and changing its perception of its past. As the Museum has become increasingly established and respected, its sense of responsibility to its own prior achievements has grown. In many ways, it has become an agent implicated in the growth of the very tradition it seeks to explore and explicate: through its pioneering exhibitions, often based upon its permanent collection; its International Program, which has promoted modern art by circulating exhibitions around the world; and its acquisitions, publications, and public programs. Thus it must constantly seek an appropriate critical distance, one that allows it to observe as well as to be observed. While this distance may be impossible to achieve fully, the effort to do so has resulted in a commitment to an intense internal debate, and an openness to sharing ideas with the public in a quest to promote an ever deeper engagement with modern art for the largest possible audience.

Any understanding of MoMA must begin with the recognition that the very idea of a museum of modern art implies an institution that is forever willing to court risks and controversy. The challenge for the Museum is to periodically reinvent itself, to map new space,



metaphorically as well as practically; to do this it must be its own severest critic. Programmed, therefore, into MoMA and its history—and by implication its future—are a series of contradictions and confliicts. Put differently, the Museum grew out of a disruption with the past, as it committed itself to artists and audiences who had previously been ignored or at best grudgingly recognized—and if it wishes to remain engaged with contemporary art, it must find ways to remain disruptive and open to new ideas and approaches. It was for this reason that the Museum merged in 2000 with P.S.1, a center for contemporary art in Long Island City, Queens, two subway stops from 53rd Street, that had championed emerging artists and had and continues to have a different audience from the Museum's. But to be disruptive means to live with fierce divisions, internal as well as external, over such diverse issues as, for example, the importance of abstract art, how to deal with the representation of alternative modernisms within the collection, and whether the Museum should continue to collect contemporary art. Rather than resolve such divisions, MoMA has had the strength to live with them. This has ensured that the Museum remains an extremely lively place, where issues and ideas are argued over with an often startling intellectual intensity.

Working within its current configuration of seven curatorial departments that collect, MoMA has built an unparalleled collection that now spans over 150 years, from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Defined by their focus on different mediums, the curatorial departments reflect the Museum's interest in examining the various ways in which modern ideas and ideals have manifested themselves across disciplines. While the roles of the departments were initially relatively fluid, during the late 1960s and 1970s they became more codified, as each department became responsible for developing its collection independently of the other departments.

This approach has enabled MoMA to study and organize the vast array of art that it owns. It has led, as well, to the layout of the Museum's galleries in recent times by department. But this fundamentally taxonomic approach has sometimes resulted in a relatively static reading of modern art, with a clearly defined set of physical and conceptual paths through the collection. Over the last fifteen years, however, the Museum has become increasingly aware of the importance of interdisciplinary approaches to the presentation of its collection. The division of the galleries into discrete departmental spaces is gradually being balanced by a more synthetic and inclusive reading of the collection that complicates, rather than simplifies, relationships among works of art.

The growth of the Museum's collection has been steady and sometimes dramatic. MoMA acquired its first works, including Aristide Maillol's sculpture *Ile de France*, in 1929, the year it was established. Only in 1931, however, after founding trustee Lillie P. Bliss bequeathed to the Museum a superb group of 116 paintings, prints, and drawings, including Paul Cézanne's *The Bather*, *Pines and Rocks*, and *Still Life with Apples*, and Paul Gauguin's *The Moon and the Earth*, did the collection really begin to develop. By 1940, the Museum's collection had grown to 2,590 objects, including 519 drawings, 1,466 prints, 436 photographs, 169 paintings, and 1,700 films. Twenty years later the collection had expanded to over 12,000 objects, and by 1980 it exceeded 52,000. Today, the Museum

owns over 6,000 drawings, 50,000 prints and illustrated books, 25,000 photographs, 3,200 paintings and sculptures, 24,000 works of architecture and design, and 20,000 films videos, and other media works.

Many of the most important works in the collection—including Pablo Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, Henri Matisse's *Blue Window*, Vincent van Gogh's *Starry Night*, and Piet Mondrian's *Broadway Boogie Woogie*—entered it during and immediately after World War II. There were many reasons for this, among them the Nazis' selling of so-called degenerate art from state collections; the economic might of the United States, especially after the war's end; and the war-induced emigration of artists and collectors to the United States and elsewhere. Having helped to introduce American audiences to avant-garde European art throughout the 1930s, MoMA became a haven for art, artists, and collectors—all victims of Nazi persecution.

Collections are complex entities that evolve in different ways. They are all the result, however, of discrete decisions made by individuals. In MoMA's case, these decisions rest with the director and chief curators. In addition, each curatorial department has a working committee, authorized by the Board of Trustees, to act on its behalf in the acquisition process. Since the development of the Museum's collection, like that of most museums, has occurred over time, each generation's choices are woven into the collection's fabric so that a continuous thread of ideas and interests emerges. The result reflects the unfolding pattern of the Museum's history in a collection that is nuanced, inflected, and altered by the tastes and ideas of individual directors and curators, and by the responses those tastes and ideas engender in their successors as holes are filled in the collection and areas of overemphasis are modified.

The vast majority of the objects in MoMA's collection have been acquired as gifts and bequests, which are often the fruit of relationships nurtured through the years, from generous donors and friends. The Museum's trustees have played a particularly important role in this regard, and the recent bequests of Louise Reinhardt Smith and Florene May Schoenborn, and the gifts of David and Peggy Rockefeller, Philip Johnson, Elaine Dannheisser, Agnes Gund, Ronald S. Lauder, the Judith Rothschild Foundation, Gilbert and Lila Silverman, Herman and Nicole Daled, and the Woodner family are among the most recent examples of a tradition that includes such extraordinary bequests as those of Lillie P. Bliss, William S. Paley, and Gordon Bunshaft. In addition, major gifts from such close friends of the Museum as Sidney and Harriet Janis, Mary Sisler, Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney, and many others have also strengthened the collection.

The Museum also purchases works of art, and it occasionally deaccessions an object in order to refine and enhance its collection. Perhaps the most celebrated instance of this was the sale of an Edgar Degas, along with several other works from the Lillie P. Bliss bequest, that enabled the Museum to acquire Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, one of the most important paintings of the twentieth century and a cornerstone of the Museum's collection. Deaccessioning also permitted the Museum to acquire Van Gogh's *Portrait of Joseph Roulin*, in 1989; Gerhard Richter's celebrated fifteen-work group *October 18, 1977*, in 1995; and Jasper Johns's *Diver*, in 2003, among other important works.

The principal reason the Museum has the most comprehensive collection of modern art in the world is that from the outset it has accepted only unconditional gifts, with very few exceptions. This has allowed it periodically to reassess the relative importance of any work of art in its collection, but the price has been that of occasionally seeing artworks go to other institutions (such as the Walter and Louise Arensberg Collection, which went to the Philadelphia Museum of Art when MoMA was unable to accept the conditions imposed by the donors). Nevertheless, the policy has also given MoMA the ability to reconsider and revise its collection, allowing it to exist in what Barr would have called a metabolic state of self-renewal. An additional consequence of the Museum's policy on gifts is that the institution has been free to integrate works into its collection in an unrestricted way, permitting the development of a coherent, relatively unencumbered presentation of its collection, confined only by the limitations of its space.

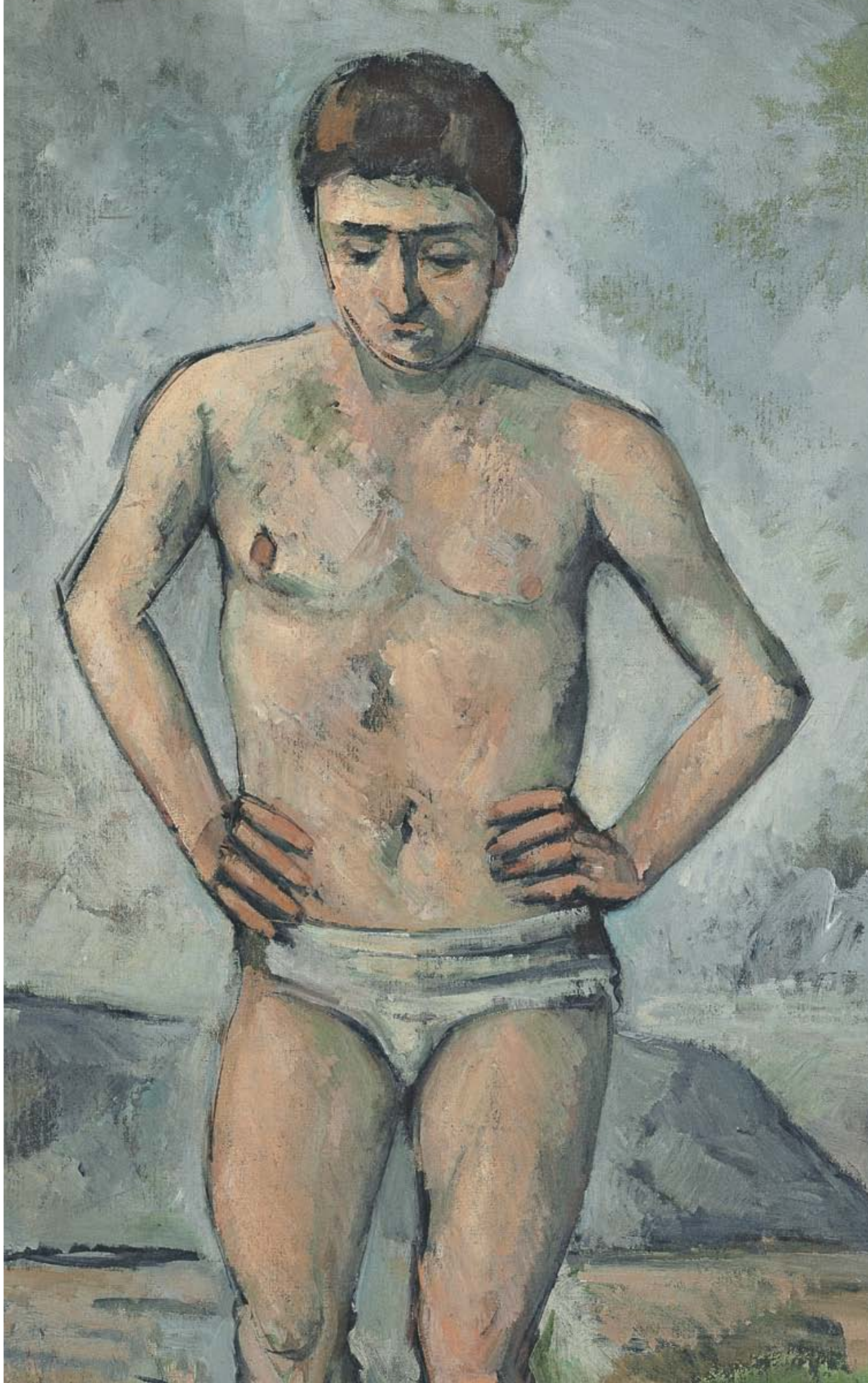
Given that great collections are inevitably mosaics that shift and change over time, the cumulative results of individual tastes and idiosyncrasies and of the vagaries of historical opportunities, it is through the ordering and presentation of their collections that museums encode their ideas and narratives. This is especially true in MoMA's case, as the collection is the principal means by which it argues for its reading of modern art. Thus the publication of this third edition of *MoMA Highlights* celebrates the richness of the Museum's collection and the variety of issues and ideas embraced here. The book is not meant to be comprehensive, nor to provide a definitive statement on the Museum's collection. On the contrary, it is intended to be provocative, one of many such publications to come designed to explore the complexity and variety of possibilities that exist within the collection, and to suggest new and imaginative ways of understanding the different works of art that constitute it. Organized in a general but not rigid chronological order, the book endeavors to juxtapose works from different parts of the collection in surprising, revealing, and sometimes arbitrary ways. Compare, for example, Pierre Bonnard's *Nude in a Bathroom* and Picasso's *Girl Before a Mirror*, both painted in 1932. Each, in a very different way, explores questions of intimacy and introspection, Bonnard by examining his wife as she dries herself off after a bath, Picasso by studying his mistress Marie-Thérèse Walter as she contemplates herself in a mirror. Bonnard, known for his optical acuity and coloristic effects, reveals himself here to be a master of subtle psychological probing, while Picasso uses his prodigious talent to examine the complex boundary between mystery and Eros, developing a rich and powerful image built of flat, bold colors surrounded by thick black contours that give his painting an almost iconic quality. Another pairing, Stuart Davis's *Odol* of 1924 and Sven Wingquist's *Self-Aligning Ball Bearing* of 1929, examines the rising impact of industrial design and consumerist society. Not every juxtaposition is meant to be read as a comparison or confrontation—some are simply the result of two interesting works of art brought together for consideration on facing pages. In preparing this volume, we have tried to demonstrate that MoMA's collection is the result of both considered, careful research and fortuitous opportunities that have allowed us to assemble often disparate works of art in new and intriguing relationships.

Modern art began as a great experiment, and it continues to be one today. Much of the Museum's early effort was given over to trying to make order out of the seemingly confused, even at times baffling nature of this art. While these efforts helped to explain the complicated relationships among different movements and counter-movements (such as Cubism, Suprematism, Dada, Conceptual art, and Minimalism, to name a few), they also, inadvertently, tended to simplify and reconcile competing and contradictory ideas. The positivist assertion of the first decades of the Museum's existence—that modern art formed a single coherent narrative that could be reflected in the Museum's galleries—needs to be tempered by the recognition that the very ideas of modern and contemporary art imply the possibility of multiple, even contradictory narratives. To a large degree, of course, the Museum's founders were aware of the richness of this tradition, and their pioneering efforts initially embraced a broad range of interests, including tribal, naïve, and folk art. But the relatively limited space of the galleries and their linear configuration, compounded by their dramatic growth, inevitably led to a reductivist approach.

Today, contemporary artists challenge us in many of the same ways that artists of the avant-garde of forty years ago (many of whom are now regarded as modern masters) challenged viewers of their day. That we have come to accept the achievements of Picasso and Matisse, Mondrian and Jackson Pollock, does not necessarily mean that their work is either fully understood or that this acceptance is universal. For The Museum of Modern Art, this means that its collection must be a laboratory where the public can explore the relationship between contemporary art and the art of the immediate past, in an ongoing effort to continue to define modern art. By locating objects and people in time as well as space, the Museum is constantly mapping relationships between works of art and their viewers, so that the space of the Museum becomes a site of narration where many individual stories can be developed and realized. This process of experimentation and narration also allows us to create a dialogue between artists (and ideas) of the first years of the twentieth century and those of the century's final years. To do this successfully, the Museum is committed to developing new ways of understanding and presenting its collection. The first edition of this handbook, with its multidisciplinary approach, was one of the first steps in this process. Another was the Museum's year-long project of three cycles of exhibitions presented in celebration of the millennium, from fall 1999 through early 2001, which examined its permanent collection in new ways that parallel many of the themes developed in this volume. The opening of the new MoMA in November 2004, with its expanded galleries and layout, continues this process of exploring the richness and complexity of the Museum's diverse holdings.

While this process of reconsidering modern and contemporary art was given new impetus with the completion of the Museum's new building and the merger with P.S.1 (renamed MoMA PS1 in 2010), it is an ongoing exercise. This edition of highlights of the Museum's collection, featuring over 100 works not included in the earlier editions, may thus be taken as yet another chapter in that story and as both a record of the Museum's past and a statement in anticipation of an exciting future.

—Glenn D. Lowry, Director



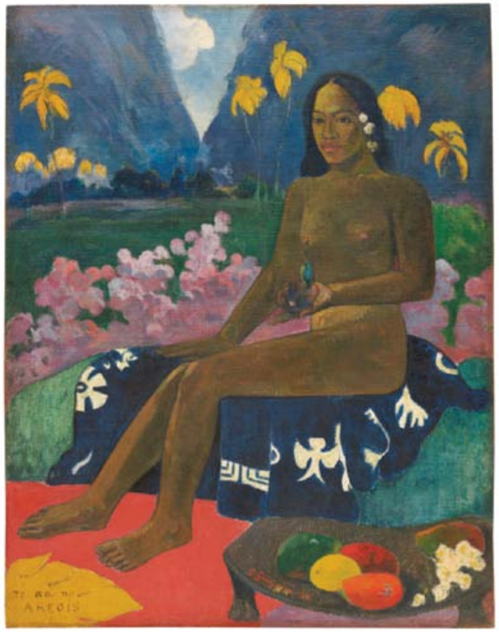
Paul Gauguin French, 1848–1903

The Seed of the Areoi (Te aa no areois). 1892

Oil on burlap, 36¼ × 28⅜" (92.1 × 72.1 cm)
The William S. Paley Collection

The Polynesian goddess sits on a blue-and-white cloth. Gauguin's style fuses various non-European sources: ancient Egyptian (in the hieratic pose), Japanese (in the relative absence of shadow and modeling, and in the areas of flat color), and Javanese (in the position of the arms, influenced by a relief in the temple of Borobudur). But there are also signs of the West, specifically through aspects of the pose derived from a work by the French Symbolist painter Pierre Puvis de Chavannes. The color, too, is eclectic: although Gauguin claimed to have found his palette in the Tahitian landscape, the exquisite chromatic chords in *The Seed of the Areoi* owe more to his aesthetic invention than to the island's visual realities.

In the origin myth of the Areoi, a Polynesian secret society, a male sun god mates with the most beautiful of all women, Vaïraümati, to found a new race. By painting his Tahitian mistress Tehura as Vaïraümati, Gauguin implied a continuity between the island's past and its life during his own stay there. In fact, Tahiti had been profoundly altered by colonialism (the Areoi society itself had disappeared), but Gauguin's anachronistic vision of the place gave him an ideal model for his painting. This vision was particularly powerful for him in its contrast with the West, which, he believed, had fallen into "a state of decay."



Henri Rousseau French, 1844–1910

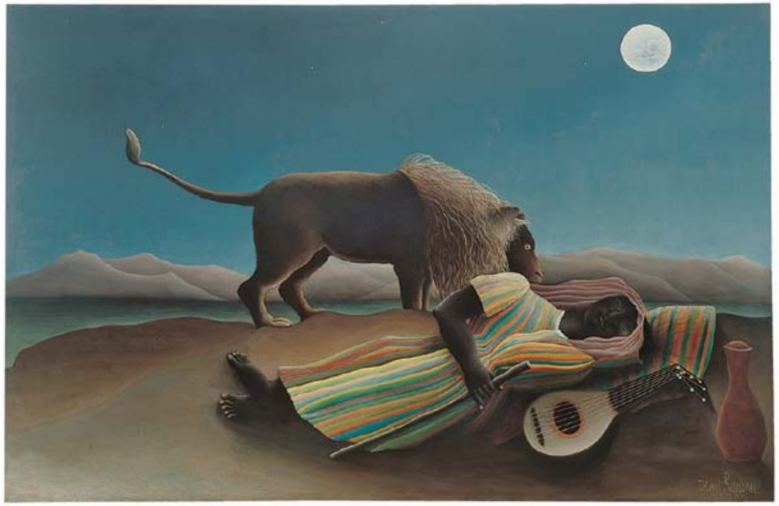
The Sleeping Gypsy. 1897

Oil on canvas, 51" × 6' 7" (129.5 × 200.7 cm)
Gift of Mrs. Simon Guggenheim

As a musician, the gypsy in this painting is an artist; as a traveler, she has no clear social place. Lost in the self-absorption that is deep, dreaming sleep, she is dangerously vulnerable—yet the lion is calmed and entranced.

The Sleeping Gypsy is formally exacting—its contours precise, its color crystalline, its lines, surfaces, and accents carefully rhymed. Rousseau plays delicately with light on the lion's body. A letter of his describes the painting's subject: "A wandering Negress, a mandolin player, lies with her jar beside her (a vase with drinking water), overcome by fatigue in a deep sleep. A lion chances to pass by, picks up her scent yet does not devour her. There is a moonlight effect, very poetic. The scene is set in a completely arid desert. The gypsy is dressed in oriental costume."

A sometime *douanier* (toll collector) for the city of Paris, Rousseau was a self-taught painter whose work seemed entirely unsophisticated to most of its early viewers. Much in his art, however, found modernist echoes: the flattened shapes and perspectives, the freedom of color and style, the subordination of realistic description to imagination and invention. As a consequence, critics and artists appreciated Rousseau long before the general public did.



Georges-Pierre Seurat French, 1859–1891

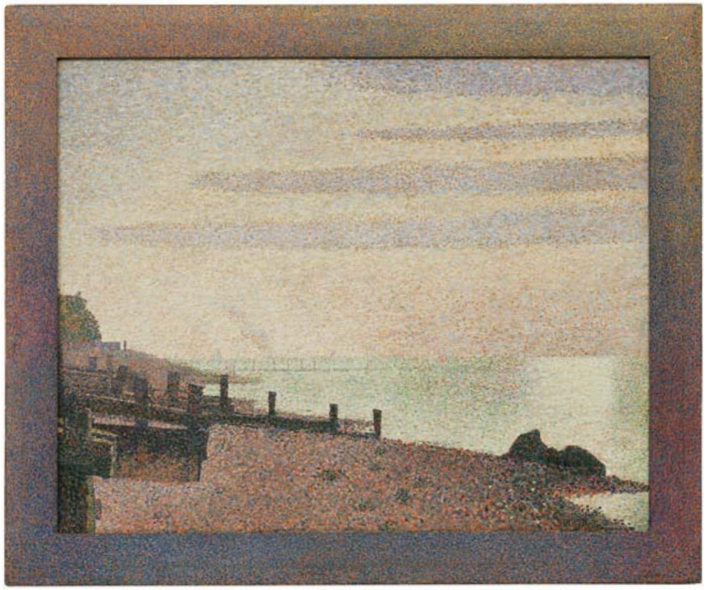
Evening, Honfleur. 1886

Oil on canvas, 25¾ × 32" (65.4 × 81.1 cm)
Gift of Mrs. David M. Levy

Seurat spent the summer of 1886 in the resort town of Honfleur, on the northern French coast, a region of turbulent seas and rugged shorelines to which artists had long been attracted. But Seurat's evening scene is hushed and still. Vast sky and tranquil sea bring a sense of spacious light to the picture, yet also have a peculiar visual density. Long lines of cloud echo the breakwaters on the beach—signs of human life and order.

Seurat had used his readings of optical theory to develop a systematic technique, known as pointillism, that involved the creation of form out of small dots of pure color. In the viewer's eye, these dots can both coalesce into shapes and remain separate particles, generating a magical shimmer. A contemporary critic described the light in *Evening, Honfleur* and related works as a "gray dust," as if the transparency of the sky were filled with, or even constituted by, barely visible matter—a sensitive response to the paint's movement between illusion and material substance, as the dots both merge to describe the scene and break into grains of pigment.

Seurat painted a frame around the scene, buffering a transition between the world of the painting and reality. At the upper right, the dots on the frame grow lighter, lengthening the rays of the setting sun.



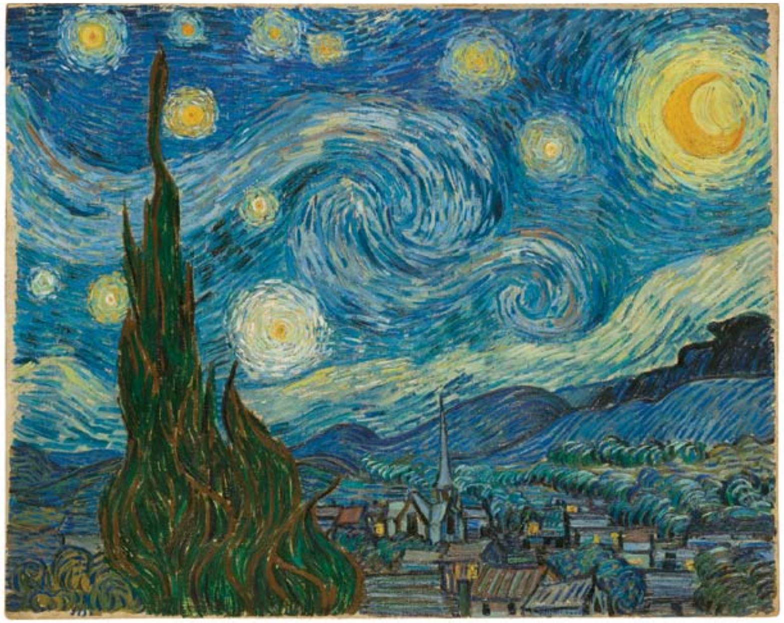
Vincent van Gogh Dutch, 1853–1890

The Starry Night. 1889

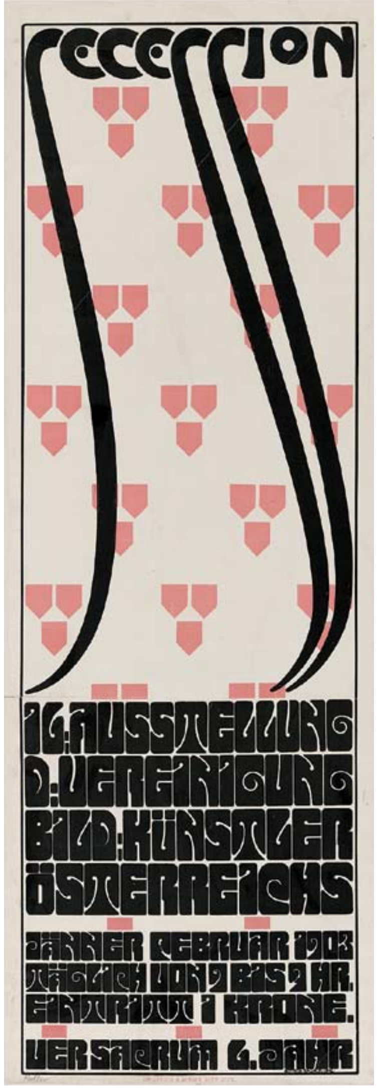
Oil on canvas, 29 × 36¼" (73.7 × 92.1 cm)
Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest

Van Gogh's night sky is a field of roiling energy. Below the exploding stars, the village is a place of quiet order. Connecting earth and sky is the flame-like cypress, a tree traditionally associated with graveyards and mourning. But death was not ominous for van Gogh. "Looking at the stars always makes me dream," he said. "Why, I ask myself, shouldn't the shining dots of the sky be as accessible as the black dots on the map of France? Just as we take the train to get to Tarascon or Rouen, we take death to reach a star."

The artist wrote of his experience to his brother Theo: "This morning I saw the country from my window a long time before sunrise, with nothing but the morning star, which looked very big." This morning star, or Venus, may be the large white star just left of center in *The Starry Night*. The hamlet, on the other hand, is invented, and the church spire evokes van Gogh's native land, the Netherlands. The painting, like its daytime companion, *The Olive Trees*, is rooted in imagination and memory. Leaving behind the Impressionist doctrine of truth to nature in favor of restless feeling and intense color, as in this highly charged picture, van Gogh made his work a touchstone for all subsequent Expressionist painting.



Alfred Roller Austrian, born Moravia (now Czech Republic). 1864–1935



Poster for the 16th Secession exhibition. 1902

Color lithograph
37⅜ × 12⅝" (95 × 32 cm)
Gift of Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder

A founding member of the Vienna Secession and the group's president in 1902, Roller created several iconic posters for the 16th Secession exhibition of 1903, all distinguished by their typographic innovation and striking use of color and ornament. In this one, the composition is dominated by the word "Secession," with its sinuous trailing letters that both emphasize the vertical format and set up a rhythmic tension against the repeating pattern in the background. Tendril forms such as these had become a favored ornamental motif for Art Nouveau designers across Europe.

In contrast to the title's graphic linearity and open spacing, the exhibition details are presented with boldly stylized, dense lettering inside a chunky rectangular block. The combination of soft pink on a white ground with a bold black overlay is unexpected, one of many contrasts played out in the composition between constraint and freedom, sensuality and order, femininity and masculinity, and between the fluidity of modern life and echoes of a heraldic past. The motif of three abstract shields in the background symbolizes the three so-called "sister arts" (painting, architecture, and sculpture), which the Viennese Secessionists were keen to unite. Roller himself had studied architecture and painting at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts and combined these different art forms in his work for the Vienna State Opera.

Hector Guimard French, 1867–1942

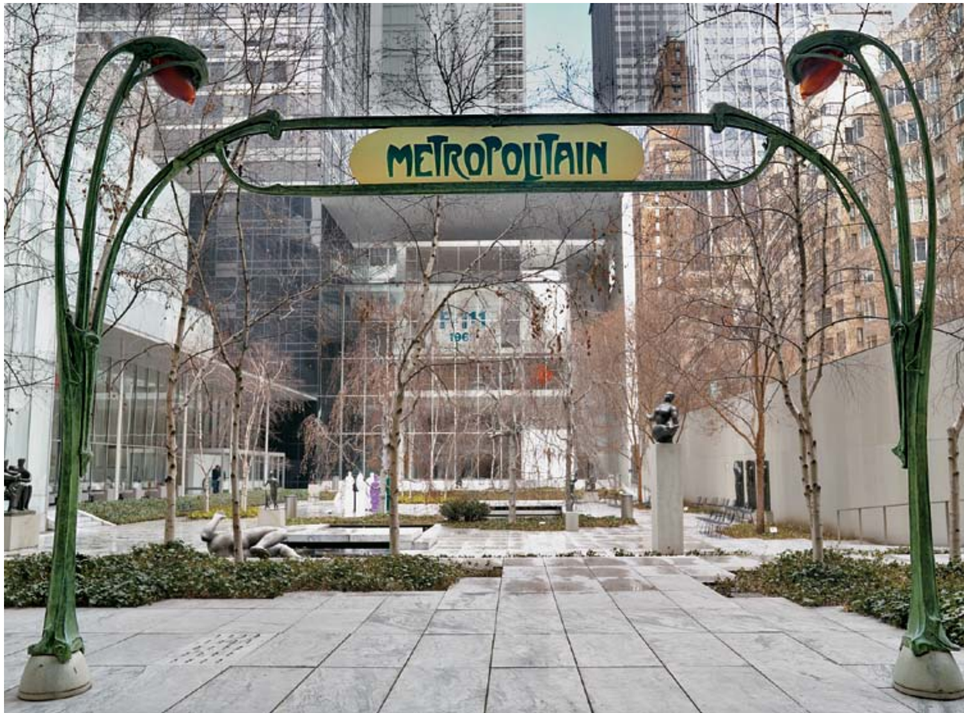
Entrance Gate to Paris Subway (Métropolitain) Station. c. 1900

Painted cast iron, glazed lava, and glass,
13' 11" × 17' 10" × 32" (424 × 544 × 81 cm)
Gift of Régie Autonome des Transports Parisiens

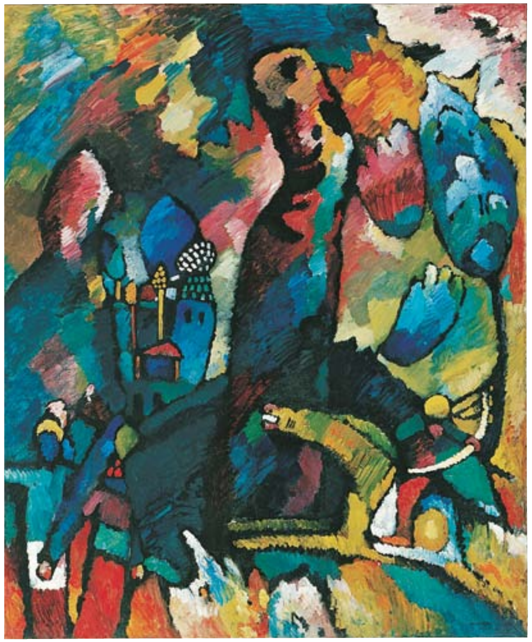
The emergence of the Art Nouveau style toward the end of the nineteenth century resulted from a search for a new aesthetic that was not based on historical or classical models. The sinuous, organic lines of Guimard's design and the stylized, giant stalks drooping under the weight of what seem to be swollen tropical flowers, but are actually amber glass lamps, make this a quintessentially Art Nouveau piece. Guimard's designs for this famous entrance arch and two others were intended to visually enhance the experience of underground travel on the new subway system for Paris.

Paris was not the first city to implement an underground system (London already had one), but the approaching Paris Exposition of 1900 accelerated the need for an efficient and attractive means of mass transportation. Although Guimard never formally entered the competition launched in 1898 by the Compagnie du Métropolitain for the design of the system's entrance gates, he won the commission with his avant-garde schemes, all using standardized cast-iron components to facilitate manufacture, transport, and assembly.

While Parisians were at first hesitant in their response to Guimard's use of an unfamiliar vocabulary associated with the luxury market, the Métro gates, installed throughout the city, effectively brought the Art Nouveau style into the realm of popular culture.



Vasily Kandinsky French, born Russia. 1866–1944



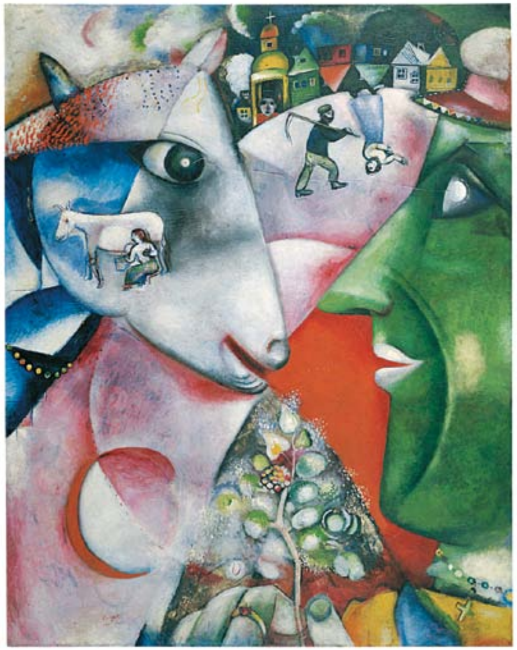
Picture with an Archer. 1909

Oil on canvas, 68⅞ × 57⅜" (175 × 144.6 cm)
Gift and bequest of Louise Reinhardt Smith

The color in *Picture with an Archer* is vibrantly alive—so much so that the scene is initially hard to make out. The patchwork surface seems to be shrugging off the task of describing a space or form. Kandinsky was the first modern artist to paint an entirely abstract composition; at the time of *Picture with an Archer*, that work was just a few months away.

Kandinsky took his approach from Paris—particularly from the Fauves—but used it to create an Eastern landscape suffused with a folk-tale mood. Galloping under the trees of a wildly radiant countryside, a horseman turns in his saddle and aims his bow. In the left foreground stand men in Russian dress; behind them are a house, a domed tower, and two bulbous mountainy pinnacles, cousins of the bent-necked spire in the picture's center. Russian icons show similar rocks, which do exist in places in the East, but even so have a fantastical air. The lone rider with his archaic weapon, the traditional costumes and buildings, and the rural setting intensify the note of fantasy or poetic romance. There is a nostalgia here for a time or perhaps for a place: in 1909 Kandinsky was living in Germany, far from his native Russia. But in the glowing energy of the painting's color there is also excitement and promise.

Marc Chagall French, born Belarus. 1887–1985



I and the Village. 1911

Oil on canvas, 6' 3⅝" × 59⅝"
(192.1 × 151.4 cm)
Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund

Painted the year after Chagall came to Paris, *I and the Village* evokes his memories of his native Hasidic community outside Vitebsk. In the village, peasants and animals lived side by side, in a mutual dependence here signified by the line from peasant to cow, connecting their eyes. The peasant's flowering sprig, symbolically a tree of life, is the reward of their partnership. For the Hasidim, animals were also humanity's link to the universe, and the painting's large circular forms suggest the orbiting sun, moon (in eclipse at the lower left), and earth.

The geometries of *I and the Village* are inspired by the broken planes of Cubism, but Chagall's is a personalized version of that style. As a boy he had loved geometry: "Lines, angles, triangles, squares," he would later recall, "carried me far away to enchanting horizons." Conversely, in Paris he used a disjunctive geometric structure to carry him back home. Where Cubism was mainly an art of urban avant-garde society, *I and the Village* is nostalgic and magical, a rural fairy tale: objects jumble together, scale shifts abruptly, and a woman and two houses, at the painting's top, stand upside-down. "For the Cubists," Chagall said, "a painting was a surface covered with forms in a certain order. For me a painting is a surface covered with representations of things . . . in which logic and illustration have no importance."

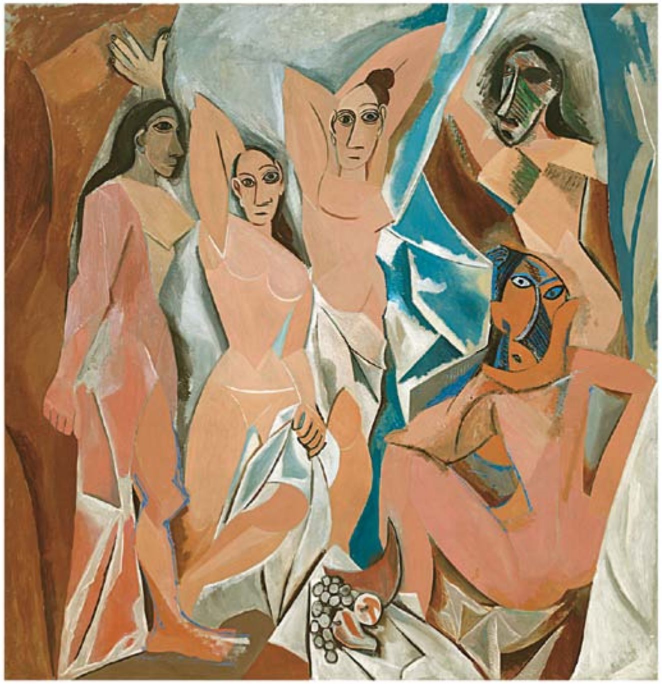
Pablo Picasso Spanish, 1881–1973

Les Demoiselles d'Avignon. 1907

Oil on canvas, 8' × 7' 8" (243.9 × 233.7 cm)
Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest

Les Demoiselles d'Avignon is one of the most important works in the genesis of modern art. The painting depicts five naked prostitutes in a brothel; two of them push aside curtains around the space where the other women strike seductive and erotic poses—but their figures are composed of flat, splintered planes rather than rounded volumes, their eyes are lopsided or staring or asymmetrical, and the two women at the right have threatening masks for heads. The space, too, which should recede, comes forward in jagged shards, like broken glass. In the still life at the bottom, a piece of melon slices the air like a scythe.

The faces of the figures at the right are influenced by African masks, which Picasso assumed had functioned as magical protectors against dangerous spirits: this work, he said later, was his "first exorcism painting." A specific danger he had in mind was life-threatening sexual disease, a source of considerable anxiety in Paris at the time; earlier sketches for the painting more clearly link sexual pleasure to mortality. In its brutal treatment of the body and its clashes of color and style (other sources for this work include ancient Iberian statuary and the work of Paul Cézanne), *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* marks a radical break from traditional composition and perspective.



Henri Matisse French, 1869–1954

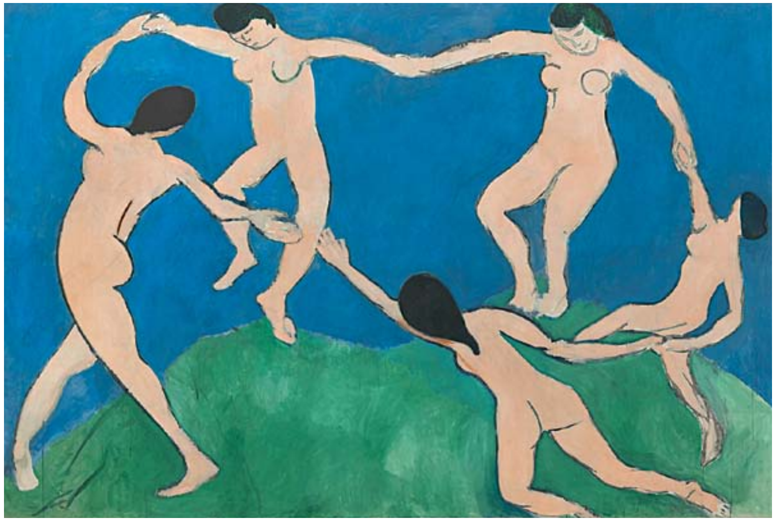
Dance (I). 1909

Oil on canvas, 8' 6½" × 12' 9½"
(259.7 × 390.1 cm)
Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller in honor of
Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

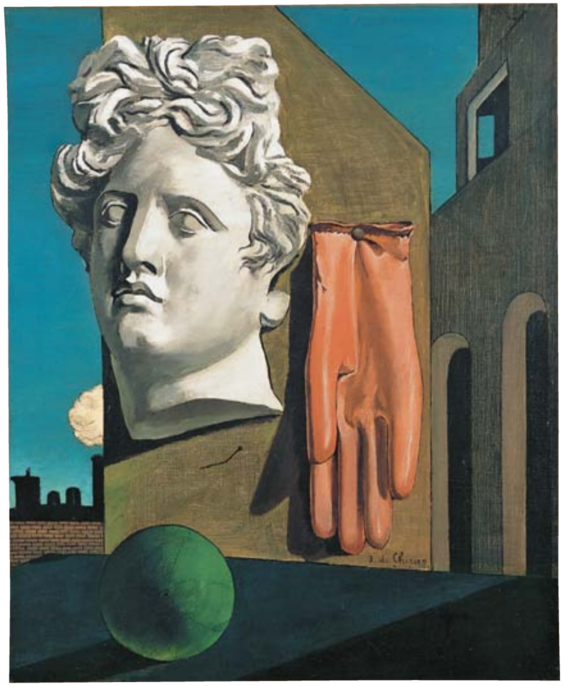
A monumental image of joy and energy, *Dance* is also strikingly daring. Matisse made the painting while preparing a decorative commission for the Moscow collector Sergei Shchukin, whose final version of the scene, *Dance (II)*, was shown in Paris in 1910. Nearly identical in composition to this work, its simplifications of the human body were attacked as inept or willfully crude. Also noted was the work's radical visual flatness: the elimination of perspective and foreshortening that makes nearer and farther figures the same size, and the sky a plane of blue. This is true, as well, of the first version.

Here, the figure at the left moves purposefully; the strength of her body is emphasized by the sweeping unbroken contour from her rear foot up to her breast. The other dancers seem so light they nearly float. The woman at the far right is barely sketched in, her foot dissolving in runny paint as she reels backward. The arm of the dancer to her left literally stretches as it reaches toward the leader's hand, where momentum has broken the circle. The dancers' speed is barely contained by the edges of the canvas.

Dance (II) is more intense in color than this first version, and the dancers' bodies—there deep red—are more sinewy and energetic. In whatever canvas they appear, these are no ordinary dancers, but mythical creatures in a timeless landscape. Dance, Matisse once said, meant "life and rhythm."



Giorgio de Chirico Italian, born Greece. 1888–1978



The Song of Love. 1914

Oil on canvas, 28¾ × 23⅜" (73 × 59.1 cm)
Nelson A. Rockefeller Bequest

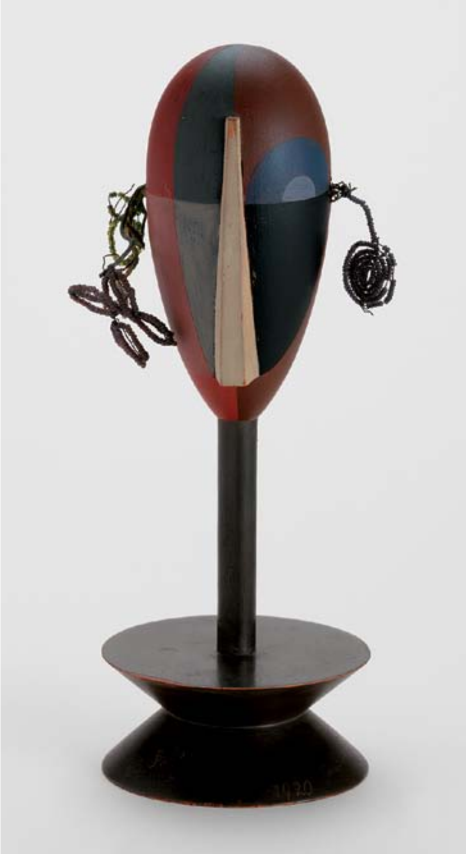
"M. Giorgio de Chirico has just bought a red rubber glove"—so wrote the French poet Guillaume Apollinaire in July of 1914, noting the purchase because, he went on to say, he knew the glove's appearance in de Chirico's paintings would add to the works' uncanny power. Implying human presence, as a mold of the hand, yet also inhuman, a clammily limp fragment distinctly unfleshlike in color, the glove in *The Song of Love* has an unsettling authority. Why is this surgical garment pinned to a board or canvas, alongside a plaster head copied from a classical statue, relic of a noble vanished age? What is the meaning of the green ball? And what is the whole ensemble doing in the outdoor setting insinuated by the building and the passing train?

Unlikely meetings among dissimilar objects were to become a strong theme in modern art (they soon became an explicit goal of the Surrealists), but de Chirico sought more than surprise: in works like this one, for which Apollinaire used the term "metaphysical," he wanted to evoke an enduring level of reality hidden beyond outward appearances. Perhaps this is why he gives us a geometric form (the spherical ball), a schematic building rather than a specific one, and inert and partial images of the human body rather than a living, mortal being.

Sophie Taeuber-Arp Swiss, 1889–1943

Tête Dada (Dada Head). 1920

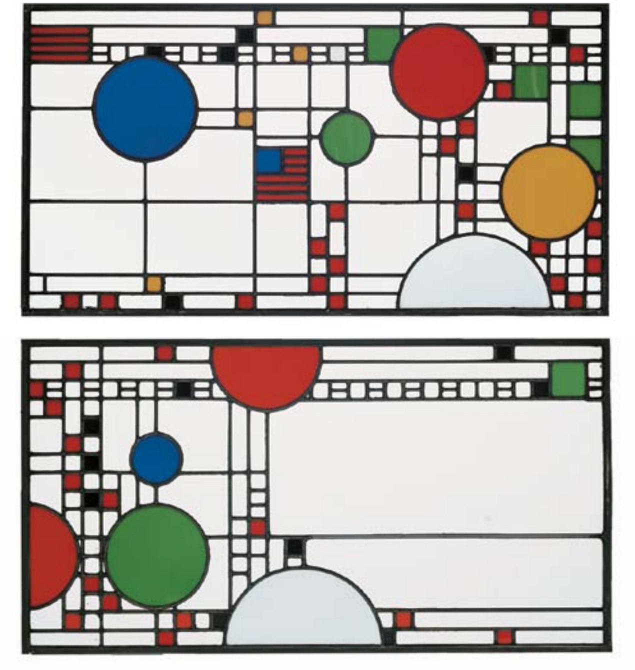
Painted wood with glass beads on wire, 9¼" high (23.5 cm)
Mrs. John Hay Whitney Bequest (by exchange) and Committee on Painting and Sculpture Funds



The elegant symmetry of the sculpture's base and head stems from the mechanical precision of a lathe, while the unruly, earring-like beaded appendages bear the idiosyncrasies of premodern handicraft. In the context of the fine arts, *Tête Dada* might be classified as a sculptural bust; in the applied arts, a miniature hat stand or doll; and in an ethnographic museum, a fetish object with spiritual powers. As an artist trained in textile design, Taeuber was keenly aware of the conventions defining each category. Her refusal to allow *Tête Dada* to conform to any single one is what makes it a "Dada object," a new category that Taeuber helped to construct during the Dada movement's initial phase in Zurich during World War I.

Other classifications conjoined in this work include painting and sculpture, human and object, authentic and artificial, spiritual and commercial. The sculpture's surface doubles as an abstract painting for which Taeuber employs her design expertise to wrap linear geometric shapes around a curved form. But this abstraction, like that of the African masks that interested many artists of the period, also breeds empathy, tapping into primordial instincts that project sentience into the protruding "nose" and semicircular "eye." Similarity to a mannequin brings the work back to modernity and commerce, fusing (or confusing) the painted faces of spiritual ritual with the look of contemporary fashion.

Frank Lloyd Wright American, 1867–1959



Two Clerestory Windows from Avery Coonley Playhouse, Riverside, Illinois. 1912

Color and clear glass, leaded,
each 18⁵⁄₁₆ × 34³⁄₁₆"(46.5 × 86.8 cm)
Joseph H. Heil Fund

To enliven the interior of his Avery Coonley Playhouse, a private kindergarten in the suburbs of Chicago, Frank Lloyd Wright designed stained-glass clerestory windows, which formed a continuous band around the top of the playroom. Each window in the series featured lively combinations of simple geometric motifs in bright colors. Inspired by the sights of a parade, their shapes were abstracted from balloons, confetti, and even an American flag.

Wright designed the interior furnishings for almost all of his buildings, thereby creating an organic unity of the whole and its parts. Art glass was integral to the architectural fabric of many of his early works. The arranging of shapes into patterns in the Coonley Playhouse windows relates to the formal strategies Wright adopted in his architecture. His belief in the universality of fundamental geometric forms was as much a response to rational methods of modern machine production as an intuitive understanding that abstract forms carried shared spiritual values. Geometric forms had played a role in Wright's own childhood education through a German system of educational toys, the Froebel blocks, which he later credited as a major influence on his ideas about architecture.

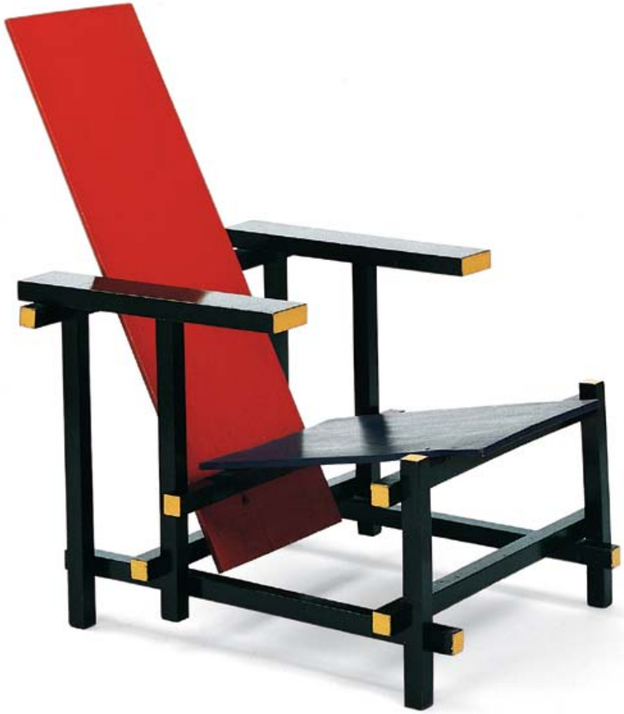
Gerrit Rietveld Dutch, 1888–1964

Red Blue Chair. c. 1923

Painted wood, 34⅛ × 26 × 33"
(86.7 × 66 × 83.8 cm)
Gift of Philip Johnson

In the Red Blue Chair, Rietveld manipulated rectilinear volumes and examined the interaction of vertical and horizontal planes, much as he did in his architecture. Although the chair was originally designed in 1918, its color scheme of primary colors (red, yellow, blue) plus black—so closely associated with the de Stijl group and its most famous theorist and practitioner Piet Mondrian—was applied to it around 1923. Hoping that much of his furniture would eventually be mass-produced rather than handcrafted, Rietveld aimed for simplicity in construction. The pieces of wood that comprise the Red Blue Chair are in the standard lumber sizes readily available at the time.

Rietveld believed there was a greater goal for the furniture designer than just physical comfort: the well-being and comfort of the spirit. Rietveld and his colleagues in the de Stijl art and architecture movement sought to create a utopia based on a harmonic human-made order, which they believed could renew Europe after the devastating turmoil of World War I. New forms, in their view, were essential to this rebuilding.



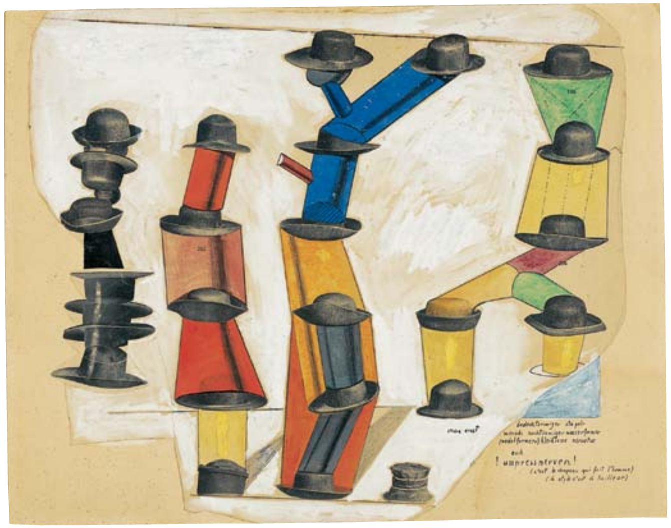
Max Ernst French, born Germany. 1891–1976

The Hat Makes the Man. 1920

Gouache, pencil, oil, and ink on cut-and-pasted printed paper on paper, 13⅞ × 17¾" (35.2 × 45.1 cm)
Purchase

Pictures of ordinary hats cut out of a catalogue are stacked one atop the other in constructions that resemble both organic, plantlike forms and anthropomorphic phalluses. With the inscription, “seed-covered stacked-up man seedless waterformer (‘edelformer’) well-fitting nervous system also tightly fitted nerves! (the hat makes the man) (style is the tailor),” Ernst incorporates verbal humor into this subversive visual pun.

The artist was a major figure of the Dada group, which embraced the concepts of irrationality and obscure meaning. *The Hat Makes the Man* illustrates the use of mechanical reproductions to record Ernst’s own hallucinatory, often erotic visions. The origin of this collage is a sculpture made from wood hat molds that Ernst created in 1920 for a Dada exhibition in Cologne. The repetition of the hat, indicative of part of the bourgeois uniform, suggests the Dadaist view of modern man as a conformist puppet. Thus, in true Dada fashion, Ernst combines the contradictory elements of an inanimate object with references to man and to nature; symbols of social conventionality are equated with sexually charged ones.



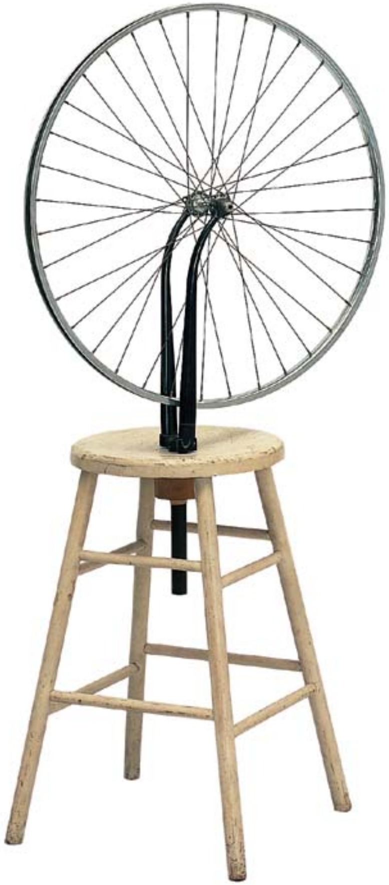
Marcel Duchamp American, born France. 1887–1968

Bicycle Wheel. 1951 (third version, after lost original of 1913)

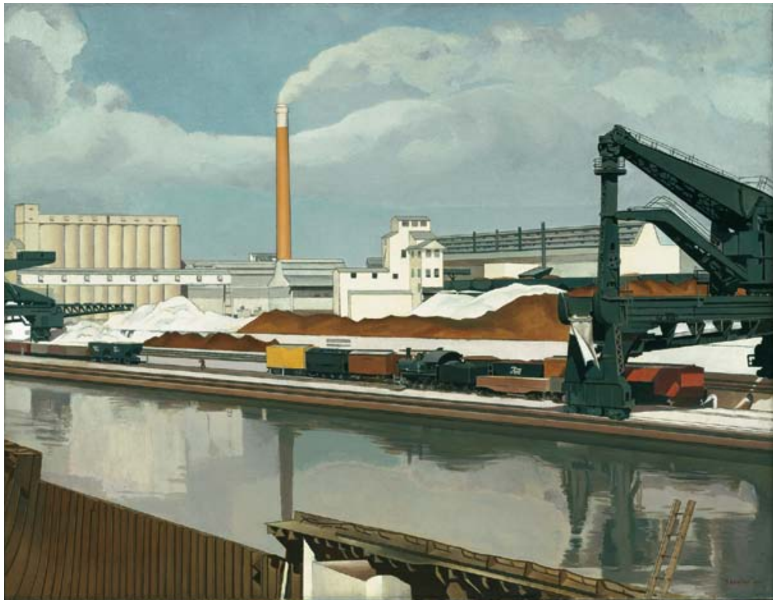
Assemblage: metal wheel, 25½" (63.8 cm) diam., mounted on painted wood stool, 23¾" (60.2 cm) high; overall, 50½ × 25½ × 16⅝" (128.3 × 63.8 × 42 cm)
The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection

Bicycle Wheel is Duchamp’s first Readymade, a class of artworks that raised fundamental questions about artmaking and, in fact, about art’s very definition. This example is actually an “assisted Readymade”: a common object (a bicycle wheel) slightly altered, in this case by being mounted upside-down on another common object (a kitchen stool). Duchamp was not the first to kidnap everyday stuff for art; the Cubists had done so in collages, which, however, required aesthetic judgment in the shaping and placing of materials. The Readymade, on the other hand, implied that the production of art need be no more than a matter of selection—of choosing a preexisting object. In radically subverting earlier assumptions about what the artmaking process entailed, this idea had enormous influence on later artists, particularly after the broader dissemination of Duchamp’s thought in the 1950s and 1960s.

The components of *Bicycle Wheel*, being mass-produced, are anonymous, identical or similar to countless others. In addition, the fact that this version of the piece is not the original seems inconsequential, at least in terms of visual experience. (Having lost the original *Bicycle Wheel*, Duchamp simply remade it almost four decades later.) Duchamp claimed to like the work’s appearance, “to feel that the wheel turning was very soothing.” Even now, *Bicycle Wheel* retains an absurdist visual surprise. Its greatest power, however, is as a conceptual proposition.



Charles Sheeler American, 1883–1965



American Landscape. 1930

Oil on canvas, 24 × 31" (61 × 78.8 cm)
Gift of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller

A photographer as well as a painter, Sheeler was hired in 1927 by the Ford Motor Company's Philadelphia advertising firm to shoot at the Ford plant in River Rouge, Michigan, outside Detroit. *American Landscape* derives from one of the pictures he took there. Choosing a detail of the photograph, he copied it quite closely, but the different framing creates a clear pictorial structure of horizontal bands regularly divided by the verticals of the smokestack, the crane, and their reflections in the water.

The painting's clean, hard-edged look reflects Sheeler's belief in the need for a machine-age aesthetic. In the twentieth century, he argued, "Industry concerns the greatest numbers. . . . The Language of the Arts should be in keeping with the Spirit of the Age." Sheeler had studied Cubism and knew the machine-derived imagery of Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia, but wanted to "remove the method of painting . . . from being a hindrance in seeing." He and other artists therefore devised a smooth, transparent, near-photographic style, called Precisionism, to address America's industrial scene.

Sheeler shows the Ford plant as literally impersonal—emptied of people. But for the tiny figure on the railroad tracks, there is no sign of the labor force, let alone of the complexities of labor relations in heavy industry. The plant also seems implausibly tidy—although its neatness did impress visitors of the period.

Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret) French, born Switzerland. 1887–1965 with Pierre Jeanneret Swiss, 1896–1967

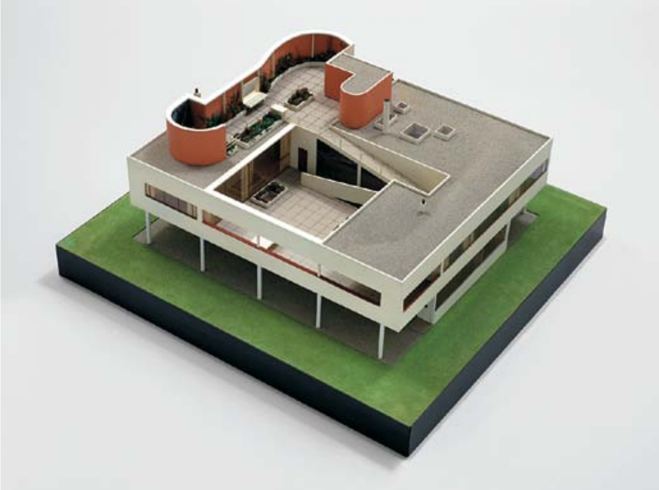
Villa Savoye, Poissy-sur-Seine, France. 1929–31

Model: wood, aluminum, and plastic, 14½ × 31½ × 34" (36.8 × 80 × 86.4 cm)
Modelmaker: Theodore Conrad (1932)
Purchase

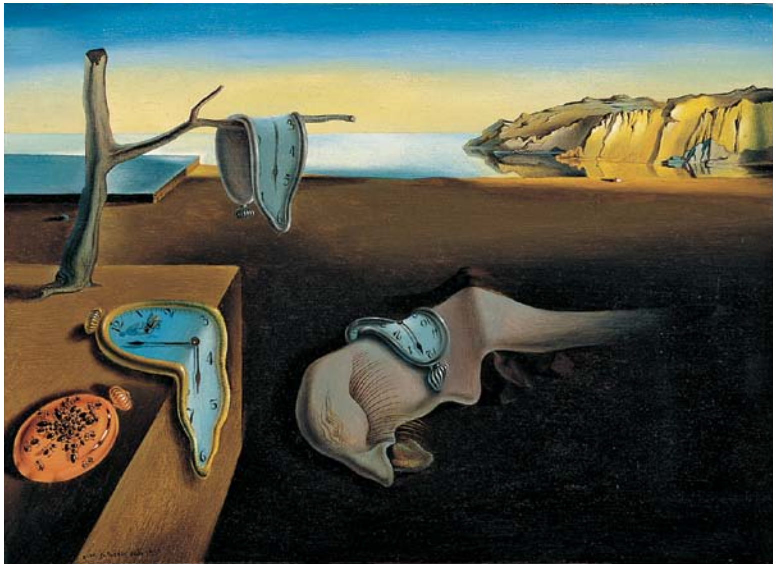
The Villa Savoye, a weekend house outside Paris, is perhaps the finest example of Le Corbusier's early work. Le Corbusier, along with his brother Pierre, planned the entire composition as a sequence of spatial effects. Arriving by automobile, the visitor drives underneath the house, circling around to the main entrance. From the entrance hall, he or she ascends the spiral stairs or the ramp to the main-level living area. The ramp continues from the central terrace to the upper-level sun deck. Sheltered by brightly colored wind screens, it is a perfect vantage point for savoring sunlight, fresh air, and nature.

In his famous book of 1923, *Vers une architecture* (*Toward an Architecture*), arguably the most influential architecture book of the twentieth century, Le Corbusier declared houses to be "machines for living in." Villa Savoye, a white rectilinear volume on a flat landscape, celebrates Le Corbusier's belief that ideal, universal forms, although rooted in the classical tradition, were appropriate to architecture for the machine age. The design incorporates Le Corbusier's "five points of architecture," which he believed to be indispensable elements: *pilotis* (reinforced-concrete columns), the free plan, the free facade, horizontal bands of windows, and the roof garden.

In 1932, this model was included in The Museum of Modern Art's first architecture exhibition, which documented the various trends that came to be known as the International Style.



Salvador Dalí Spanish, 1904–1989



The Persistence of Memory. 1931

Oil on canvas, 9½ × 13" (24.1 × 33 cm)
Given anonymously

The Persistence of Memory is aptly named, for the scene is indelibly memorable. Hard objects become inexplicably limp in this bleak and infinite dreamscape, while metal attracts ants like rotting flesh. Mastering what he called "the usual paralyzing tricks of eye-fooling," Dalí painted with what he called "the most imperialist fury of precision," but only, he said, "to systematize confusion and thus to help discredit completely the world of reality." It is the classical Surrealist ambition, yet some literal reality is included too: the distant golden cliffs are the coast of Catalonia, Dalí's home.

Those limp watches are as soft as overripe cheese—indeed "the camembert of time," in Dalí's phrase. Here time must lose all meaning. Permanence goes with it: ants, a common theme in Dalí's work, represent decay, particularly when they attack a gold watch, and become grotesquely organic. The monstrous fleshy creature draped across the painting's center is at once alien and familiar: an approximation of Dalí's own face in profile, its long eyelashes seem disturbingly insectlike or even sexual, as does what may or may not be a tongue oozing from its nose like a fat snail.

The year before this picture was painted, Dalí formulated his "paranoiac-critical method," cultivating self-induced psychotic hallucinations in order to create art. "The difference between a madman and me," he said, "is that I am not mad."

Meret Oppenheim Swiss, born Germany. 1913–1985

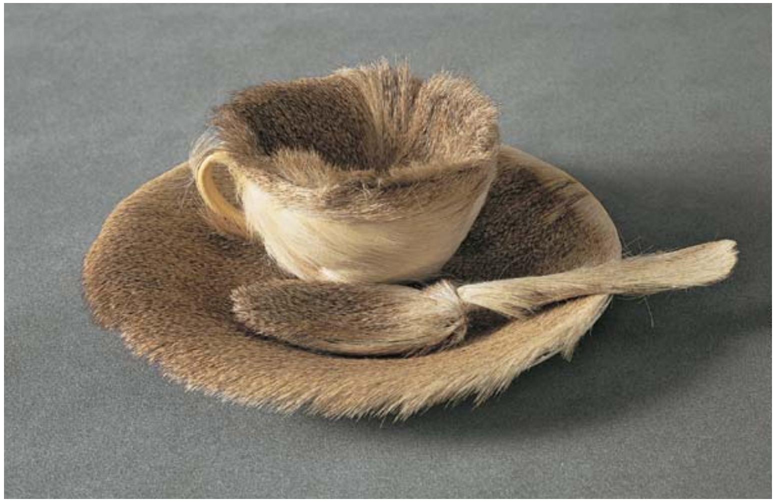
Objet (Le Déjeuner en fourrure) (Object [Lunch in Fur]). 1936

Fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon; cup 4⅜" (10.9 cm) diameter; saucer, 9⅜" (23.7 cm) diameter; spoon 8" (20.2 cm) long; overall height 2⅞" (7.3 cm)
Purchase

Oppenheim's fur-lined teacup is perhaps the single most notorious Surrealist object. Its subtle perversity was inspired by a conversation between Oppenheim, Pablo Picasso, and the photographer Dora Maar at a Paris café. Admiring Oppenheim's fur-trimmed bracelets, Picasso remarked that one could cover just about anything with fur. "Even this cup and saucer," Oppenheim replied.

In the 1930s, many Surrealist artists were arranging found objects in bizarre combinations that challenged reason and summoned unconscious and poetic associations. *Objet*—titled *Le Déjeuner en fourrure* (*Lunch in Fur*) by the Surrealist leader André Breton—is a cup and saucer set that was purchased at a Paris department store and lined with the pelt of a Chinese gazelle. The work highlights specificities of sensual pleasure: fur may delight the touch but it repels the tongue. And a cup and spoon, of course, are made to be put in the mouth.

A small concave object covered with fur, *Objet* may also have a sexual connotation and political import: working in a male-dominated art world, perhaps Oppenheim was mocking the prevailing "masculinity" of sculpture, which conventionally adopts a hard substance and vertical orientation that can be seen as almost absurdly self-referential. Chic, wry, and simultaneously attractive and disturbing, *Objet* is shrewdly and quietly aggressive.



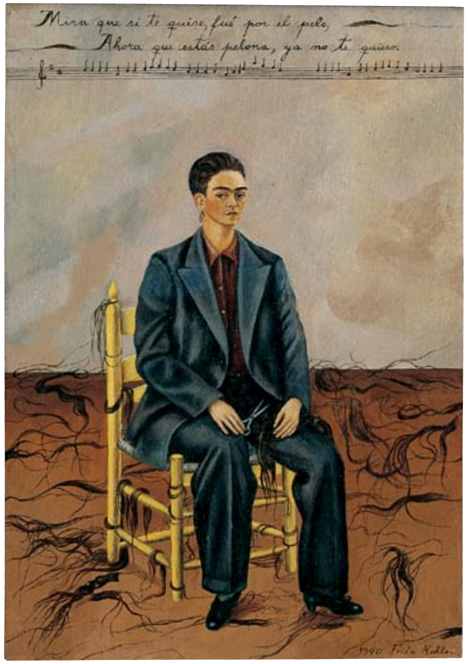
Frida Kahlo Mexican, 1907–1954

Self-Portrait with Cropped Hair. 1940

Oil on canvas, 15¾ × 11" (40 × 27.9 cm)
Gift of Edgar Kaufmann, Jr.

Kahlo painted *Self-Portrait with Cropped Hair* shortly after she divorced her unfaithful husband, the artist Diego Rivera. As a painter of many self-portraits, she had often shown herself wearing a Mexican woman's traditional dresses and flowing hair; now, in renunciation of Rivera, she painted herself short haired and in a man's shirt, shoes, and oversized suit (presumably her former husband's).

Kahlo knew adventurous European and American art, and her own work was embraced by the Surrealists, whose leader, André Breton, described it as "a ribbon around a bomb." But her stylistic inspirations were chiefly Mexican, especially nineteenth-century religious painting, and she would say, "I do not know if my paintings are Surrealist or not, but I do know that they are the most frank expression of myself." The queasily animate locks of fresh-cut hair in this painting must also be linked to her feelings of estrangement from Rivera (whom she remarried the following year), and they also have the dreamlike quality of Surrealism. For, into the work she has written the lyric of a Mexican song: "Look, if I loved you it was because of your hair. Now that you are without hair, I don't love you anymore."


Mira que si te quise, fué por el pelo,
Ahora que estás pelona, ya no te quiero.
1940 Frida Kahlo

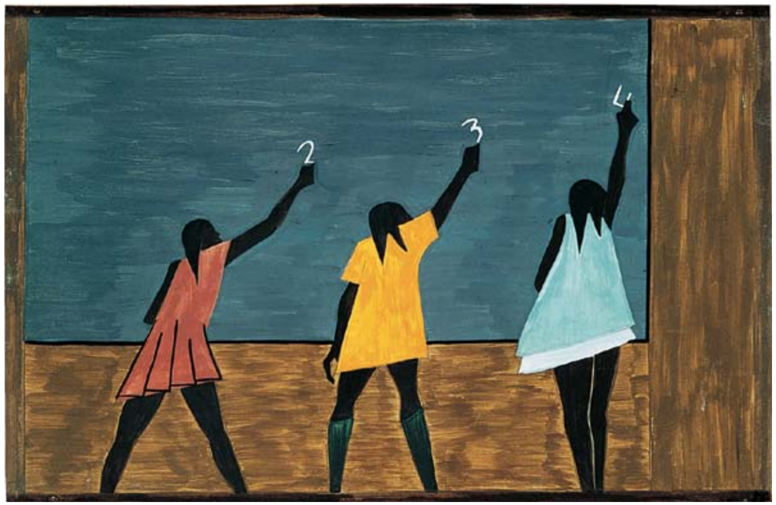
Jacob Lawrence American, 1917–2000

The Migration Series. 1940–41

Number 58, from a series of 60 works
(30 in the Museum):
tempera on gesso on composition board,
12 × 18" (30.5 × 45.7 cm)
Gift of Mrs. David M. Levy

During the first half of the twentieth century, as the expanding modern industries in America's northern cities demanded ever more workers, great numbers of African Americans saw in these jobs a chance to escape the poverty and discrimination of the rural South. Between 1916 and 1930 alone, over a million people moved north. Lawrence's own parents made this journey, and he grew up hearing stories about it; as a young artist living in Harlem, the heart of New York City's African-American community, he recognized it as an epic theme. Originally known as *The Migration of the Negro*, but renamed by the artist in 1993, this distinguished cycle of images chronicles a great exodus and arrival.

Visually, the cycle advances through panels of great incident and panels of near abstraction and emptiness. Using exaggerated perspectives, rhythmic constructions, astringent colors, and angular figures, Lawrence bends decorative forms to the task of history and makes Social Realism compatible with abstract art. Yet he never loses touch with the task of telling a complex story clearly and accessibly. Leaving hardships behind in the South, African Americans received a mixed reception in the North; along with the possibility of jobs, the vote, and education, the new life also brought unhealthy living conditions, race riots, and other trials all documented in Lawrence's cycle, along with his community's heroic perseverance in facing them. Each part of the story carries a legend by the artist; for the image shown here, the legend reads: "In the North the Negro had better educational facilities."



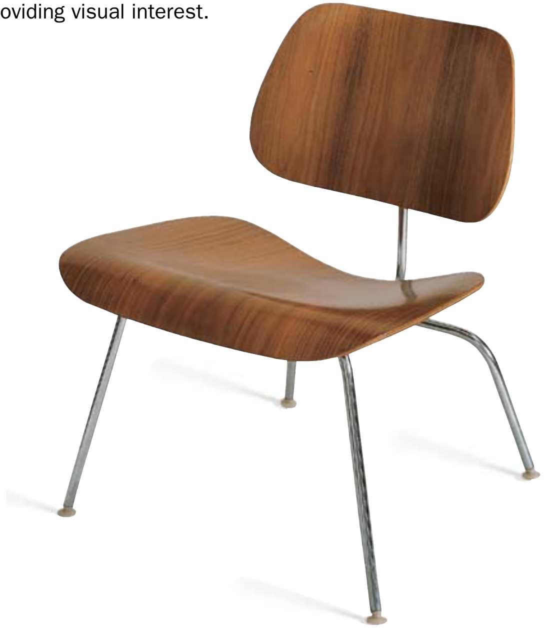
Charles Eames American, 1907–1978
Ray Eames American, 1912–1988

Low Side Chair (model LCM).
1946

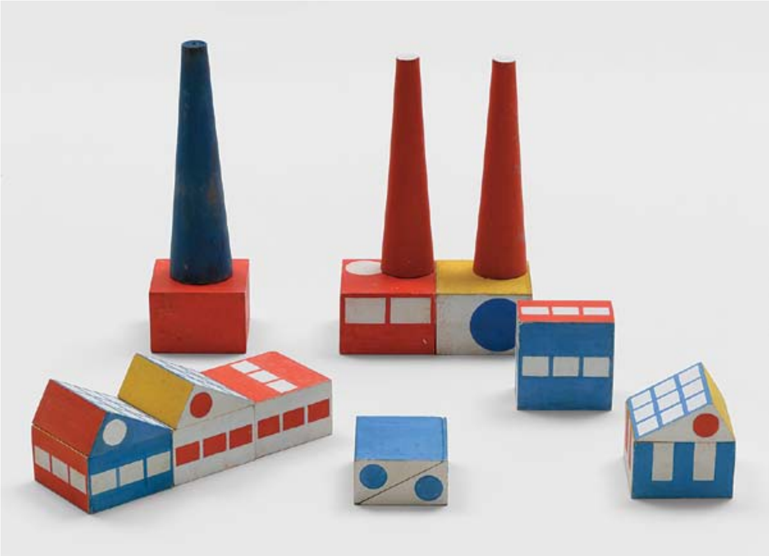
Molded walnut veneered plywood, chrome-plated steel rods, and rubber shock mounts, 27⅜ × 22¼ × 25⅜" (69.5 × 56.3 × 64.5 cm)
Manufacturer: Herman Miller Inc., USA
Gift of the manufacturer

The LCM (Lounge Chair Metal) was conceived by Eames, who, with his wife and professional partner, Ray, formed one of the most influential design teams of the twentieth century. First produced in 1946, the LCM and its companion, the DCM (Dining Chair Metal), met with great commercial success and have become icons of modern design. The LCM's molded-plywood seat and back sit on a chrome-plated steel frame, with rubber shock mounts in between. That the back and seat are separate pieces simplified production, while also providing visual interest.

Together with Eero Saarinen, Charles Eames had first experimented with bent plywood for a group of prize-winning designs they submitted to the 1940 competition "Organic Design in Home Furnishings," organized by The Museum of Modern Art. These, however, proved difficult to manufacture, and most were upholstered for comfort. Intent on producing high-quality objects at economical manufacturing costs, the Eameses devoted the better part of the next five years to refining the technique of molding plywood to create thin shells with compound curves. The chair was initially manufactured by the Evans Products Company; in 1949 Herman Miller Inc. bought the rights to produce it.



Ladislav Sutnar American, born Bohemia (now Czech Republic), 1897–1976



Prototype for Build the Town building blocks. 1940–43

Painted wood blocks, 29 units, various shapes and sizes
Gift of Ctislav Sutnar and Radoslav Sutnar

Between 1940 and 1943, Sutnar produced a series of prototypes for a set of painted wooden building blocks called *Build the Town*, the last in a series of construction toys he had begun in 1922 and that was central to his ideas about design and modern life. A designer at the forefront of interwar modernism in Czechoslovakia, he viewed well-designed toys as an important means of shaping the values of a new generation living in a modern world. Even after Sutnar emigrated to the United States in 1939, he kept his ideas for a popular building toy alive. Like many design and educational reformers of the twentieth century, he believed in the cognitive power of a visual language rooted in elemental shapes and colors.

Like his earlier sets of blocks, *Build the Town* was inspired by contemporary American factories and the planned communities that often surrounded them. For Sutnar, building miniature cities with blocks gave children an awareness of form and structure—in this case, the forms and structures of modern functionalist architecture—and also a sense of the forces that shape a community. Although he was unable to find a reliable manufacturer for the blocks or to interest retailers in the project, Sutnar continued to work successfully in the field of graphic design and became a leading advocate of modernist principles in postwar commercial design.

Arthur Young American, 1905–1995

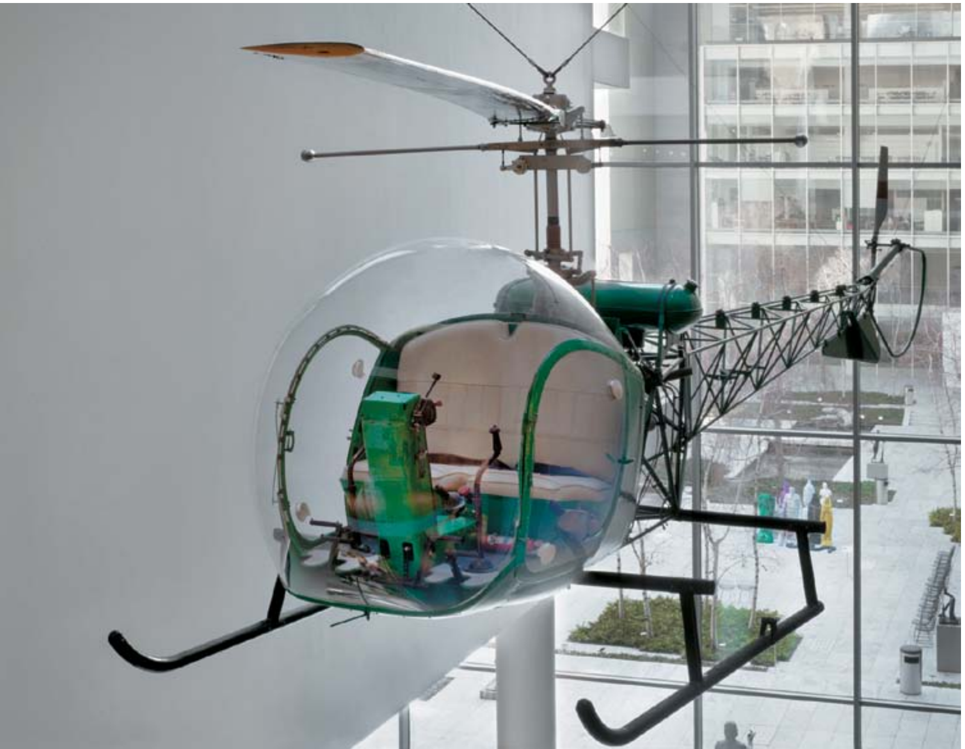
Bell-47D1 Helicopter. 1945

Aluminum, steel, and acrylic, 9' 2¾" × 9' 11" × 41' 8¾" (281.3 × 302 × 1272.9 cm)
Manufacturer: Bell Helicopter Inc., U.S.A.
Marshall Cogan Purchase Fund

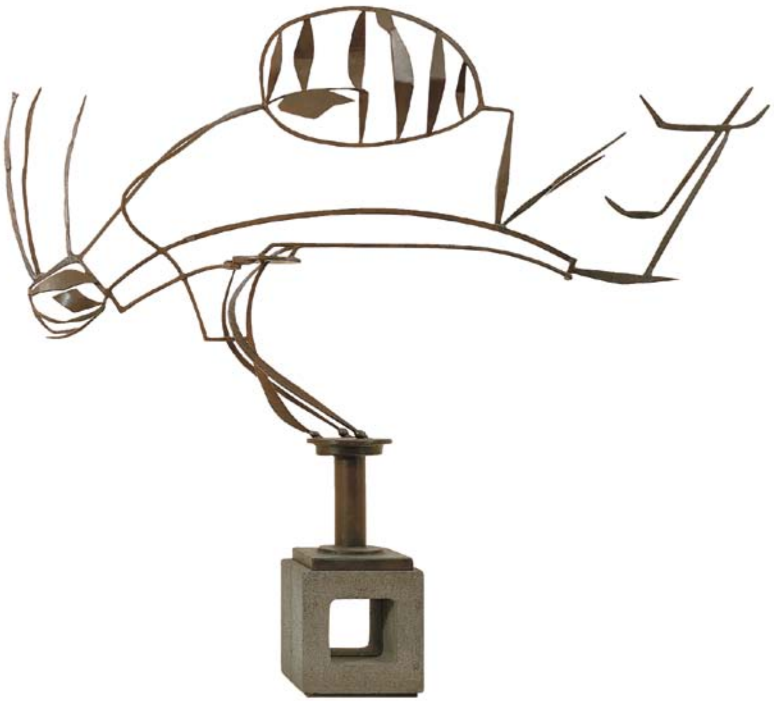
More than three thousand Bell-47D1 helicopters were made in the United States and sold in forty countries between 1946 and 1973, when production ceased. While the Bell-47D1 is a straightforward utilitarian craft, its designer, Arthur Young, who was also a poet and a painter, consciously juxtaposed its transparent plastic bubble with the open structure of its tail boom to create an object whose delicate beauty is inseparable from its efficiency. That the plastic bubble is made in one piece rather than in sections joined by metal seams sets the Bell-47D1 apart from other helicopters. The result is a cleaner, more unified appearance.

The bubble also lends the hovering craft an insectlike appearance, which generated its nickname, the "bug-eyed helicopter." It seems fitting, then, that one of the principal uses of the Bell-47D1 has been for pest control in crop dusting and spraying. It has also been used for traffic surveillance and for the delivery of mail and cargo to remote areas. During the Korean War, it served as an aerial ambulance.

Awarded the world's first commercial helicopter license by the Civil Aeronautics Administration (now the FAA), the Bell-47D1 weighs 1,380 pounds. Its maximum speed is 92 miles per hour, and its maximum range, 194 miles. It can hover like a dragonfly at altitudes up to 10,000 feet.



David Smith American, 1906–1965



Australia. 1951

Painted steel, 6' 7½" × 8' 11⅞" × 16⅛" (202 × 274 × 41 cm) on cinder block base, 14 × 14" (35.6 × 35.6 cm)
Gift of William Rubin

In *Australia* Smith uses thin rods and plates of steel, simultaneously delicate and strong, to draw in space. Sculpture has traditionally gained power from solidity and mass, but *Australia* is linear, a skeleton. The Constructivists were the first to explore this kind of penetration of sculpture by empty space. Smith learned about it from photographs of the welded sculpture of Pablo Picasso: he had begun his career as a painter, but he knew how to weld (he had worked as a riveter in the automobile industry) and Picasso's works liberated him to start working in steel.

Like a painting or drawing, *Australia* must be seen frontally if its form is to be grasped. It has been identified as an abstraction of a kangaroo, and its lines have that animal's leaping vitality; but it is an essay in tension, balance, and shape more than it is any kind of representation. In calling the work *Australia*, Smith may have had in mind the passages on that country in James Joyce's novel *Finnegans Wake*. He may also have been thinking of the magazine illustration of aboriginal Australian cave drawings that the critic Clement Greenberg sent him in September of 1950, with the note, "The one of the warrior reminds me particularly of some of your sculpture."

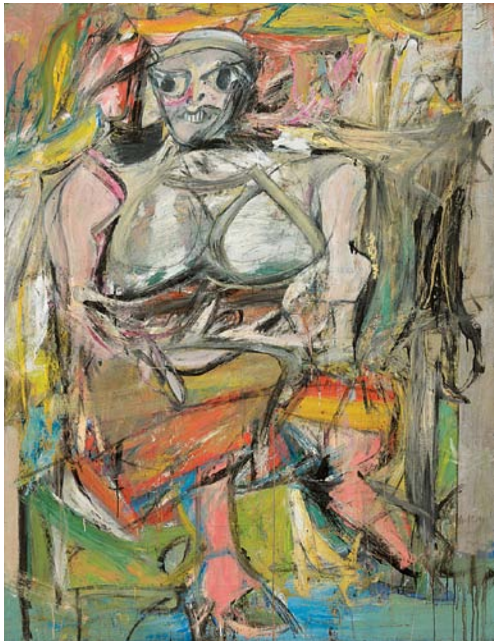
Willem de Kooning American, born the Netherlands, 1904–1997

Woman, I. 1950–52

Oil on canvas, 6' 3⅞" × 58"
(192.7 × 147.3 cm)
Purchase

Woman, I is the first in a series of de Kooning works on the theme of Woman. The group is influenced by images ranging from Paleolithic fertility fetishes to American billboards, and the attributes of this particular figure seem to range from the vengeful power of the goddess to the hollow seductiveness of the calendar pinup. Reversing traditional female representations, which he summarized as "the idol, the Venus, the nude," de Kooning paints a woman with gigantic eyes, massive breasts, and a toothy grin. Her body is outlined in thick and thin black lines, which continue in loops and streaks and drips, taking on an independent life of their own. Abrupt, angular strokes of orange, blue, yellow, and green pile up in multiple directions as layers of color are applied, scraped away, and restored.

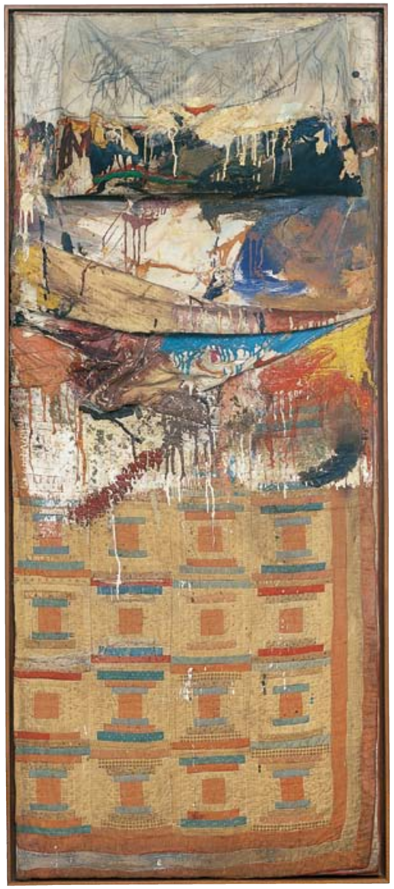
When de Kooning painted *Woman, I*, artists and critics championing abstraction had declared the human figure obsolete in painting. Instead of abandoning the figure, however, de Kooning readdressed this age-old subject through the sweeping brushwork of Abstract Expressionism, the prevailing contemporary style. Does the woman partake of the brushwork's energy to confront us aggressively? Or is she herself under attack, nearly obliterated by the welter of violent marks? Perhaps something of both; and, in either case, she remains powerful and intimidating.



Robert Rauschenberg American, 1925–2008

Bed. 1955

Combine painting: oil and pencil on pillow,
quilt, and sheet on wood supports,
6' 3¼ × 31½" × 8" (191.1 × 80 × 20.3 cm)
Gift of Leo Castelli in honor of Alfred H. Barr, Jr.



Bed is one of Rauschenberg's first Combines, his own term for his technique of attaching cast-off items, such as rubber tires or old furniture, to a traditional support. In this case he framed a well-worn pillow, sheet, and quilt, scribbled them with pencil, and splashed them with paint, in a style derived from Abstract Expressionism. In mocking the seriousness of that ambitious art, Rauschenberg predicted an attitude more widespread among later generations of artists—the Pop artists, for example, who also appreciated Rauschenberg's relish for everyday objects.

Legend has it that the bedclothes in *Bed* are Rauschenberg's own, pressed into use when he lacked the money to buy a canvas. Since the artist himself probably slept under this very sheet and quilt, *Bed* is as personal as a self-portrait, or more so—a quality consistent with Rauschenberg's statement, "Painting relates to both art and life. . . . (I try to act in that gap between the two)." Although the materials here come from a bed, and are arranged like one, Rauschenberg hung them on the wall, like a work of art. So the bed loses its function, but not its associations with sleep, dreams, illness, sex—the most intimate moments in life. Critics have also projected onto the fluid-drenched fabric connotations of violence and morbidity.

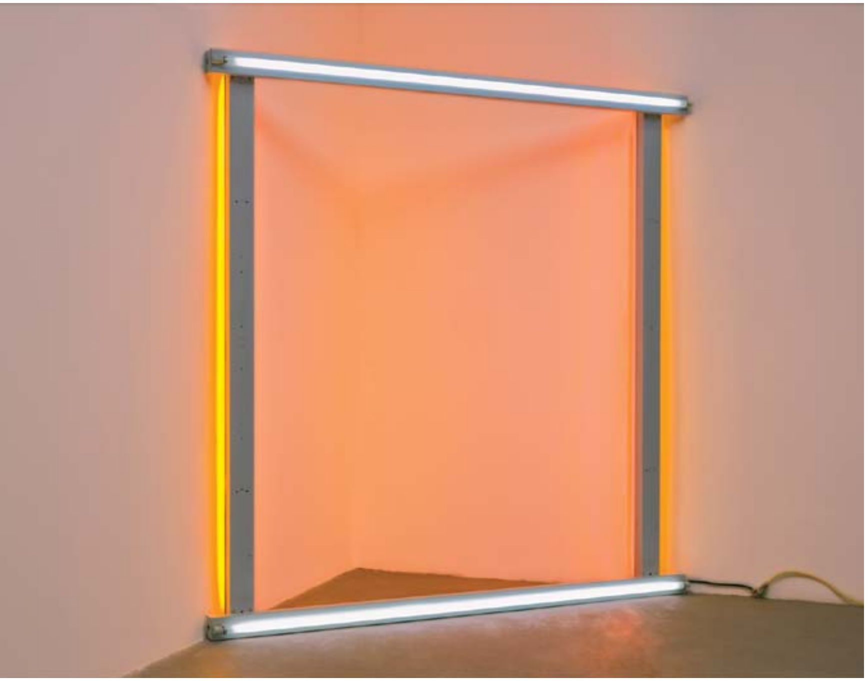
Dan Flavin American, 1933–1996

untitled (to the "innovator" of Wheeling Peachblow). 1968

Fluorescent lights and metal fixtures, 8' ½" × 8' ¼" × 5¾" (245 × 244.3 × 14.5 cm)
Edition: 2/3
Helena Rubinstein Fund

Dan Flavin began working with commercially available fluorescent light tubes in 1963. He exhibited them singly or in combination, creating a complicated and varied range of visual effects using minimal means. *untitled (to the "innovator" of Wheeling Peachblow*) derives its palette from Wheeling Peachblow, a type of Victorian art glass first made in Wheeling, West Virginia, that shades from yellow to deep red, producing a delicate peach color in between. Flavin creates a similar color on the walls of the gallery by placing one yellow and one pink fluorescent tube on each of the two vertical elements of a square metal armature. Two horizontal daylight bulbs, facing the viewer, complete the structure.

Rather than hanging the work flush against the wall, Flavin positions it on the floor across the corner of a gallery, where the square frames a monochromic plane of colored light and simultaneously defines an opening onto a three-dimensional space. *untitled (to the "innovator" of Wheeling Peachblow*) creates a visual effect that invokes the conditions of painting's flatness and sculpture's depth without employing materials traditionally associated with either discipline.



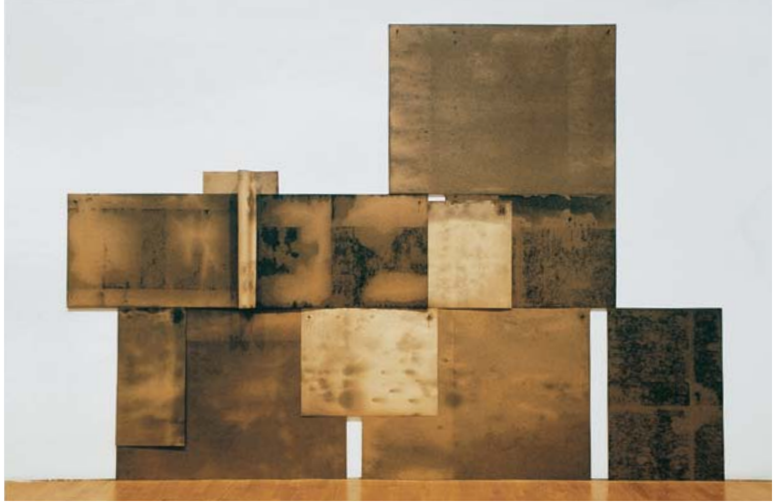
Dorothea Rockburne American, born Canada 1932

Scalar. 1971

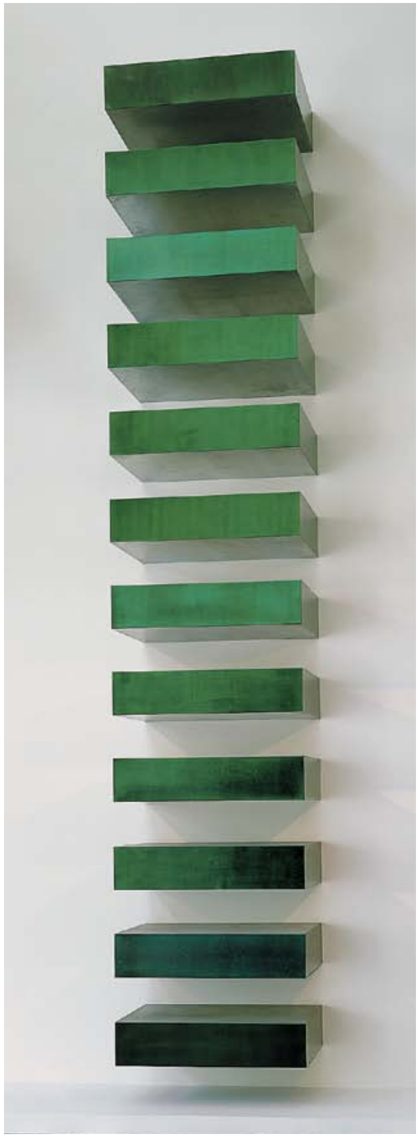
Chipboard, crude oil, paper, and nails, overall 6' 8" × 9' 6½" × 3½" (203.2 × 289.5 × 8.9 cm)
Gift of Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder and Estée Lauder, Inc. in honor of J. Frederic Byers III

Scalar inherits the geometry and literalness of Minimal art but softens these qualities through variations in its tones and in the disposition of its forms. Tacked-up rectangles (and one cylinder) of paper and chipboard suggest a modular order, but differ in size and proportion. Sometimes they overlap, sometimes leave the wall bare; their placement seems both careful and irregular, as in Incan masonry. Unpigmented oil applied to their surfaces has left gentle mottlings and stains, which have spread through an interaction between oil and support that must have lain largely outside the artist's control. These planes against the wall invoke paintings, but at the bottom they rest on the floor, so that they also cite sculpture and weight.

In reaction against Abstract Expressionism, many American artists of the 1960s, such as Rockburne, tried to minimize or erase signs of their own individuality in their art. Instead, their work drew attention to the process by which it was made and to impersonal agents in its making: its physical context, the qualities of its materials, the force of gravity, a system or procedure that might generate a form independently of the artist's aesthetic judgment. *Scalar* is party to these ideas, but with its blotched surfaces, its echoes of painting, and its rhythmic arrangement of uprights and horizontals, it remains subtly pictorial, in a powerful combination of rigor and delicacy.



Donald Judd American, 1928–1994



Untitled (Stack). 1967

Lacquer on galvanized iron, twelve units,
each 9 × 40 × 31" (22.8 × 101.6 × 78.7 cm),
installed vertically at 9" (22.8 cm) intervals
Helen Acheson Bequest (by exchange) and
gift of Joseph Helman

Sculpture must always face gravity, and the stack—one thing on top of another—is one of its basic ways of coping. The principle traditionally enforces a certain hierarchy, an upper object being not only usually different from a lower one but conceptually nobler, as when a statue stands on a pedestal. Yet in Judd's stack of galvanized-iron boxes, all of the units are identical; they are set on the wall and separated, so that none is subordinated to another's weight (and also so that the space around them plays a role in the work equivalent to theirs); and their regular climb—each of the twelve boxes is nine inches high, and they rest nine inches apart—suggests an infinitely extensible series, denying the possibility of a crowning summit. Judd's form of Minimalism reflected his belief in the equality of all things. "In terms of existing," he wrote, "everything is equal."

The field of Minimalist objects, however, is not an undifferentiated one—Judd also believed that sculpture needed what he called "polarization," some fundamental tension. Here, for example, the uniform boxes, their tops and undersides bare metal, suggest the industrial production line. Meanwhile their fronts and sides have a coat of green lacquer, which, although it is auto paint, is a little unevenly applied, and has a luscious glamour.

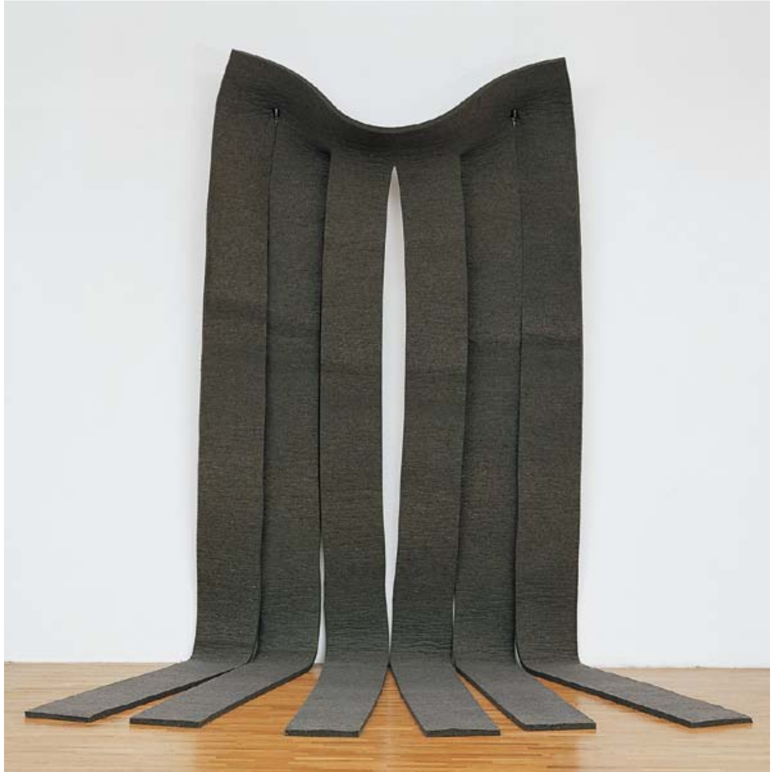
Robert Morris American, born 1931

Untitled. 1969

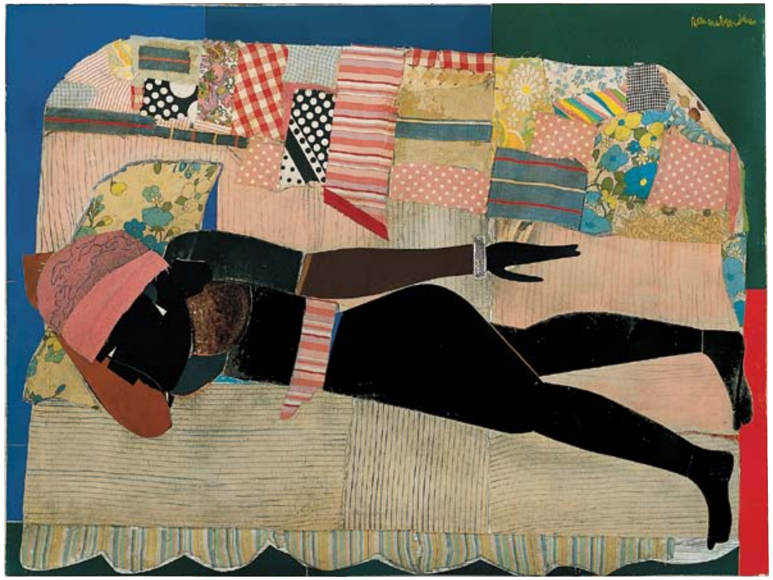
Gray-green felt, draped, 15' ¾" × 6' ½" × 1"
(459.2 × 184.1 × 2.5 cm)
The Gilman Foundation Fund

Although Morris helped to define the principles of Minimal art, writing important articles on the subject, he was also an innovator in tempering the often severe appearance of Minimalism with a new plasticity—a literal softness. In works like this one, he subjected sheets of thick industrial felt to basic formal procedures (a series of parallel cuts, say, followed by hanging, piling, or even dropping in a tangle), then accepted whatever shape they took as the work of art. In this way he left the overall configuration of the work (a configuration he imagined as temporary) to the medium itself. "Random piling, loose stacking, hanging, give passing form to material," Morris wrote. "Chance is accepted and indeterminacy is implied. . . . Disengagement with preconceived enduring forms and orders for things is a positive assertion."

This work emphasizes the process of its making and the qualities of its material. But even if Morris was trying to avoid making form a "prescribed end," as a compositional scheme, the work has both formal elegance and psychological suggestiveness: the order and symmetry of the cut cloth is belied by the graceful sag at the top. In fact, a work produced by rigorous aesthetic theory ends up evoking the human figure. "Felt has anatomical associations," Morris has said, "it relates to the body—it's skinlike."



Romare Bearden American, 1914–1988



Patchwork Quilt. 1970

Cut-and-pasted cloth and paper with synthetic polymer paint on composition board, 35¾ × 47⅞" (90.9 × 121.6 cm)
Blanchette Hooker Rockefeller Fund

"I try to show," Bearden once said, "that when some things are taken out of the usual context and put in the new, they are given an entirely new character." And a patchwork quilt, no matter how rich its pattern, is always made out of remnants cut from their context—out of scraps of outworn cloth now put to a new use and acquiring a nobler quality. Whether faded or frayed, their role in a new design refreshes their meaning and beauty.

Bearden's *Patchwork Quilt*, made up, in part, of exactly such fragments of cloth, has a share in this kind of ennoblement. A student of many cultures, Bearden took Egyptian tomb reliefs as his inspiration for the figure, with its graceful lines, its distinctive left arm and hand, its sideways posture, and its legs parted as if in midstride. Another influence was the centuries-old sculpture of Benin. These bases in high, specifically African aesthetics claim a regal ancestry for Bearden's lounging African American woman. In fact, his work fuses the cosmopolitan and democratic. It melds the distinguished heritage of painting and the domestic practice of quilting (in which there is a distinct African American tradition), analytic art (in the echoes of Cubism) and household decoration, and everyday leisure and utter elegance.

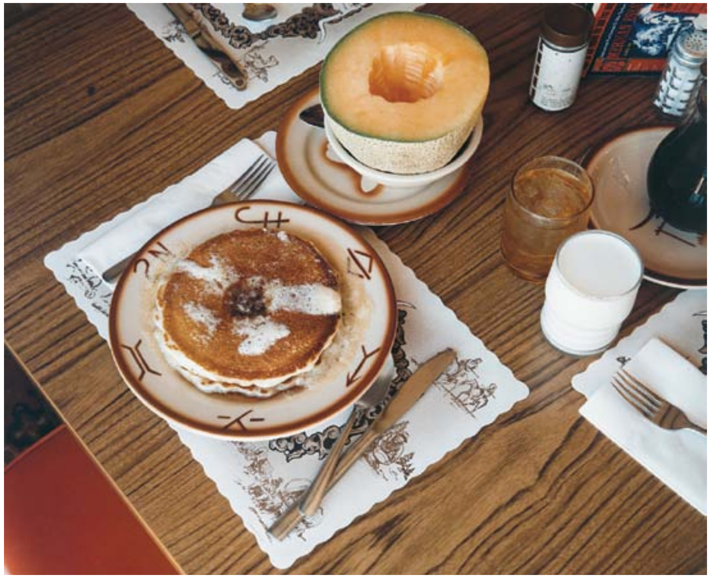
Stephen Shore American, born 1947

Breakfast, Trail's End Restaurant, Kanab, Utah. 1973

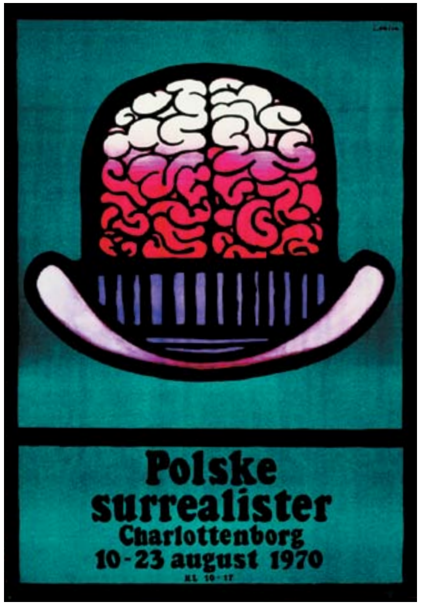
Chromogenic color print, 9 × 11⅛" (22.9 × 28.3 cm)
Purchase

Juicy cantaloupe, a stack of pancakes topped with frothy butter, and a filled-to-the-brim glass of pure white milk are ready to be devoured by the traveler who has stopped for breakfast in a dusty western town. This photograph is part of Shore's series Uncommon Places, which was shot with an 8-by-10-inch view camera during the artist's road trips across the United States. Like photographers before him (Walker Evans, Robert Frank), Shore, a native New Yorker, set out to capture daily life across the country, though in his case, the camera was a device by which to frame unexpected—and often seemingly unremarkable—aspects of the scenery. His focus on small-town street corners, modest store fronts, and other run-of-the-mill sights of the 1970s implies the influence of Conceptual artists of this same period, who often utilized a vernacular style of photography to capture the mundane American landscape.

Unlike some of his predecessors, however, Shore presents his pictures in vibrant color and vivid detail. Snapping a 35mm picture "just like that," he has said, is quite different from setting up the shot with a large-format camera. At Trail's End Restaurant, he stood on a chair to find the view he wanted and later recalled, "the food was cold by the time I took the picture."



Jan Lenica Polish, 1928–2001



Polske Surrealister (Polish Surrealists). 1970

Offset lithograph, 38¼ × 26⅝"
(97.2 × 67.5 cm)
Gift of the designer

This poster for a German exhibition of Polish Surrealist art and design exemplifies the remarkable vitality and international popularity of Polish poster design during the Cold War. Its designer, Jan Lenica, studied architecture and music before turning to graphics. Starting in 1954, he worked in the poster studio at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts, where a group of designers in the circle of Henryk Tomaszewski was developing a sophisticated new visual language characterized by surreal and expressionist tendencies, macabre and often satirical humor, and bold use of color. Their posters had little to do with commercial advertising; in general they were made to commemorate or publicize cultural events—opera, theatre, films, and exhibitions. The Communist state monopolized the commissioning, production, and distribution of such work and exercised censorship, but it also recognized the "soft" propaganda value of poster art in the context of Cold War politics.

From 1963 on, Lenica was based mainly in Paris and Berlin, although he continued to accept commissions from Polish state agencies. This poster's image of pulsating pink brains in a bowler hat is a witty adaptation of imagery by the Belgian artist René Magritte. It indicates the pervasive Polish fascination with Surrealism as well as the characteristic Central European interest in the concealed interior life of the individual.

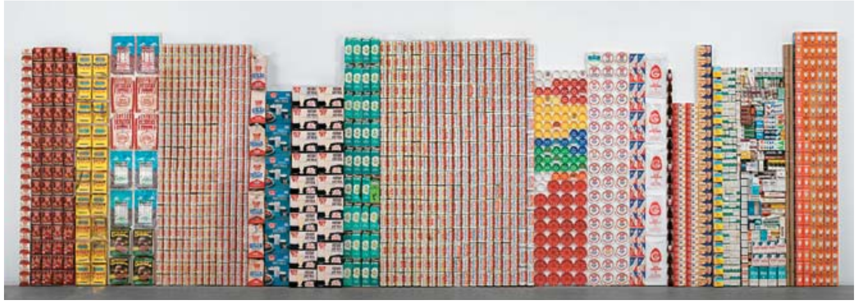
George Maciunas American, born Lithuania, 1931–1978

One Year. 1973–74

Empty containers and packaging, dimensions vary
Publisher: Fluxus Editions, announced 1973
The Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Gift

One Year consists of the empty containers of food and household products that George Maciunas consumed over the course of one year. Tiled together, packages that once contained concentrated frozen orange juice, powdered milk, frozen strawberries, toothpaste, antacid medication, and adhesive bandages, among other items, extend over twenty feet in length. Overall, there is very little diversity among the types of items eaten and used, with large quantities of a single product repeated across the panels. The accumulation offers a glimpse into the American consumer landscape of the early 1970s and highlights the artist's monotonous daily regimen.

Maciunas created this work while living in downtown Manhattan, in the then-gritty, postindustrial area now known as SoHo. He helped regenerate the neighborhood for the burgeoning art community, purchasing cheap buildings from defunct manufacturing companies and converting them into "Fluxhouse cooperatives," which he envisioned as collective living and working environments. Fluxus, a network of artists that emerged in the early 1960s in the United States, Europe, and Japan, encouraged activities facilitating the interpenetration of life and art. As demonstrated by projects such as *One Year*, they recognized the creative potential in cooking, eating, grooming, and cleaning, among many other everyday tasks. Maciunas, like many of his fellow Fluxus artists, employed humor and provocation in his work to question accepted modes of artistic expression and presentation.



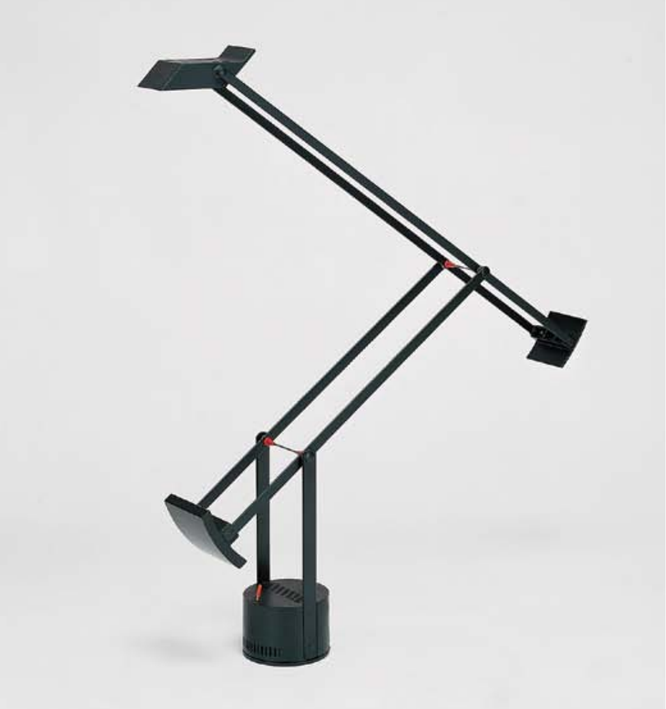
Richard Sapper German, born 1932

Tizio Table Lamp. 1971

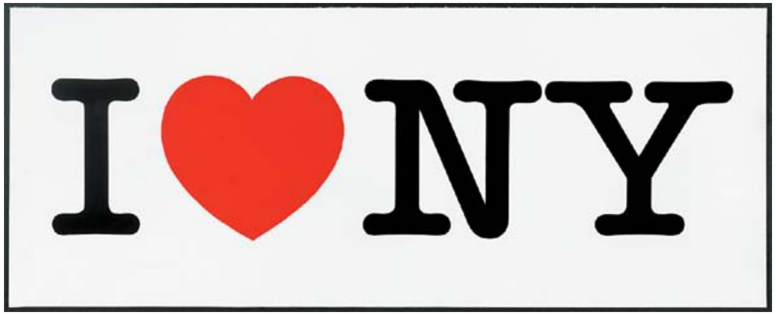
ABS plastic and aluminum, max. 44½ × 42½"
(113 × 108 cm)
Manufacturer: Artemide S.p.A., Italy
Gift of the manufacturer

Sapper claimed that he designed the Tizio lamp because he could not find a work lamp that suited him: “I wanted a small head and long arms; I didn’t want to have to clamp the lamp to the desk because it’s awkward. And I wanted to be able to move it easily.” The designer’s dream lamp, the Tizio is an adjustable table fixture that can be moved in four directions. It swivels smoothly and can be set in any position, its balance ensured by a system of counterweights. The halogen bulb, adjustable to two different light intensities, is fed through the arm from a transformer concealed in the base. In 1972, when the Tizio lamp was first produced, the use of the arms to conduct electricity was an innovation seen in few other lamp designs.

From a formal point of view, the Tizio lamp was revolutionary. Black, angled, minimalist, and mysterious, the lamp achieved its real commercial success in the early 1980s, when its sleek look met the Wall Street boom. Found in the residences of the young and successful and in the offices of executives, the lamp has become an icon of high-tech design.



Milton Glaser American, born 1929



I♥NY. 1976

Ink and collage on board, 6½ × 16½"
(16.5 × 41.9 cm)
Gift of William S. Doyle

In February 1975, the City of New York was in dire straits. With a billion dollar deficit and bankruptcy looming, 300,000 workers freshly laid off, crime on the rise, and, to top everything off, a week-long garbage collection strike, the city was in desperate need of an injection of hope. With this in mind, the New York State Department of Commerce and Deputy Commissioner Bill Doyle commissioned the advertising agency Wells Rich Greene to develop a campaign to boost the city’s image. Many people contributed to shaping it, from Governor Hugh Carey, who first pointed out that, despite everything, people still loved New York, to the Wells Rich Greene associates who created a Broadway-centered pitch, with its infectious musical refrain by Steve Karmen. Milton Glaser, a designer of star quality, was asked to capture the campaign graphically, which he famously did with a quick, instinctive sketch.

I♥NY is a rudimentary rebus with letters set in American Typewriter, a rounded slab serif typeface. Glaser compares it to a declaration of love carved into a tree trunk. Designed pro bono, the wildly successful design has been copied and reinterpreted millions of times all over the world. It has become a lasting icon for New York City and one of the most frequently imitated logos in history, a template for declarations of love for multitudes of people, places, and things. The design was copyrighted after about ten years of open use.

I♥NY used with permission of the NYS Dept. of Economic Development.

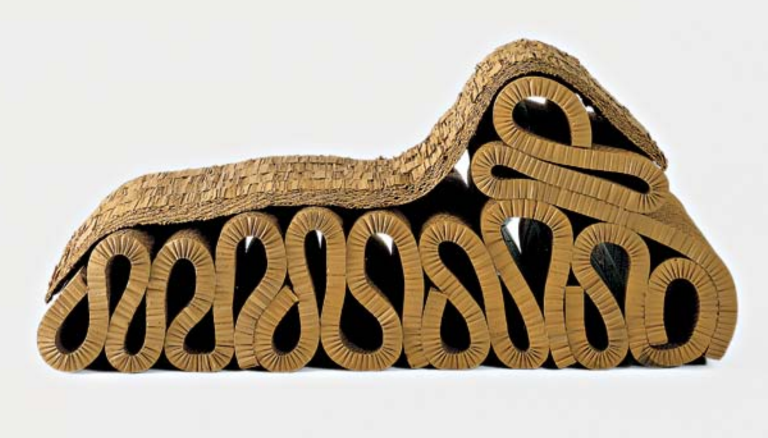
Frank O. Gehry American, born Canada 1929

Bubbles Chaise Longue. 1987

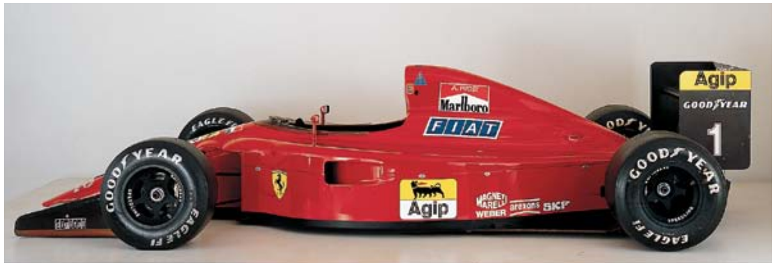
Corrugated cardboard with fire-retardant coating,
35" × 28½" × 6' 1" (88.9 × 72.4 × 185.4 cm)
Manufacturer: New City Editions, U.S.A.
Kenneth Walker Fund

Gehry worked with an unexpected, throwaway material—corrugated cardboard—in two series of surprisingly sturdy and humorous home furnishings. The instant success of the first series, Easy Edges, introduced in 1972, earned him national recognition. Gehry conceived its cardboard tables, chairs, bed frames, rocking chairs, and other items to suit the homes of young as well as old, of urban sophisticates as well as country dwellers. The Bubbles Chaise Longue belongs to Experimental Edges, the second series, which was introduced in 1979. These objects were intended to be artworks, yet they are sturdy enough for regular use. As the cardboard wears, it begins to appear suedelike and soft. Gehry's material lends itself to the curving form of this chair; its rollicking folds are, perhaps, a play on the corrugations themselves.

Heavily marketed and intentionally inexpensive, this furniture epitomized Gehry's interest in promoting affordable good design. The choice of humble cardboard for Bubbles reflects his broad interest in using industrial, commercial, and utilitarian materials. An award-winning architect, Gehry has worked with exposed chainlink fencing, corrugated metal, and plywood in concurrent architectural projects. In both the furniture series and the buildings, he has given value to seemingly worthless materials by using them to create lasting designs.



John Barnard British, born 1946
Ferrari S.p.A. Established 1946



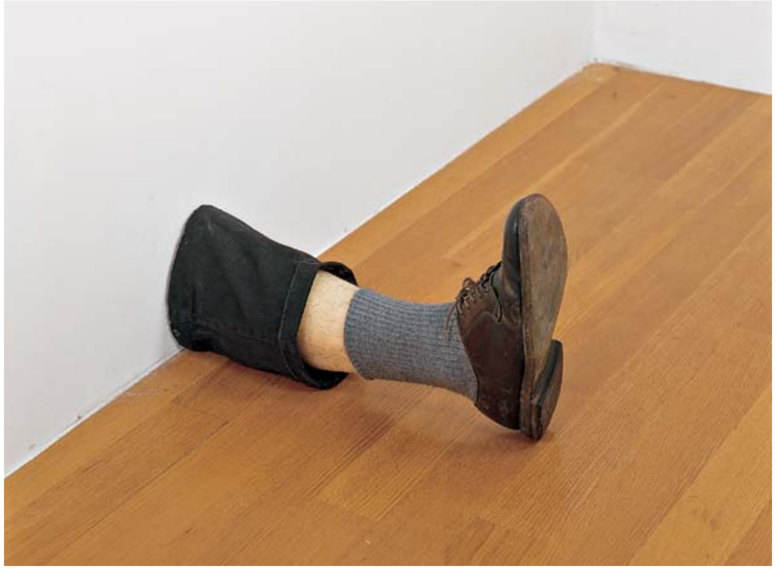
Formula 1 Racing Car 641/2.
1990

Body materials: composite with monocoque chassis in honeycomb with carbon fibers and Kevlar, 40½" × 7' × 14' 8½" (102.9 × 213.4 × 448.3 cm)
Manufacturer: Ferrari S.p.A., Italy
Gift of the manufacturer

This Formula 1 Racing Car—with an exterior body designed by Barnard and interior chassis engineered and designed by the Ferrari company—clearly illustrates the modernist dictum "form follows function." The shape of its exterior has been determined by the laws of physics and aerodynamics, and falls within the rules and guidelines set up by the governing body of the sport of automobile racing. The sleek and sculptural silhouette of this Ferrari allows air to pass over the body with minimal drag and maximal down-force, which ensures precision handling even at speeds in excess of two hundred miles per hour.

High-performance racing cars represent the ultimate achievement of one of the world's largest industries. Painstakingly engineered to go faster, handle better, and stop more quickly than any other kind of automobile, they are the most technologically rational and complex type of motorcar produced. Experimentation and innovation in design, stimulated by the desire to win, are constants in the ongoing quest for the optimal racing machine.

Robert Gober American, born 1954



Untitled. 1989–90

Beeswax, cotton, leather, human hair, and wood, 11⅜ × 7¾ × 20" (28.9 × 19.7 × 50.8 cm)
Gift of the Dannheisser Foundation

As a copy of a man's leg and foot, this work is strikingly real: its fleshy waxen skin, clad in leather shoe and in cotton pant and sock, sprouts actual human hair. Such exactitude becomes unsettling and macabre, as the leg's placement suggests that the rest of the body to which it belongs is behind the wall. For some, the work may also have a subtle fetishistic eroticism, inasmuch as it focuses on a narrow band of the body where men routinely and unself-consciously show their nakedness.

Many of the artists who emerged alongside Gober in the 1980s were interested in modern communications media or in quoting from art history. Gober, by contrast, insists on the handmade quality of his sculpture, and although his works can remind us of earlier art (this piece, for example, may recall the body fragments in the sculpture of Auguste Rodin), their disturbing mood is entirely contemporary.

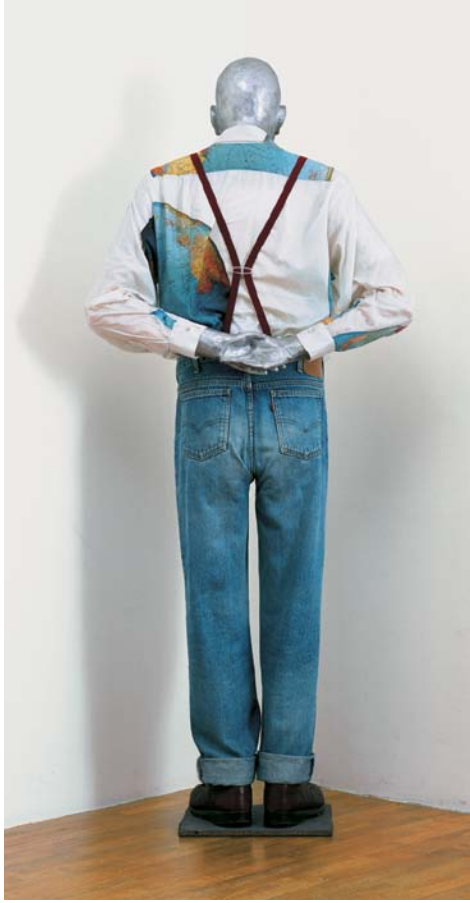
Martin Kippenberger German, 1953–1997

Martin, Stand in the Corner and Be Ashamed of Yourself. 1990

Cast aluminum, clothing, and iron plate, 71½ × 29½ × 13½" (181.6 × 74.9 × 34.3 cm)
Blanchette Hooker Rockefeller Fund Bequest, Anna Marie and Robert F. Shapiro, Jerry I. Speyer, and Michael and Judy Ovitz Funds

Kippenberger cultivated his reputation as the bad boy of German art in the 1980s, acting deliberately and often outrageously provocative in both his art and his personal behavior. With this sculpture he reaps what he has sown, placing himself in a position all naughty schoolchildren know well: in the corner, alone with his enforced remorse. A particularly vicious article by a German art critic served as the catalyst for this and several other mock-apologetic Martin-in-the-corner sculptures. However, the work's resonance goes far beyond the specific occasion, deftly setting into a contemporary vernacular the Romantic identification of the artist as outcast, whether genius, prophet, beggar, or madman.

Each work in this series is uniquely made and clothed, and the faces and hands are cast in aluminum from molds of the artist's own body. While the other figures are dressed more formally, the Martin in this sculpture (commissioned by MoMA) wears Levi's jeans and a shirt with a globe on it. Kippenberger chose the shirt as a nod to MoMA's international role as a center of modern art. Its presence in the galleries is a witty upending of the museum's traditional glorification of the artist. Kippenberger zeros in on a trade secret: for contemporary museum officials, artists and the challenges their works present can be as vexatious as they are beloved.



Clint Eastwood American, born 1930

Unforgiven. 1992

35mm film, color, sound, 130 minutes
Gift of the artist and Warner Bros.
Clint Eastwood

A Western that is at once moody and ambivalent, comical and cruel, *Unforgiven* follows its unlikely, unheroic avengers across a broad, pristine landscape under bright skies to a frontier town where legend and death by violence are equally ridiculed. In the film, the aging Will Munny (Clint Eastwood) pleads with his former partner Ned Logan (Morgan Freeman) to come back just one more time to kill a man who slashed a prostitute. Although their task is dishonorable, their success will ensure them a peaceful old age. Bluffing his way as the third partner is a rookie outlaw (Jaimz Woolvett), who survives the unfolding events and learns a painful moral truth.

Also appearing in the film is a bogus legend, English Bob (Richard Harris), who is no verbal match for the acid-tongued sheriff (Gene Hackman). The mocking tone of the dialogue provides a counterpoint to the Western genre's rhythms of hit, run, and destroy. The idea that men who live by violence can also be brilliantly funny sharpens director Eastwood's steady gaze. With this film, which instills a new morality into the tradition of the Western, Eastwood single-handedly revived the genre.

An actor turned director, Eastwood depicts the ambivalence of his own screen characters in understated, spare terms, set against the stunning beauty of the deep landscape and culminating in fluid action scenes that end in loss and death. In this film violence is itself critiqued; there is no joyful ending for the traditional code of the West.

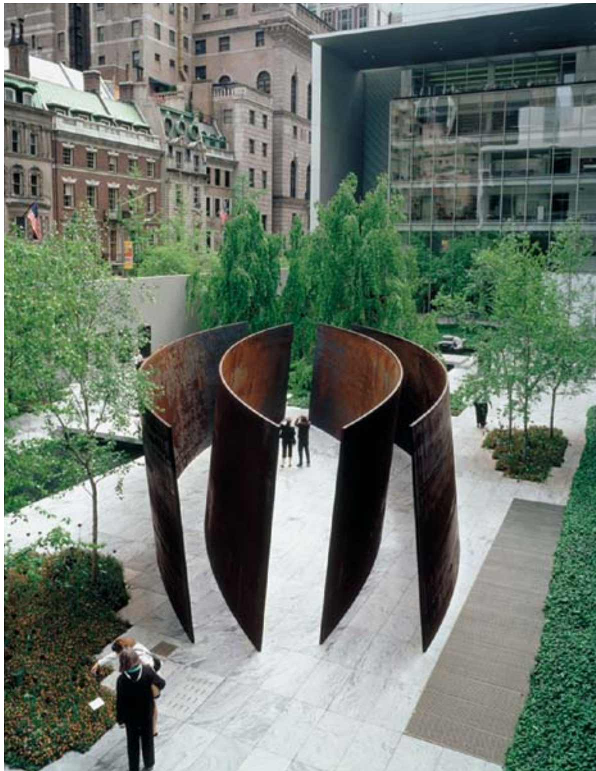
Richard Serra American, born 1939

Intersection II. 1992–1993

Cor-Ten steel, four plates, each 13' 1½" × 55' 9⅜" × 2" (400 × 1700 × 5 cm).
Gift of Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder

Slightly younger than the Minimalist artists, Serra has intensified a quality of their work—a heightening of the viewer's physical self-awareness in relation to the art object. In early works of Serra's, heavy metal slabs stood in precarious balance; any close look at them was a charged affair. *Intersection II*, similarly, sensitizes its visitors, inviting them under and between its massive walls—which, they will find, exert an enormous psychic pressure.

That pressure arises from the weight, height, and leaning angles of the walls, and from their variously dark and rusted surfaces. It is tempered by the elegant precision of their lines and the satisfying logic of their arrangement. The slopes and placements of the great steel curves produce two outer spaces that invert each other at floor and ceiling, one being wide where the other is narrow. Meanwhile the central space is a regular yet biased ellipse. Whether these spaces are experienced as intimate or threateningly claustrophobic, what Serra has said of his earlier work applies: "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."



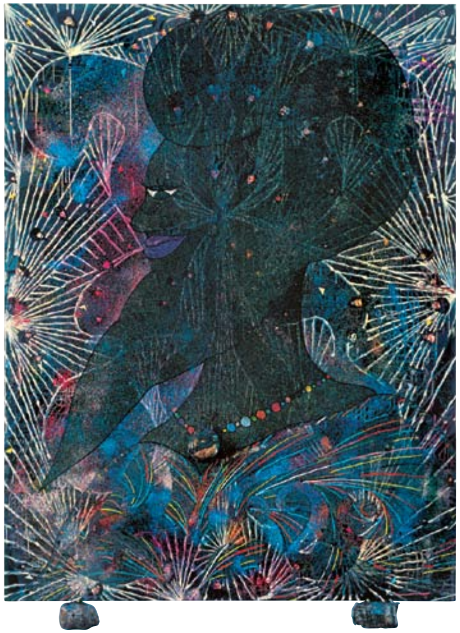
Chris Ofili British, born 1968

Prince amongst Thieves. 1999

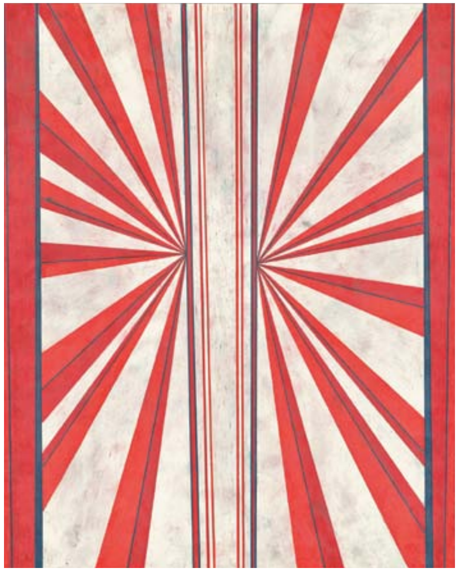
Oil, paper collage, glitter, resin,
map pins, and elephant dung on linen,
8 × 6' (243.8 × 182.8 cm)
Mimi and Peter Haas Fund

Ofili's intensely worked, vibrant paintings combine a wide range of referents, from African burlesque to Western popular culture. Using a cut-and-mix technique and repetitive patterning, the works evoke the anarchic rhythm of hip-hop lyrics and performance. *Prince amongst Thieves* features the caricatured yet regal profile of a bemused man of African descent, set against a densely ornate background dotted with countless minute collages of the heads of illustrious black figures. The work's shimmering, psychedelic surface of sprayed pigment, synthetic polymer paint, glitter, elephant dung, and splashes of translucent resin produces a ritualistic effect that parodies stereotypes of black culture while celebrating difference. The lacquered clumps of elephant dung on which the canvas rests have become a signature for Ofili, and they confer on the painting a sculptural and perhaps even totemic presence, invoking African tribal art, with which Ofili (who is of Nigerian descent) became familiar during a visit to Zimbabwe, in 1992.

The artist uses elephant droppings procured from the London Zoo, thereby probing his cultural heritage and urban experience in ways that confound identity typecasting. Ofili's mix of hybrid sources culled from popular magazines, music, folk art, and the tough streets around his Kings Cross studio, in London, epitomizes a new form of counterculture that subtly reworks Western perceptions of blackness.



Mark Grotjahn American, born 1968

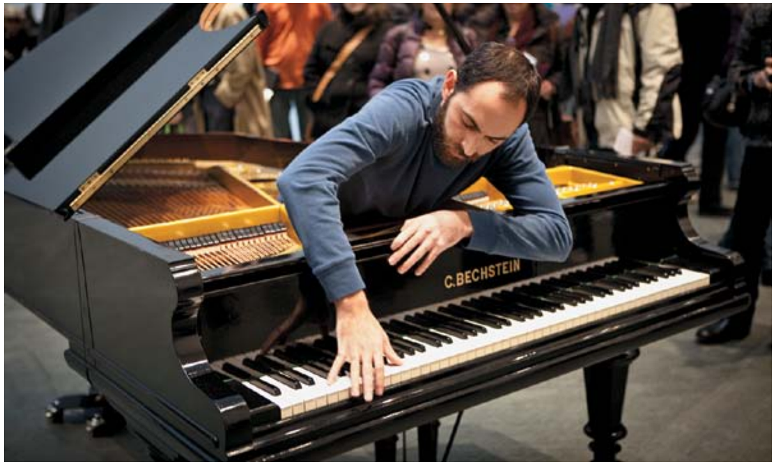


Untitled (Red Butterfly 112). 2002

Colored pencil on paper,
24 × 19" (61 × 48.3 cm)
The Judith Rothschild Foundation Contemporary Drawings Collection Gift

Mark Grotjahn's devotion to his distinctive format recalls the belief of early twentieth-century proponents of abstraction in the universal nature of their artistic language. His sense of the expressive possibilities of abstraction is demonstrated by his exploration of his signature motif, a butterfly form. In *Untitled (Red Butterfly 112)*, radiating lines of color in red, white and blue emerge from two distinct vertical vanishing points to form flanking wings, which are divided and bordered by additional bands of colored lines. Grotjahn has maintained this general format for his Butterfly series and has created endless possibilities for this particular theme, varying color, line, and shape. In each drawing he commits to a limited but vibrant palette, covering the paper with controlled strokes of colored pencil in order to investigate perspective. His process is more intuitive than the works' consistent patterns may imply, as he uses the naked eye rather than a ruler or straightedge to determine the converging points of the wings' bands of color.

Jennifer Allora American, born 1974
Guillermo Calzadilla Cuban, born 1971



Stop, Repair, Prepare: Variations on Ode to Joy for a Prepared Piano No. 1. 2008

Prepared Bechstein Piano, 40 × 67 × 84" (101.6 × 170.2 × 213.4 cm), performance duration 25 min.
Gift of the Julia Stoschek Foundation, Düsseldorf
Pianist Amir Khosrowpour

Combining sculpture and performance, *Stop, Repair, Prepare: Variations on Ode to Joy for a Prepared Piano* involves a musician performing part of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony while standing up through a hole carved into the center of a grand piano. From his or her position within the circular gap in the instrument, the pianist leans out over the keyboard to play—upside down and backwards—the famous fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, usually referred to as the "Ode to Joy." The pianist walks while (s)he plays, propelling the instrument, which is mounted on wheels, slowly through the space.

What is heard in this piece conceived by the artist duo Allora & Calzadilla is a structurally incomplete version of the ode—the hole in the piano renders two octaves inoperative. The gap fundamentally changes the player/instrument dynamic as well as the signature melody, emphasizing the contradictions and ambiguities of a piece of music that has long been invoked as a symbol of humanist values and national pride by governments with widely divergent political agendas.

"We're asking the musicians to reinvent their skills, or to use their skills to make new gestures or forms that are not part of their standard vocabulary," the artists say. "And this idea of re-skilling doesn't end with the performer. The public is asked to re-skill its way of viewing." In this way Allora & Calzadilla are subverting the traditional and expected roles of the artist and the public.

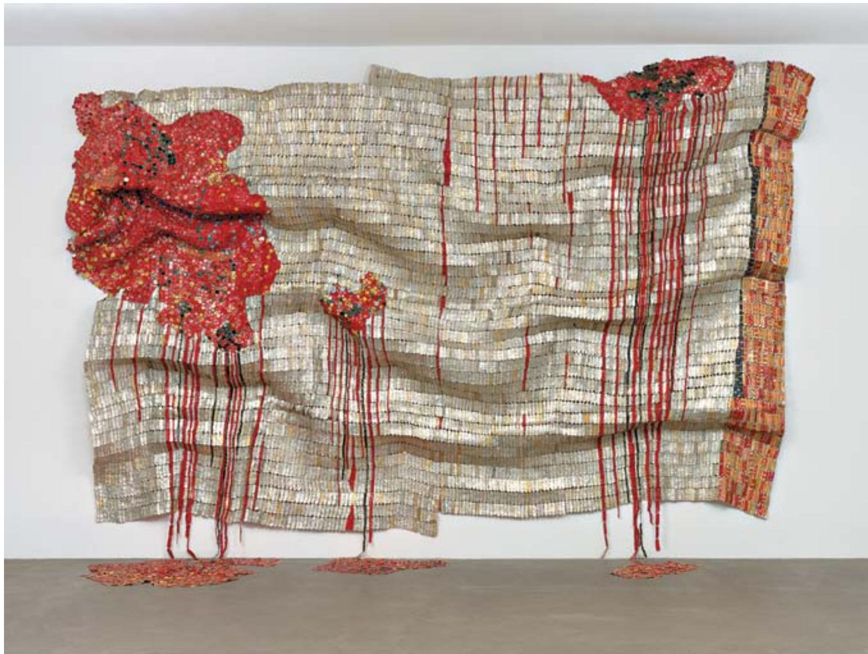
El Anatsui Ghanaian, born 1944

Bleeding Takari II. 2007

Aluminum and copper wire
12' 11" × 18' 11" (393.7 × 576.6 cm)
Gift of Donald L. Bryant, Jr. and Jerry Speyer

El Anatsui's large-scale tapestries are made of used bottle caps and foil seals from liquor bottles. The artist connects these materials with copper wire, then drapes the resulting "fabric" in horizontal folds and hangs it on the wall. Anatsui first achieved international recognition in the 1990s for his work in wood and ceramics. He began using discarded bottle caps at the end of that decade, attracted to them partly for the way their bent forms retain traces of the hands that pried them off and cast them away. Linked together, the bottle caps and foil seals allude to the importance of liquor as an international trade commodity in colonial and post-colonial Africa.

The red portions of the metallic surface of *Bleeding Takari II* appear to soak into the "cloth" and drip onto the floor like blood. Yet the violence implied need not be seen as entirely destructive. Regeneration, Anatsui says, "comes with blood as well, like childbirth," and brokenness and decay can also be "a condition for new growth, rebirth." Anatsui uses the term "Takari" freely to designate, in his words, "any thing, person, object, country, even continent." Thus the "bleeding" of the title, might describe the condition of an individual, a group, or all living things.



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