

Art Styles: A Basic Introduction to Art History

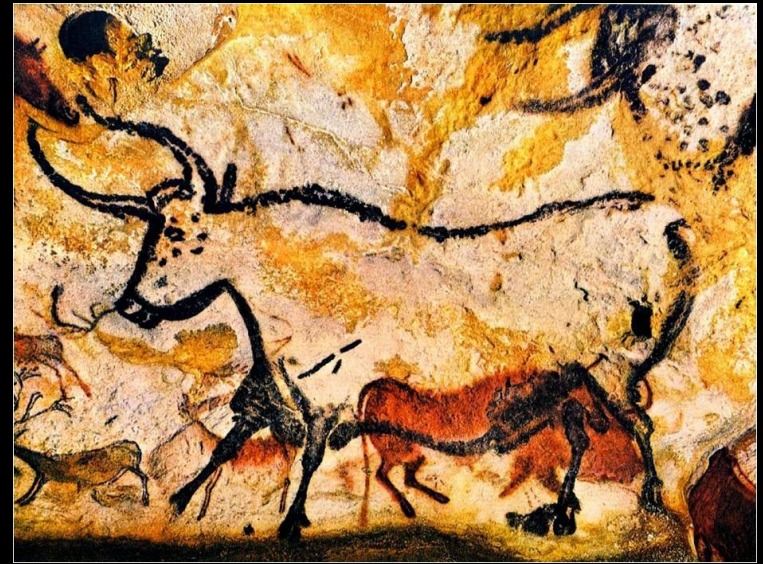
Art acts as a time capsule, allowing us to see how artists viewed the world, what was valued, and what technologies were available. Artists visually communicate history.

Style is the distinctive manner that groups work together into related categories, often by visual appearance. In art, it is often divided into the general style of a period, country or cultural group, group of artists or art movement, and the individual style of the artist within that group style.

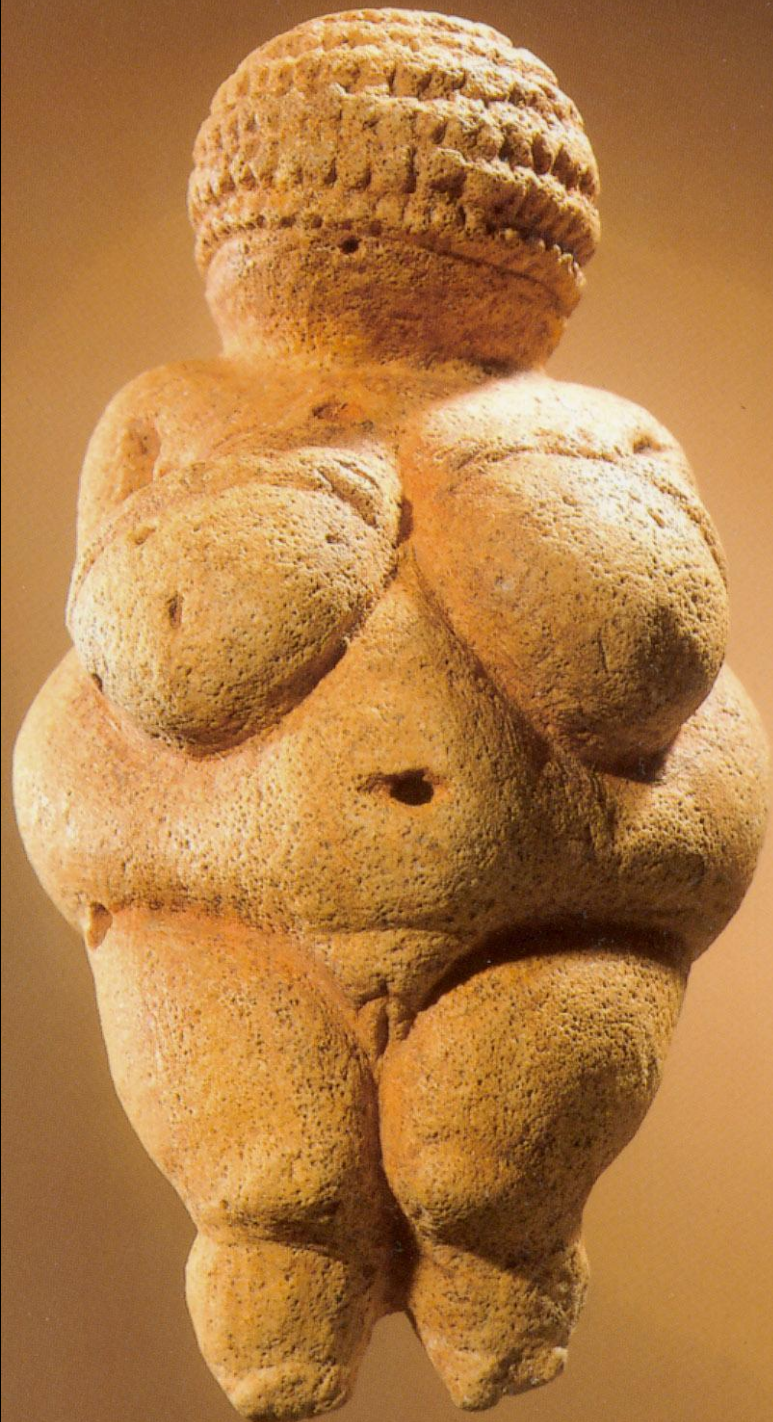
ANCIENT ART:

30,000 BC to 2,000 BC

The earliest found works of art were cave drawings. These were made on cave walls with blown pigment or burned animal bones.



Early works of art shared common themes of food, fertility, basic human figures, and animals (especially hunting).



“Venus of Willendorf” (left)

4.4” high, made between 28,000 and 25,000 BCE

- *Represents a mother goddess figure
- *Symbol of fertility; lacks facial features (IDENTITY)
- *Some believe that this type of sculpture was a self-portrait, noting that the sculptors would not have owned mirrors- but others say that water pools and puddles would have been natural mirrors.

Below: other examples of an ancient figure and a mask, common in ancient art. Often used in ceremonies or everyday purposes.



ART STYLES

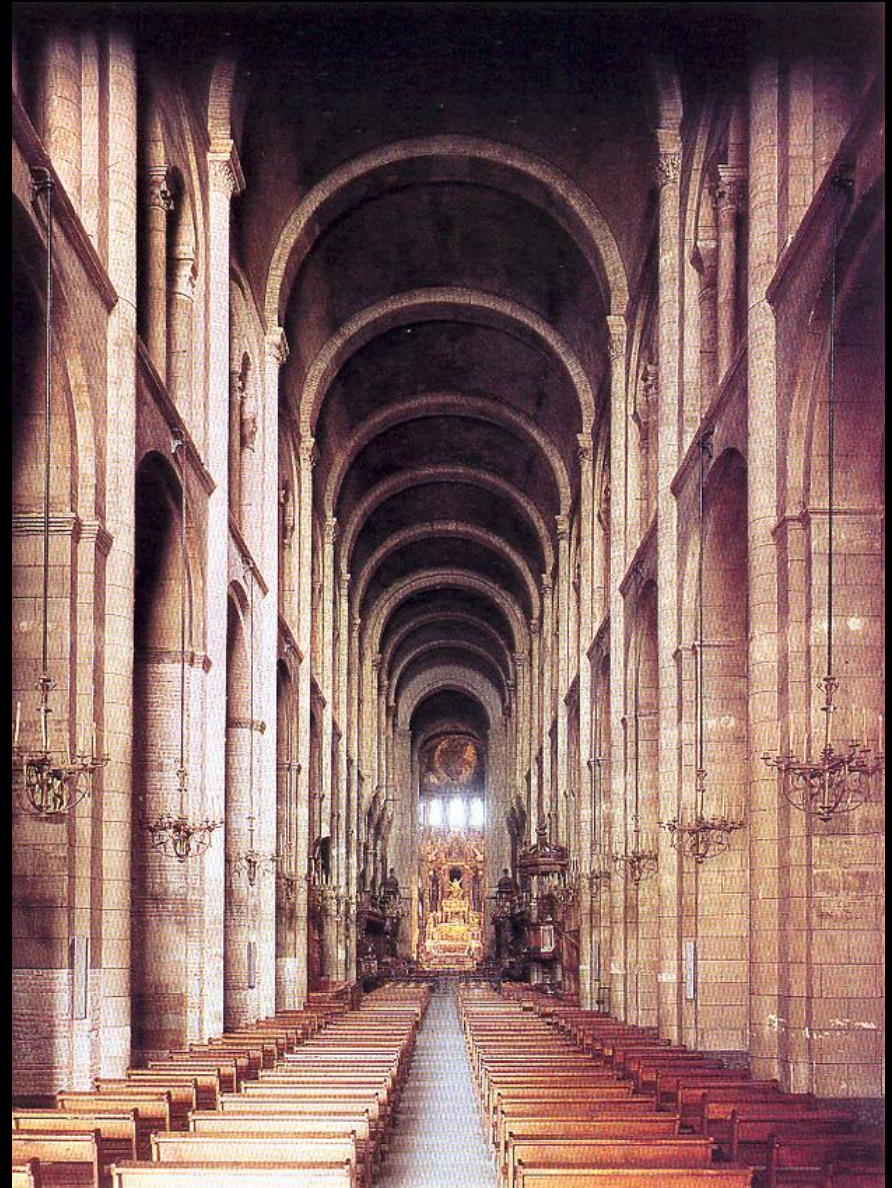
There are a seemingly infinite number of styles of art. This is a basic list of what we'll cover, and these styles are based in Europe and America.

It is important to note that most styles of art were rejected in their beginnings; additionally, most art styles were formed in reaction to something in art, politics, or culture at the time.

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10. CUBISM [1907-1911]
11. DADA [1916 – 1922]
12. SURREALISM [French 1920s beginnings]
13. EXPRESSIONISM [German, early 20th C]
14. ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM – 1946
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16. MINIMALISM [American, 1960s-1970s]
17. PHOTO REALISM [American, late 60s-early 70s]



Romanesque: semi-circular arches, massive thick walls, sturdy piers, few windows, decorative arcade [*succession of arches*] with “flat” body-less figures.



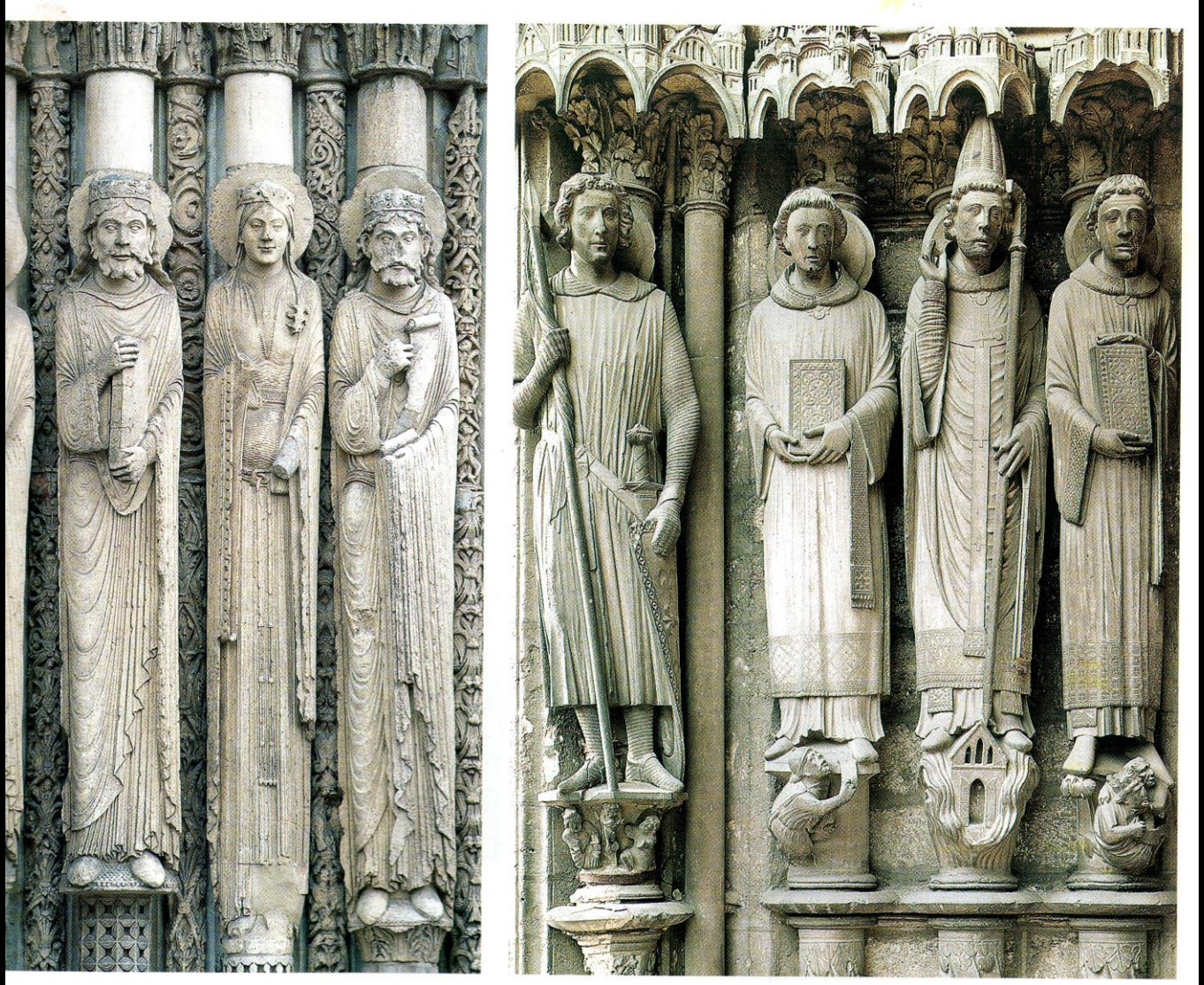


Gothic: French: Chartres Cathedral [top], Ornate, linear, vertical elements that force the eye upward toward the heavens, FLYING BUTTRESSES [*an external support*], lots of windows, light filled interior.

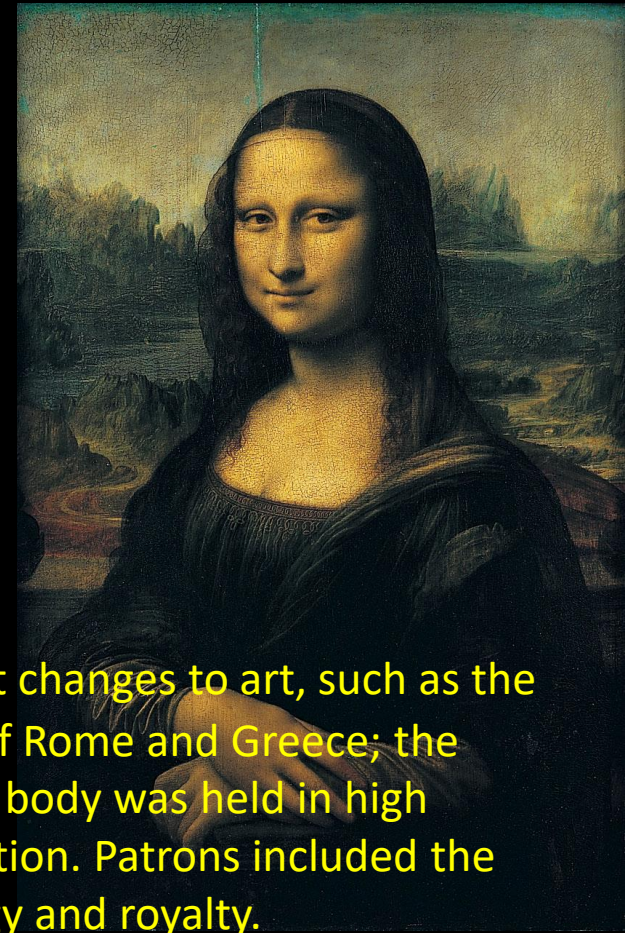
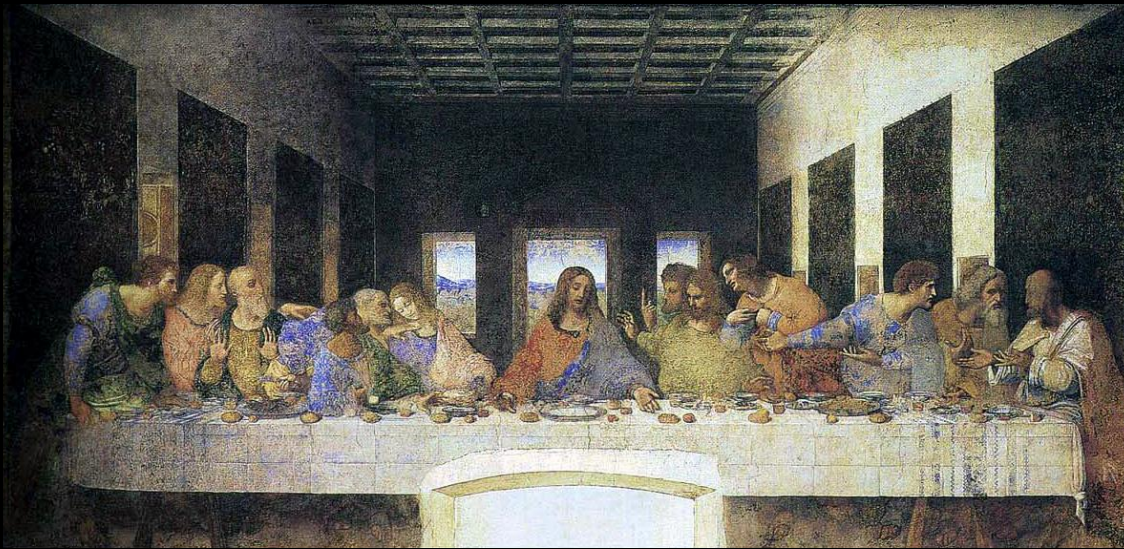
RIGHT: Sainte-Chapelle, private chapel for Louis IX, 1239, pointed arches, groin vault over nave [central isle], ribs, allowing for great height & thin walls of glass.



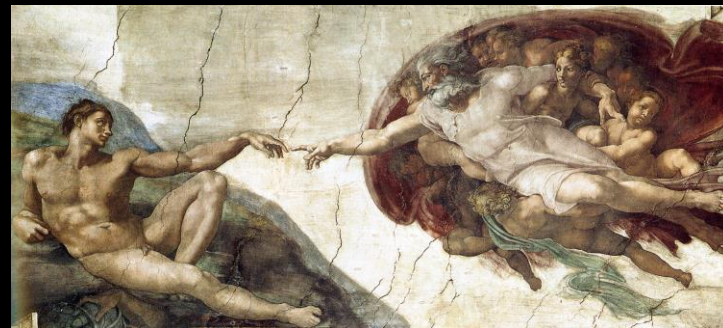
Romanesque vs. Gothic



Romanesque on left [12th century], Gothic on right [13th century] [both on façade of Chartres Cathedral]: note differences in projection [relief], human qualities vs. stiff, bodiless images.



Renaissance: brought vast changes to art, such as the return to the Classical ideals of Rome and Greece; the return of the nude figure. The body was held in high esteem as God's greatest creation. Patrons included the rich and famous, not just clergy and royalty.





Baroque: follows the Renaissance. It differs in that Renaissance stressed calm and reason, while Baroque is full of emotion, energy, and movement. It was dynamic and theatrical.



CLASSICISM is the 16-17th century revival of the Classical Greek Period, 480-323 BC.

It held a high regard for antiquity [classics of Greece & Rome], and classic philosophy in literature, art, music, & architecture.



*NOTE: Classical Period
[480-350 B.C.E.]
vs. Neoclassic [late 1700s –
early 1800s in the West]
vs. classicism [general
term meaning any art
that follows those tenants:
order, balance, harmony &
restraint]*



Right: Gericault,
French Romantic
Painter

1819

Romanticism:

Second half of the 18th century in Europe. Strong emotion, rebelling against the “Age of Reason” of the 19th century. It focuses on emotion, intuition, individual experience, and imagination.

Common subject material includes awe-inspiring landscapes; picturesque ruins; extreme human events; struggle for Liberty; scenes of exotic cultures [exotic to European sensibilities].



Bottom: Thomas Cole, American
Romantic painter

1836



Above: Caspar David Friedrich, German Romantic Painter, early 19th C.



Daumier, *Rue Transnonain*,
1834, French

Realism was the first art movement to be born in the 19th century.

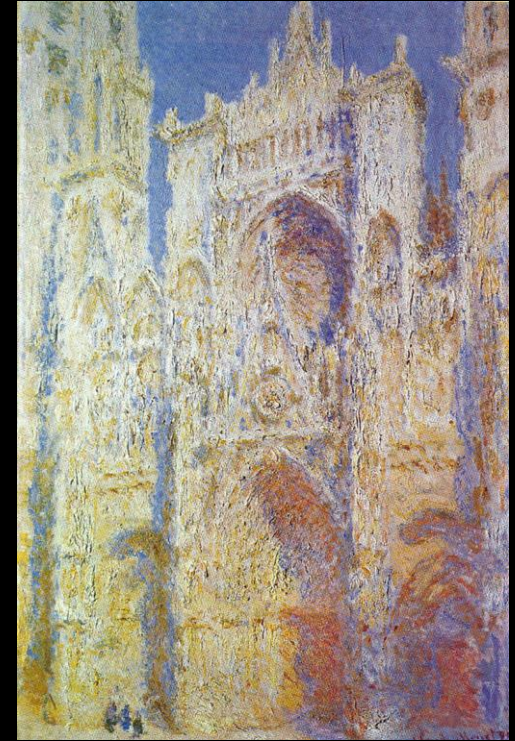
It was a reaction against Neo-Classicism and Romanticism: Subject matter - the everyday and ordinary vs. historic, exotic or heroic.

Trompe l'oeil: “to fool the eye”

REALISM -19th Century



Eakins, *Biglin Bros. Racing*,
1874, American



Impressionism

Above: Pierre-Auguste Renoir

Right: Claude Monet

19th Century French. CHARACTERISTICS: small, thin, visible brush strokes; open composition; emphasis on accurate depiction of the effects of light; ordinary subject matter.



Futurism: artistic and **social** movement originating in Italy, early 20th century. It was a celebration of industrialization and the Machine Age. It was one of the most politicized art movements, and included manifestos. Artists held a belief in propelled change in Italy.

Characteristics: passionate loathing for anything old, especially artistic or political traditions; admiration for speed, technology, industry, youth.



Giacomo Balla, Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash, 1912, oil on canvas



Umberto Boccioni, Unique Forms of Continuity in Space, 1913



Left: Pablo Picasso, *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J. Version O)*, 1907. Considered the first cubist work. Depicts five prostitutes composed of flat, splintered planes rather than rounded figures; space comes forward in shards; two of the women have masks for heads.



Right: Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2*

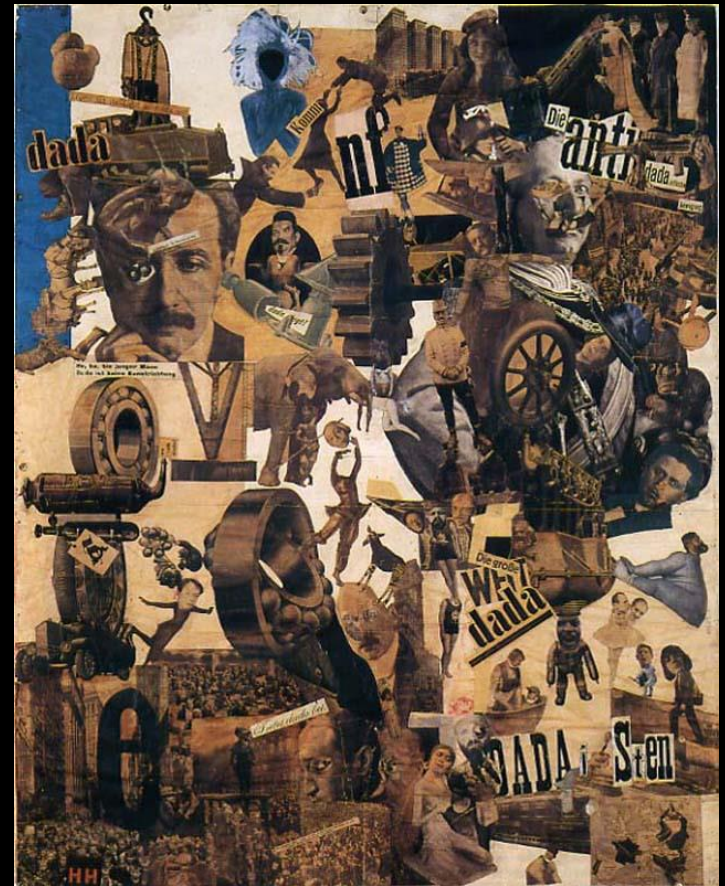
Cubism

20th Century avant-garde art movement pioneered by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque.

Objects are broken up, analyzed, and reassembled in an abstracted form. They were depicted from multiple viewpoints to represent the subject in greater context.

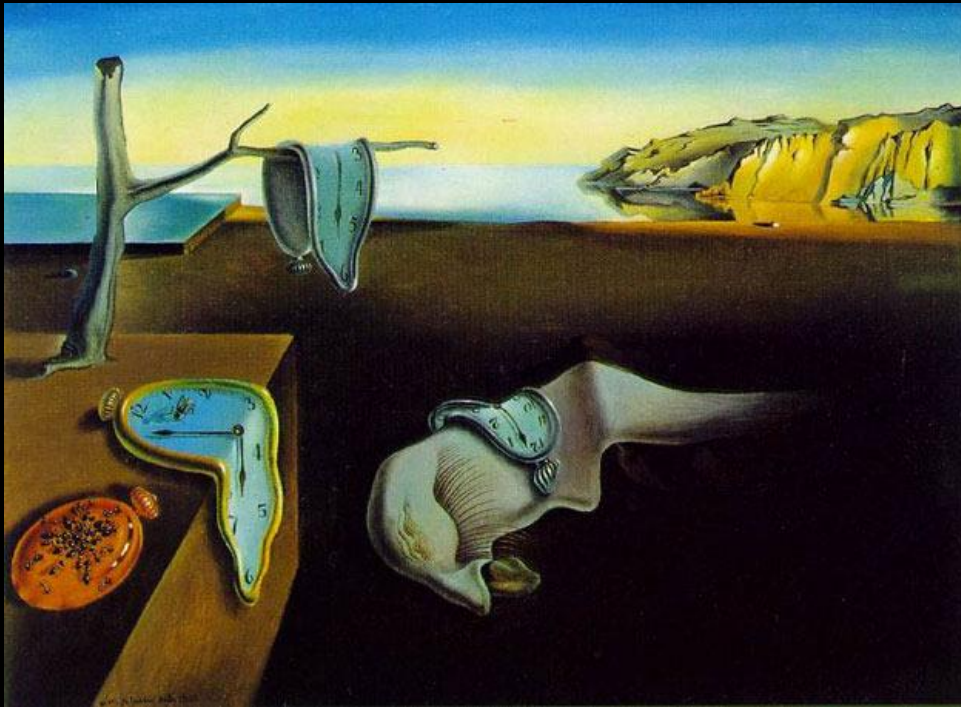
Influences were African masks and art, and Iberian sculpture.

Duchamp, *Fountain*, 1917



Hannah Hoch, *Cut with a Kitchen Knife Dada through the Last Weimar Beer Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany* (1919): collage. Critique of German culture by literally slicing apart its imagery and reassembling it into vivid, disjointed, emotional depictions of modern life. The title refers to the decadence, corruption, and sexism of pre-war German culture.

DADA, or Dadaism: cultural movement starting in Switzerland during WWI, peaking in 1922. Dada stood for what's NOT art being art...a belief that capitalism and the bourgeois led people into war: Dada rejected logic and embraced chaos and irrationality.

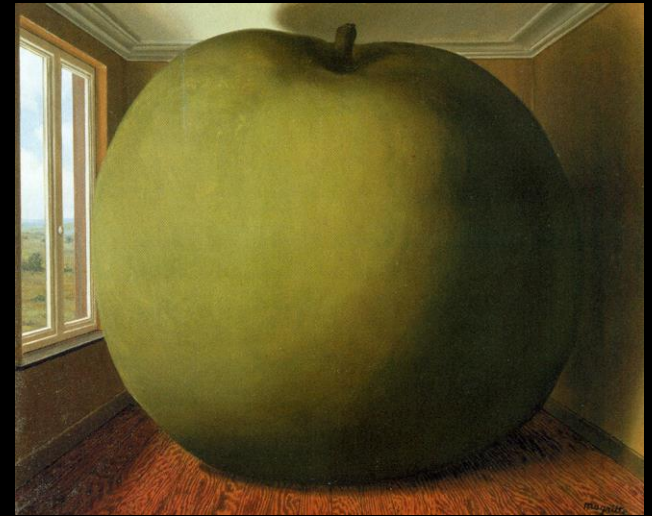


Dali

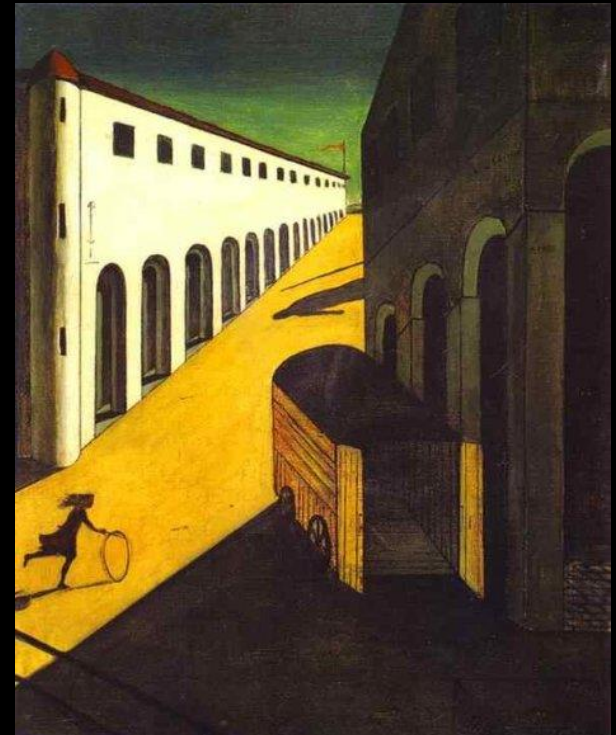
Surrealism: Early 1920s: a cultural movement developed from DADA.

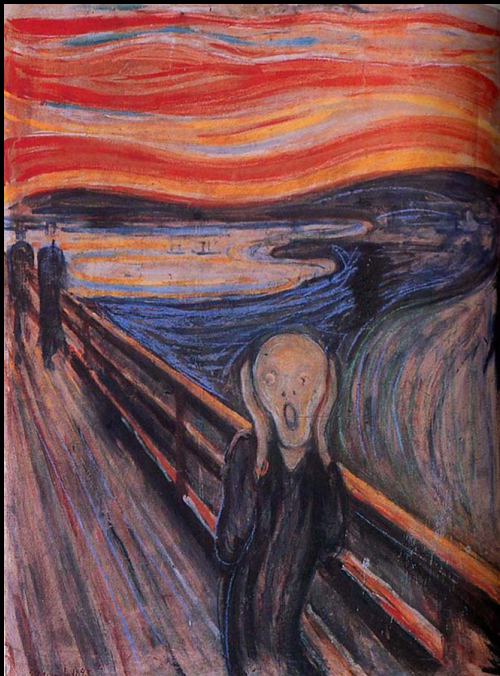
Subject matter: the element of surprise, bizarre, imaginary, weird, sometimes frightening subject matter!

Georgio de Chirico



Magritte



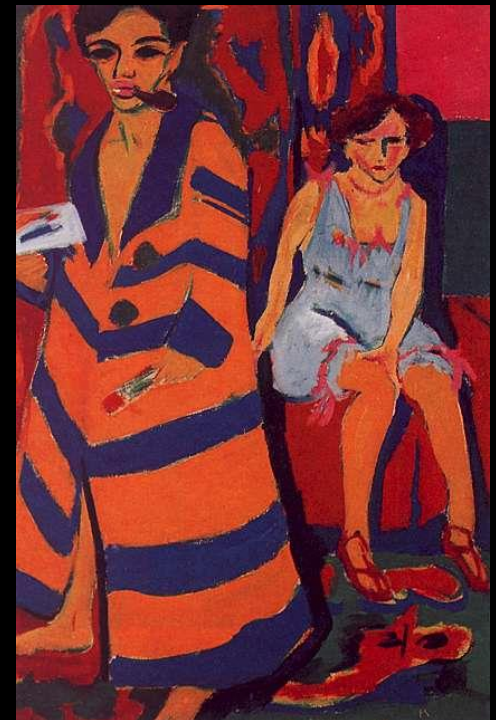


Munch,
German, 1895



Kollwitz,
Death & The
Mother

Ernst Kirchner, German,
1910



Expressionism: a trend in Europe born from Fauvism (termed by critics, “wild beasts:”).

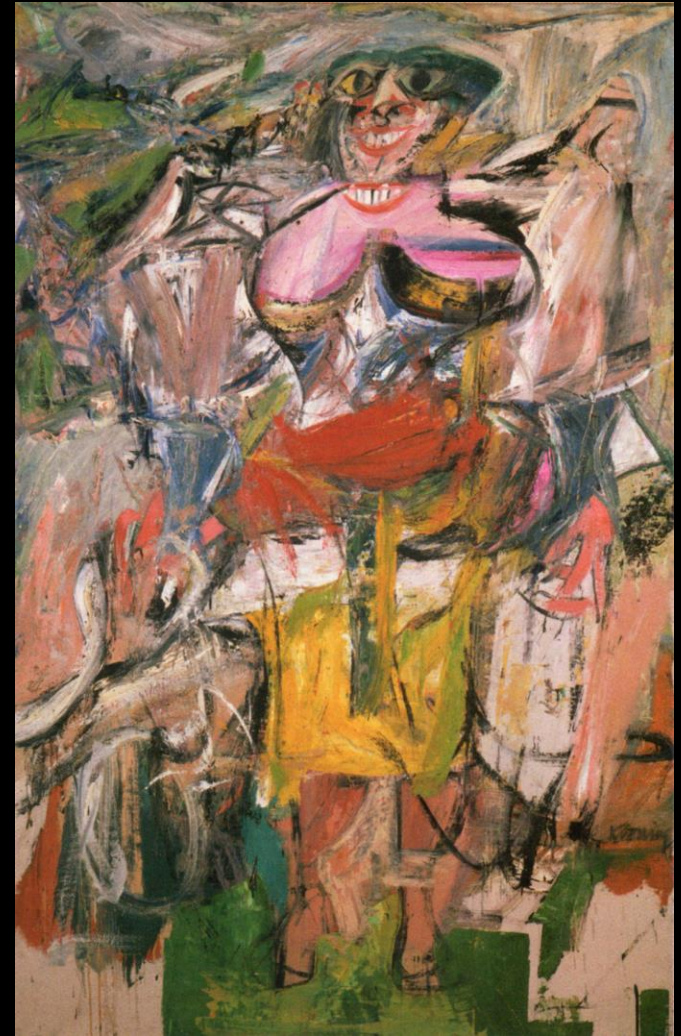
Artists believed that the fundamental purpose of art was to express their intense feelings toward the world. The artists subjective feelings take precedence over objective observation.

Pollock, 1950s: “action paintings”

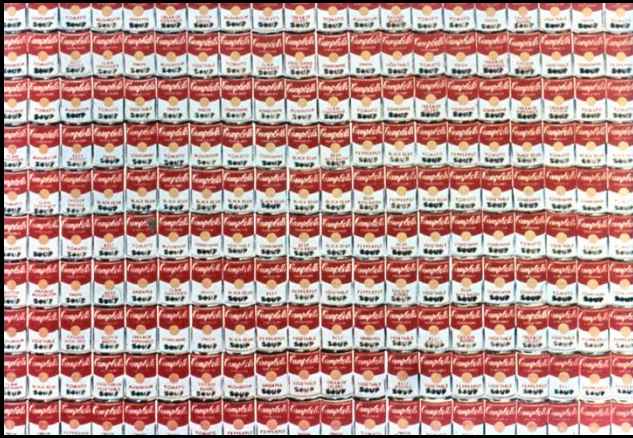


Abstract Expressionism: American, post-WWII. Developed in New York in the 1940's. First American movement that achieved international influence.

Combined the emotional intensity and self-denial of German Expressionists with the anti-figurative aesthetic of Futurism & Cubism.



De Kooning,
*Woman &
Bicycle*,
1953



Oldenburg (right)



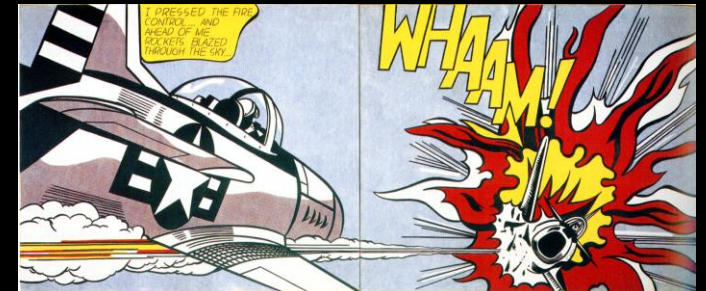
Warhol (above and right)

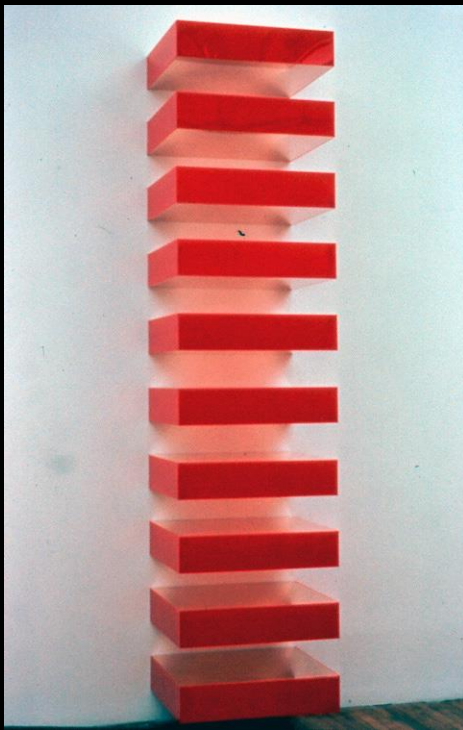


POP Art: mid-1950s in Britain,
and late-1950s in America.

Pop art focused on the overfamiliar objects of daily life to give them new meaning as visual entities. Subject matter are objects of mass-production, including the concept of a mass-produced personality (aka Marilyn).

Lichtenstein, 1960s





Donald Judd, 1969

Minimalism - art is stripped down to its most fundamental features.

Post WWII: a reaction against Abstract Expressionism and, a bridge to postmodern art practices. Minimalist artists often favored industrial materials, and sculpture was often placed on the floor or stuck to a wall.

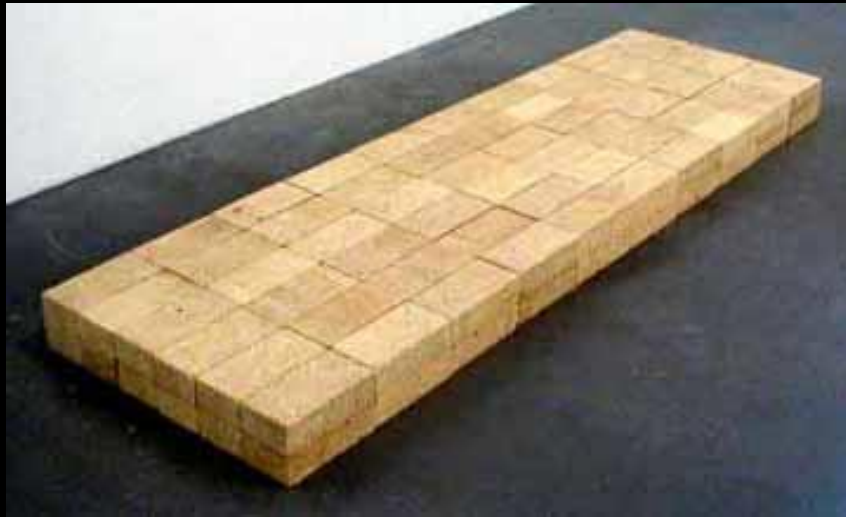
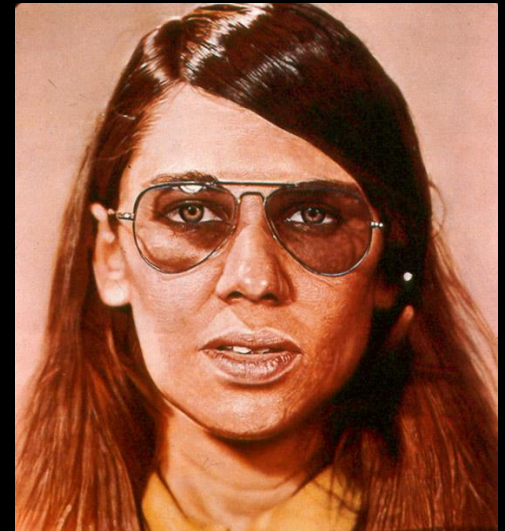




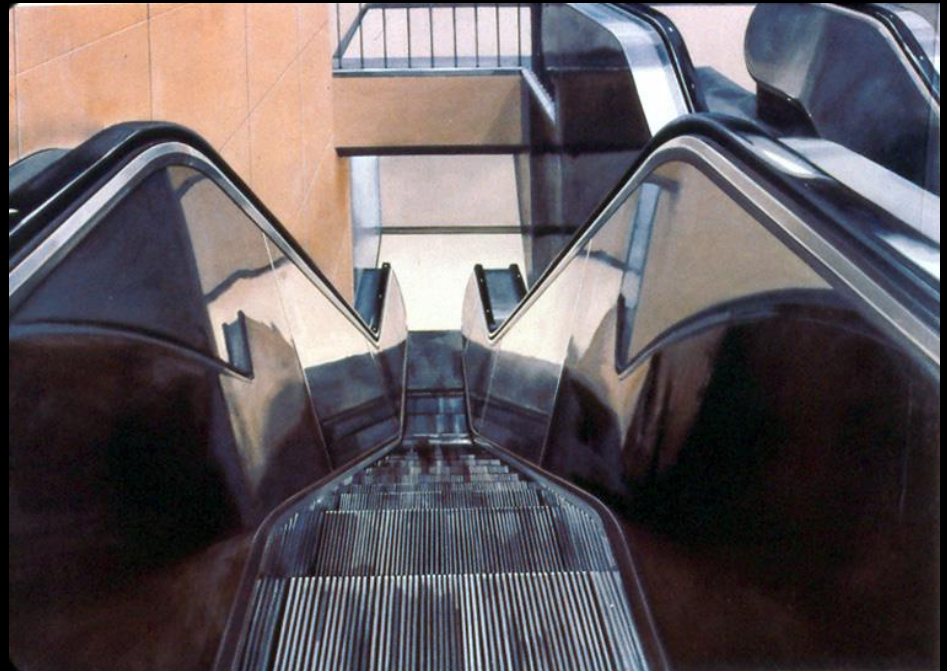
Photo Realism



A genre of painting based on using the camera and photographs to gather information, and then create a painting that appears to be very realistic.

USA: 1960s and 1970s.

Slides were projected onto canvases and copied larger-than-life or life-size.



A few final notes about style...

The terms “modern” and “contemporary” are often used interchangeably, but have different meanings in visual art.

Modern art includes work produced during the period from roughly the 1860's to the 1970's. Modern art typically focused on a spirit of experimentation, and cast aside the traditions of the past.

Contemporary art includes work that has been made and continues to be created during our lifetime, from about the 1960's or 1970's til now.