

Early and Mid-Twentieth-Century Art

22

TIME PERIOD: 1900–1980

Movement	Dates	Major Artists
Fauvism	c. 1905	Matisse
Expressionism	1905–1930s	Kollwitz
■ The Bridge	1905	Kirchner
■ The Blue Rider	1911	Kandinsky
Cubism	1907–1930s	Picasso, Braque
Constructivism	1914–1920s	Stepanova
Dada	1916–1925	Duchamp
DeStijl	1917–1930s	Mondrian
Mexican Muralists	1920s–1930s	Rivera
International Style	1920s–1930s	Le Corbusier
Surrealism	1924–1930s	Kahlo, Oppenheim, Lam
Harlem Renaissance	1930s	Lawrence
Abstract Expressionism	Late 1940s–1950s	DeKooning
Pop Art	1955–1960s	Warhol, Oldenburg
Color Field Painting	1960s	Frankenthaler
Happenings	1960s	Kusama
Site Art	1970s–1990s	Lin, Smithson
Postmodern	1975–today	Venturi

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: Art is influenced by changes in society. It is affected by economic forces which cause widespread migration, war, and a concentration of population in cities. New countries emerge and social movements gain strength.

Essential Knowledge:

- New philosophies, particularly those by Freud and Einstein, spread throughout the world. These views were supplemented by a new understanding of worldwide cultures.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: Artists become more prominent members of society. Art movements come in a rapid succession.

Essential Knowledge:

- Modern movements include Expressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, etc.
- Women artists become more recognized.
- Artists publish manifestos.
- Artists and architects use new materials such as acrylic, earthworks, and cantilevers.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: Art was seen in a new, often provoking, way by the public.

Essential Knowledge:

- Commercial galleries become important. Museums open and display art. Art sells to an ever widening market.
- Artists work for private and public institutions to a sometimes critical public.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

With the cataclysmic events of World War I and World War II, as well as the Great Depression, one would never suspect that the early twentieth century was an intensely creative period in the arts. But in nearly every artistic venue—literature, music, dance, and the fine arts—artistic expression flourished. Some movements fed on these very cataclysms for inspiration, others sought to escape the visceral world. Whatever the reason, the early twentieth century is one of the most creative periods in art history.

Patronage and Artistic Life

Early twentieth-century art was sponsored by extremely cultivated and intellectual patrons who were members of the avant-garde. They saw art as a way to embrace the modern spirit in a cultured way. These influential patrons, like Gertrude Stein, promoted great artists through their sponsorship and connections.

New to the art world is the patronage of museums. It has become standard for a great museum to hire the finest architectural firms to handle expansion projects and turn the museum into a work of art in its own right. Museums also commission works of sculpture and painting from contemporary artists to be showcased in their public spaces.

Not all modern art, however, was greeted with enthusiasm. The **Armory Show** of 1913, which introduced modern art to American audiences, was generally reviled by American audiences. **Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger*** (Figure 22.5) horrified the public. **Duchamp's *Fountain*** (Figure 22.9) even upset the promoters of the gallery who were supposed to allow anyone to be able to exhibit, provided he or she paid the six-dollar admission fee.

One of the results of World War II was the abandonment of Paris as the art capital of the world, a position it had retained since about 1650. New York, the financial and cultural capital of the United States, took over that position, in part because that is where so many fleeing Europeans settled, and in part because it had an active artistic community that was unafraid of experimentation. Mondrian, Duchamp, and Kandinsky moved to New York, not so much to continue their work, most of which was well behind them, but to galvanize modern American artists in what has been called The New York School. **De Kooning** and **Frankenthaler** settled here to do their most impressive works.

EARLY AND MID-TWENTIETH-CENTURY ART

All of the characteristic painter's tools of expression were under question in the early twentieth century. Color was not only used to describe a setting or an artist's impression, but also to evoke a feeling and challenge the viewer. Perspective was generally discarded, or violently tilted for dramatic impact. Compositions were forcefully altered in a new and dynamic way.

Most radically, the introduction of pure form, **abstraction**, became the feature of modern art. Actually, abstract art has always existed, usually in marginal areas of works of art, sometimes in frames or as decorative designs. New is the placement of the abstract form directly in the center of the composition—a statement averring that abstraction has a meaning independent of realistically conveyed representations.

Artists moved beyond the traditional oil-on-canvas approach to great art, and were inspired by **frottage** and **collage**, techniques formerly relegated to children's art. Such fervent experimentation led Europeans to draw inspiration from African cultures, hitherto ignored or labeled as primitive. Europeans were stimulated by African artists' ability to create works in geometric, even abstract, terms, unafraid of a lack of conventional reality. This freedom of expression inspired Europeans to rethink traditional representations, sometimes by writing their thoughts down in artistic manifestos, which served as a call to arms for their movement.

The Armory Show, named after the building in New York where it was held, was mounted in 1913 to introduce Americans to the current trends in European art. Many contemporary artists, such as Duchamp and Picasso, were showcased in America for the first time. The show also exhibited prominent American artists.

The adventurous spirit that epitomizes modern painting and architecture also characterizes modern sculpture. Artists used new materials, such as plastic, and new formats, such as collages, to create dynamic compositions. Artists also dangled metal shapes from a ceiling and called them **mobiles**.

In the Dada movement, artists saw a found object and turn it into a work of art. These **ready-mades** became works of art simply because the artist said they were.

Fauvism

Fauvism is an art movement that debuted in 1905 at Salon d'Automne in Paris. It was so named because a critic, Louis Vauxcelles, thought that the paintings looked as if they were created by "Wild Beasts." Fauvism was inspired by Post-Impressionist painters like Gauguin and Van Gogh, whose work was exhibited in Paris around this time. Fauves stressed a painterly surface with broad flat areas of violently contrasting color. Figure modeling and color harmonies were suppressed so that expressive effects could be maximized. Fauvism all but died out by 1908.

Henri Matisse, *Goldfish*, 1912, oil on canvas, Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, Russia (Figure 22.1)

- Still life painting
- Violent contrasts of color
- Thinly applied colors; white of canvas shows through
- Energetic painterly brushwork
- May have been influenced by the decorative quality of Asian art
- Broad patches of color anticipate Color-Field painting later in century



Figure 22.1: Henri Matisse, *Goldfish*, 1912, oil on canvas, Hermitage, Saint Petersburg, Russia

- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Color**

- Kngwarreye, *Earth's Creation* (Figure 29.13)
- *Dedication Page of Blanche of Castile and Louis IX* (Figure 12.9b)
- Mori, *Pure Land* (Figure 29.19)

Expressionism

Inspired by the Fauve movement in Paris, a group of German artists in Dresden gathered around **Kirchner** and formed *Die Brücke*, **The Bridge**, in 1905, so named because they saw themselves as a bridge from traditional to modern painting. They emphasized the same Fauve ideals expressed in violent juxtapositions of color, which so purposely roused the ire of critics and the public.

A second Expressionist group, called **Der Blaue Reiter**, **The Blue Rider**, formed in Munich, Germany, in 1911. This group (so named because of an affection the founders had for horses and the color blue) began to forsake representational art and move toward abstraction. Highly intellectual, and filled with theories of artistic representation, artists like **Kandinsky**

saw abstraction as a way of conceiving the natural world in terms that went beyond representation. Kandinsky's theories were best expressed in his influential essay, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, which outlined his theories on color and form for the modern movement.



Figure 22.2: Vassily Kandinsky, *Improvisation 28 (second version)*, 1912, oil on canvas, Guggenheim Museum, New York

Vassily Kandinsky, *Improvisation 28 (second version)*, 1912, oil on canvas, Guggenheim Museum, New York (Figure 22.2)

- Movement toward abstraction; representational objects suggested rather than depicted
- Title derived from musical compositions
- Strongly articulated use of black lines



Figure 22.3: Ernst Kirchner, *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, 1915, oil on canvas, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio

- Colors seem to shade around line forms
- Felt that sound and color were linked
- Gave musical titles to his works like “Composition” and “Improvisation”
- Kandinsky wanted the viewer to respond to a painting the way one would to an abstract musical composition like a concerto, sonata, or symphony
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Composition**
 - David, *The Oath of the Horatii* (Figure 19.6)
 - Ringgold, *Dancing at the Louvre* (Figure 29.11)
 - Giotto, *Lamentation* (Figure 13.1c)

Ernst Kirchner, *Self-Portrait as a Soldier*, 1915, oil on canvas, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio (Figure 22.3)

- Kirchner was an “unwilling volunteer” driver in the artillery in World War I, rather than be drafted into the infantry
 - Declared unfit for service; lung problems and weakness; mental breakdown—scholarly debate as to whether or not he faked these to avoid service
 - Painted this work during a recuperation period

- Drawn face; loss of right hand indicates his feeling that he has an inability to paint
- Nude model represents what he used to paint, but no longer can
- Nightmarish quality
- Colors are non-representational, but symbolic, and chosen to provide a jarring impact
- Expressive quality of horrified facial features and grim surroundings
- Tilted perspective moves things closer to the picture plane
- His life was plagued by drug abuse, alcoholism, and then paralysis
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Self-Portraits**
 - Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait with Saskia* (Figure 17.9)
 - Vigée Le Brun, *Self-Portrait* (Figure 19.2)
 - Kahlo, *The Two Fridas* (Figure 22.11)

Käthe Kollwitz, *Memorial Sheet for Karl Liebknecht*, 1919–1920, woodcut. Private Collection (Figure 22.4)

- Themes of war and poverty dominate her oeuvre
- Theme of women grieving over dead children; her son died in World War I, then she became a socialist
- Karl Liebknecht among the founders of the Berlin Spartacus League that became the German Communist Party
- In 1919 Liebknecht shot to death during a Communist uprising in Berlin called the Spartacus Revolt (named for the slave who led a revolt against the Romans in 73 B.C.E.)
- No political reference in the woodcut
- Human grief dominates
- Stark black and white of the woodcut used to magnify the grief
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Memorials**
 - Taj Mahal (Figures 9.17a, 9.17b)
 - The Sphinx and the Pyramids (Figure 3.6a)
 - Terra-Cotta Warriors (Figures 24.8a, 24.8b)



Figure 22.4: Käthe Kollwitz, *Memorial Sheet for Karl Liebknecht*, 1919–1920, woodcut, Private Collection

Cubism

Cubism was born in the studio of **Pablo Picasso**, who in 1907 revealed the first cubist painting, *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* (Figure 22.5). Perhaps influenced by the simple geometries of African masks, then the rage in Paris, Picasso was inspired to break down the human form into angles and shapes, achieving a new way of looking at the human figure from many sides at once. This use of multiple views shows parts of a face, for example, from a number of angles. Cubism is dominated by wedges and facets that are sometimes shaded to simulate depth.

The first phase of Cubism, from 1907–1912, called **Analytical**, was highly experimental, showing jagged edges and sharp multifaceted lines. The second phase, after 1912, called **Synthetic Cubism**, was initially inspired by collages and found objects and featured flattened forms. The last phase, **Curvilinear Cubism**, in the 1930s, was a more flowing rounded response to the flattened and firm edges of Synthetic.



Figure 22.5: Pablo Picasso, *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.K. R. 1909)*, 1907, oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York



Figure 22.6: Georges Braque, *The Portuguese*, 1911, oil on canvas, Art Museum, Basel, Switzerland



Figure 22.7: Constantin Brancusi, *The Kiss*, 1907-1908, limestone, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia

Major Works of Cubism

Pablo Picasso, *Les Femmes d'Alger*, 1907, oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York (Figure 22.5)

- First Cubist work, influenced by late Cézanne, and perhaps African masks
- Represents five prostitutes in a bordello on Avignon Street in Barcelona, each posing for a customer
- Poses are not traditionally alluring but awkward, expressionless, and uninviting
- Three on left more conservatively painted, two on right more radical; reflects a dichotomy in Picasso
- Multiple views expressed at the same time
- No real depth
- Influenced by Gauguin's primitivism
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Group Figures**
 - Velázquez, *Las Meninas* (Figure 17.7)
 - Basquiat, *Horn Players* (Figure 29.5)
 - Sultan Muhammad, *Court of the Gayumars* (Figure 9.9)

Georges Braque, *The Portuguese*, 1911, oil on canvas, Art Museum, Basel, Switzerland (Figure 22.6)

- Analytical Cubism; worked in concert with Pablo Picasso to develop this style
- Rejected naturalistic and conventional painting
- Fractured forms; breaking down of objects into smaller forms
- Clear-edged surfaces sit on the picture plane, not recessed in space
- Nearly monochrome
- Not a portrait of a Portuguese musician, but rather an exploration of shapes
- Only realistic elements are the stenciled letters and numbers; perhaps they suggest a dance hall poster behind the guitarist; a café atmosphere

Constantin Brancusi, *The Kiss*, 1907-1908, limestone, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia (Figure 22.7)

- Symbolic, almost Cubist, rendering of the male and female bodies
- Intertwined and enveloped figures
- Two eyes become one, almost Cyclops-like
- Interlocked forms
- Brancusi worked in Rodin's studio; cf. Rodin's *The Kiss*
- This is the fourth stone version of this subject, done as a commission
- First version was one of Brancusi's earliest efforts at stone carving (Craiova Art Museum, Romania)
- Second version of *The Kiss* (a plaster cast) exhibited at the Armory Show

- Third version used as tombstone in Montparnasse Cemetery in Paris over the body of a suicide victim: a young Russian anarchist; artist asked by a friend of the deceased, who had jilted her, for a marking of her grave; artist said take what you want; he took this
- There may be many more undocumented versions
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Schematic Human Forms**
 - Anthropomorphic Stele (Figure 1.2)
 - Female Deity from Nukuoro (Figure 28.2)
 - Ikenga Shrine (Figure 27.10)

Photo-Seession

From 1902 through 1917 Alfred Stieglitz's gallery, called Gallery 291, was the most progressive gallery in the United States, showcasing photographs as works of art beside avant-garde European paintings and modern American works.

Alfred Stieglitz, *The Steerage*, 1907, photograph, Private Collection (Figure 22.8)

- Stieglitz photographed the world as he saw it, arranged little and allowed people and events to make their own compositions
- Interested in compositional possibilities of diagonals and lines acting as framing elements
- Diagonals and framing effects of ladders, sails, steam pipes, and so on
- Depicts the poorest passengers on a ship traveling from the United States to Europe in 1907
- Some may have been people turned away from entrance to the United States, more likely artisans whose visas had expired and were returning home
- Published in October 1911 in *Camera Work*
- Influenced by experimental European painting; compared to a Cubist drawing by Picasso; Cubist-like in arrangement of shapes and tonal values
- Represents social divisions of society
- Steerage: the part of a ship reserved for passengers with the cheapest tickets
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Disadvantaged Persons**
 - Turner, *Slave Ship* (Figure 20.5)
 - Courbet, *The Stone Breakers* (Figure 21.1)
 - Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais* (Figure 21.15)



Figure 22.8: Alfred Stieglitz, *The Steerage*, 1907, photograph, Private Collection

Dada

Dada, a nonsense word that literally means “hobby horse,” is a term directed at a movement in Zurich, Cologne, Berlin, Paris, and New York from 1916 to 1925. Disillusioned by the useless slaughter of World War I, the Dadaists rejected conventional methods of representation and the conventional manner in which they were exhibited. Oil and canvas were abandoned. Instead, Dadaists accepted **ready-mades** as an art form, and often did their work on glass. Dadaists challenged the relationship between words and images, often incorporating words prominently in their works. The meaning of Dada works is frequently contingent on location or accident. If a glass should shatter, as a few did, it was hailed as an enhancement, acknowledging the hand of chance in this achievement. In sum, Dada accepts the dominance of the artistic concept over the execution.



Figure 22.9: Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain*, original 1917, this version 1950, china with black paint, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania

Marcel Duchamp, *Fountain*, original 1917, this version 1950, china with black paint, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania (Figure 22.9)

- Ready-made sculpture, actually a found object that Duchamp deemed to be a work of art
- Entered in an unjuried show, but the work was refused
- Signed by the “artist” R. Mutt, a pun on the *Mutt and Jeff* comic strip and Mott Iron Works
- Title *Fountain* a pun; fountains spout liquid, a urinal is meant to collect it
- Added irony of placing the urinal upside down

Surrealism

Inspired by the psychological studies of Freud and Jung, Surrealists sought to represent an unseen world of dreams, subconscious thoughts, and unspoken communication. Starting with the theories of Andre Breton in 1924, the movement went in two directions: The abstract tradition of **biomorphic** and suggestive forms, and the veristic tradition of using reality-based subjects put together in unusual ways. Those who seek to understand the inscrutable world of Surrealism by looking at a painting’s title will find themselves even more confused than when they started. Surrealism is meant to puzzle, challenge, and fascinate; its sources are in mysticism, psychology, and the symbolic. It is not meant to be clearly understood and didactic.



Figure 22.10: Meret Oppenheim, *Object*, 1936, fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, Museum of Modern Art, New York

Meret Oppenheim, *Object*, 1936, fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, Museum of Modern Art, New York (Figure 22.10)

- Said to have been done in response to Picasso’s claim that anything looks good in fur
- Combination of unlike objects: fur-covered teacup, saucer, and spoon
- Erotic overtones
- An assemblage
- Combined traditionally female and genteel objects vs. masculinity of sculpture done in hard surfaces in great scale and made vertically
- Chosen by visitors of a Surrealist show in New York as the quintessential Surrealist work of art
- Fame came to her young (she was 22 when she produced the work), and it inhibited her growth as an artist
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Found Objects**
 - Camelid Sacrem (Figure 1.1)
 - Duchamp, *Fountain* (Figure 22.9)



Figure 22.11: Frida Kahlo, *The Two Fridas*, 1939, oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, Mexico City

Frida Kahlo, *The Two Fridas*, 1939, oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, Mexico City (Figure 22.11)

- Juxtaposition of two self-portraits
- Left: Kahlo dressed as a Spanish lady in white lace
- Right: Kahlo dressed as a Mexican peasant—the stiffness and provincial quality of Mexican folk art serves as a direct inspiration for the artist

- Her two hearts are twined together by veins that are cut by scissors at one end and lead to a portrait of her husband, artist Rivera, at the other; painted at the time of their divorce
- Barren landscape, two figures sit against a wildly active sky
- Kahlo rejected the label of Surrealism to her artwork
- The vein acts as an umbilical cord, symbolically associating Rivera as a husband and son
- Blood on her lap suggests many abortions and miscarriages, also her surgeries related to her polio
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Self-Portraits**
 - Bichitr, *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings* (Figure 23.9)
 - Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait with Saskia* (Figure 17.9)
 - Vigée Le Brun, *Self-Portrait* (Figure 19.2)

Wifredo Lam, *The Jungle*, 1943, gouache on paper mounted on canvas, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (Figure 22.12)

- Cuban-born artist whose career took him to Europe and United States
- Interested in Cuba's mixture of Hispanic and African cultures
- Influenced by African sculpture; Cubist works; Surrealist paintings (he was a member of the Surrealist movement in Paris)
- This work "intended to communicate a psychic state"
- Addresses the history of slavery in colonial Cuba
- Crescent-shaped faces suggest African masks
- Rounded backs, thin arms and legs, pronounced hands and feet
- Meant to suggest sugarcane, which are grown in fields, not jungles
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Art Inspired from Diverse Cultural Traditions**
 - Petra (Figures 6.9a, 6.9b)
 - *Golden Haggadah* (Figures 12.10a, 12.10b, 12.10c)
 - Kngwarreye, *Earth's Creation* (Figure 29.13)



Figure 22.12: Wifredo Lam, *The Jungle*, 1943, gouache on paper mounted on canvas, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Constructivism

Constructivists experimented with new architectural materials and assembled them in a way devoid of historical reference. Beginning in 1914, Stepanova and others saw the new Russia as an idealistic center removed from historical reference and decoration. Influenced by the Cubists, Constructivism designed buildings with no precise façades. Emphasis was placed on the dramatic use of the materials used to create the project.

Varvara Stepanova, Illustration from *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*, 1932, photomontage, Museum of the Revolution, Moscow, Russia (Figure 22.13)

- Stepanova one of the main figures in the Russian avant-garde movement
- Graphic art for political and propaganda purposes
- Influenced by Cubism and Futurism
- Five year plan: Soviet practice of increasing agricultural and industrial output in five years; launched in 1928; considered complete in 1932



Figure 22.13: Varvara Stepanova, Illustration from *The Results of the First Five-Year Plan*, 1932, photomontage, Museum of the Revolution, Moscow, Russia

- Emphasis on growth of heavy industry rather than consumer goods
- Huge increases in electrical output (dominant industrial symbol in the work)
- A double page spread in a book
- Red dominates: the color of Communist Soviet Union
- СССР (Союз Советских Социалистических Республик) is a Russian abbreviation for the Soviet Union
- Large portrait of Lenin dominates; although deceased, his image is used to stimulate patriotism
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Social Commentary**
 - Delacroix, *Liberty Leading the People* (Figure 20.4)
 - Sherman, *Untitled #228* (Figure 29.10)
 - Walker, *Darkytown Rebellion* (Figure 29.21)

DeStijl

DeStijl, a movement symbolized by the Dutch painter **Mondrian**, reached its height between 1917 and the 1930s. At its purest, DeStijl paintings are completely abstract; even the titles make no reference to nature. They are painted on a white background and use black lines to shape the rectangular spaces. Only the three primary colors are used: red, yellow, and blue, and they are painted without modulation. Lines can only be placed perpendicularly—diagonals are forbidden.

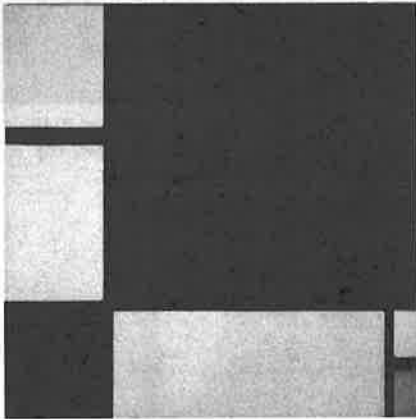


Figure 22.14: Piet Mondrian, *Composition with Red, Blue and Yellow*, 1930, oil on canvas, Private Collection

Piet Mondrian, *Composition with Red, Blue and Yellow*, 1930, oil on canvas, Private Collection (Figure 22.14)

- Only primary colors used: red, yellow, blue and the neutrals, white and black
- Severe geometry of form, only right angles; gridlike forms
- No shading of colors
- Assymetrical composition
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Composition**
 - Su-nam, *Summer Trees* (Figure 29.6)
 - Navigation Chart (Figure 28.3)
 - Martínez, *Black-on-black ceramic vessel* (Figure 26.14)

EARLY AND MID-TWENTIETH-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE

Early twentieth-century architecture is marked by a complete embrace of technological advances. **Ferroconcrete** construction, particularly in Europe, allowed for new designs employing skeleton frameworks and glass walls. The **cantilever** (Figure 22.15) helped push building elements beyond the solid structure of the skeletal framework.

In general, architects avoided historical associations: There are few columns and fewer flying buttresses. Architects prefer clean sleek lines that stress the building's underlying structure and emphasize the impact of the machine and technology.

The Prairie Style

The Prairie School of architecture concerns a group of architects working in Chicago from 1900 to 1917, of which **Frank Lloyd Wright** is the most famous. They rejected the idea that

buildings should be done in historic styles of architecture; however, they insisted that they should be in harmony with their site. Wright employed complex irregular plans and forms that seemed to reflect the abstract shapes of contemporary painting: Rectangles, triangles, squares, and circles. Stylized botanical shapes were particularly prized. Wright used **cantilever** construction to have porches and terraces extend out from the main section of a structure (Figure 22.15). Cantilevers give the impression of forms hovering over open space, held up by seemingly weightless anchors.

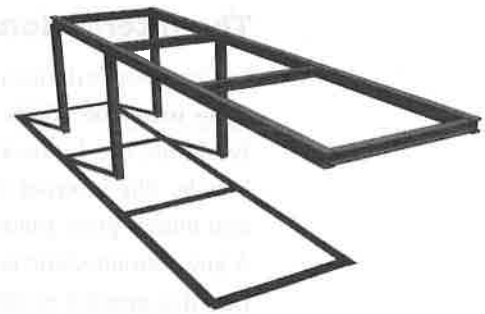


Figure 22.15: Cantilever

The organic qualities of the materials—concrete with pebble aggregate, sand-finished stucco, rough-hewn lumber, and natural woods—were believed to be the most beautiful. The horizontal nature of the prairie is stressed in the alignment of these houses. Although **Fallingwater** was designed well after The Prairie School peaked, it still reflects many of the same characteristics.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Kaufmann House “Fallingwater,” 1936–1939, reinforced concrete, sandstone, steel, and glass, Bear Run, Pennsylvania (Figures 22.16a, 22.16b, and 22.16c)

- Cantilevered porches extend over waterfall; accent on horizontal lines; architecture in harmony with site
- Living room contains glass curtain wall around three of the four sides; embraces the woods around it
- Floor of living room and walls of building are made from stone of the area
- Hearth is the center of the house, an outcropping of natural stones surrounds it
- Suppression of space devoted to hanging a painting; Wright wanted architecture to dominate
- Irregularity and complexity of ground plan and design
- **Cross-Cultural Connections: Homes**
 - Jefferson, Monticello (Figures 19.5a, 19.5b)
 - Ryoan-ji (Figures 25.2a, 25.2b, 25.2c)
 - House of the Vettii (Figures 6.7a, 6.7b)



Figure 22.16a: Frank Lloyd Wright, Kaufmann House “Fallingwater,” 1936–1939, Bear Run, Pennsylvania



Figure 22.16b: Frank Lloyd Wright, Kaufmann House, “Fallingwater,” living room

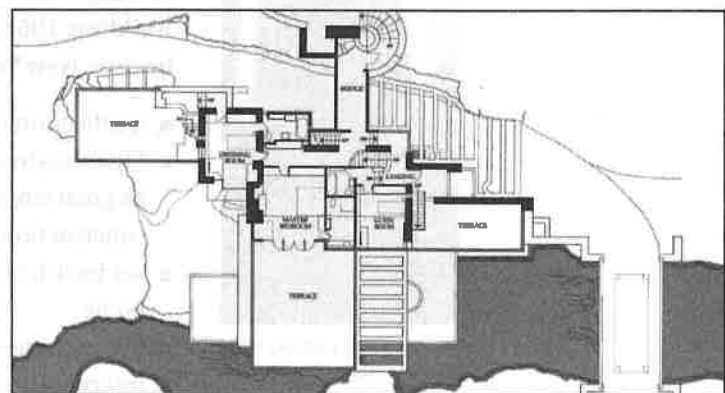


Figure 22.16c: Frank Lloyd Wright, Kaufmann House, “Fallingwater,” plan

The International Style

Le Corbusier's dictum that a house should be a "machine for living" sums up the International Style from the 1920s to the 1950s. Greatly influenced by the streamlined qualities of the Bauhaus, the International Style celebrates the clean spacious white lines of a building's façade. The internal structure is a skeleton system which holds the building up from within and allows great planes of glass to wrap around the walls using **ferroconcrete** construction. A key characteristic is the lack of architectural ornament and an avoidance of sculpture and painting applied to exterior surfaces.

Le Corbusier, Villa Savoye, 1929, steel and reinforced concrete, Poissy-sur-Seine, France (Figure 22.17)

- Three-bedroom villa with servant's quarters
- Boxlike horizontal quality; an abstraction of a house
- Main part of house lifted off the ground by narrow pilotis—thin freestanding posts
- Turning circle on bottom floor is a carport, so that family members can enter the house directly from their car
- All space is utilized, including the roof which acts as a patio

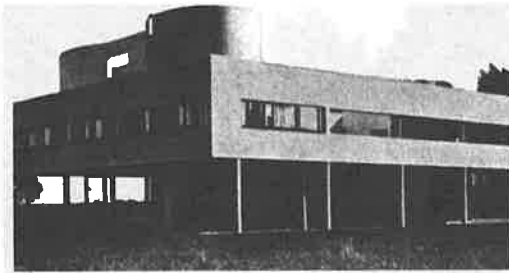


Figure 22.17: Le Corbusier, Villa Savoye, 1929, steel and reinforced concrete, Poissy-sur-Seine, France

- No historical ornamentation
- Subtle colors: white on exterior symbolized modern cleanliness, the new, simplicity, healthful living
- Open interior free of many walls
- Furniture built into the walls
- Ribbon windows wind around second floor
- Streamlined look
- House appears to float on pilotis
- Living spaces around an open courtyard-type setting on second floor; surrounded by glass
- Patrons: Pierre and Emilie Savoye, wanted a country house
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Houses**
 - House of the Vettii (Figures 6.7a, 6.7b)
 - Alberti, Palazzo Rucellai (Figure 5.2)
 - Alhambra (Figures 9.15a, 9.15b)



Figure 22.18: Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson, Seagram Building, 1954–1958, New York

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson, Seagram Building, 1954–1958, steel frame with glass curtain wall and bronze, New York (Figure 22.18)

- A reflection of the Minimalist movement in painting
- Mies's saying "Less is more" can be seen in this building with its great simplicity, geometry of design, and elegance of construction
- Set back from the street on a wide plaza balanced by reflecting pools
- Bronze veneer gives the skyscraper a monolithic look
- Interplay of vertical and horizontal accents
- Steel-and-glass skyscraper became the model after World War II
- A triumph of the International Style of architecture

The Harlem Renaissance

In the early twentieth century African-Americans moved in great numbers to a New York City neighborhood called Harlem. This migration, and its subsequent infusion of talent, created a deep cultural center that reached its fullest expression in painting, theatre, music, writing, and photography. The movement began after World War I, around 1919, and reached its peak in the 1920s and early 1930s, but its influence extended well into the later twentieth century. The movement's general themes, which extended across the arts, include racial pride, civil rights, and the influence of slavery on modern culture.

Jacob Lawrence, *The Migration of the Negro, Panel no. 49*, tempera on hardboard, 1940–1941, Museum of Modern Art, New York (Figure 22.19)

- A series of sixty paintings that depicts the migration of African-Americans from the rural South to the urban North after World War I.
- Overall color unity in the series unites each painting
- Forms hover in large spaces
- Flat simple shapes
- Unmodulated colors
- Collective African-American experience, little individuality to the figures
- Goes back to tempera paint; influenced by Italian masters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries
- Collective unity achieved by painting one color across many panels before going on to the next color
- Angularity of forms
- This scene involved a public restaurant in the North; segregation emphasized by yellow poles that zigzag down the center
- Tilted table tops show the surface of the table
- Narrative painting in an era of increasing abstraction
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Social Criticism**
 - Salcedo, *Shibboleth* (Figure 29.26)
 - Smith, *Lying with the Wolf* (Figure 29.20)
 - Quick-to-See-Smith, *Trade* (Figure 29.12)

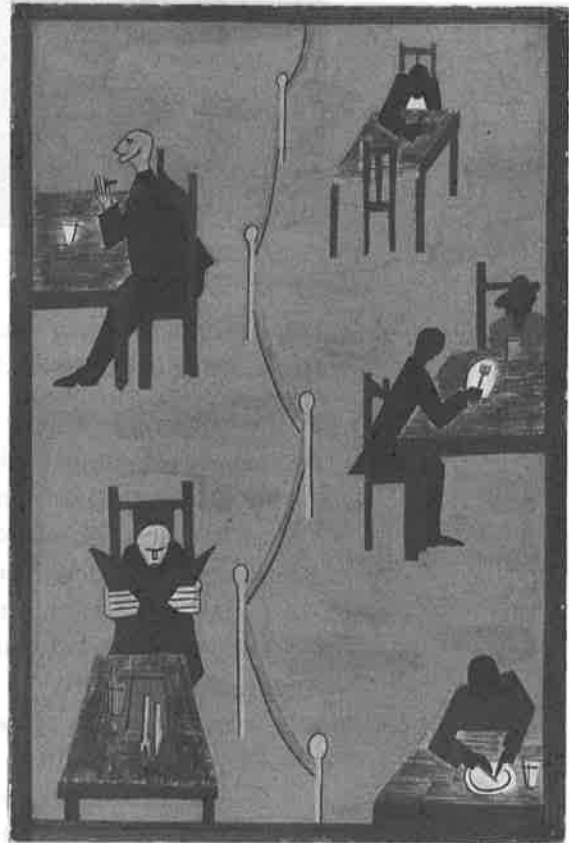


Figure 22.19: Jacob Lawrence, *The Migration of the Negro, Panel no. 49*, tempera on hardboard, 1940–1941, Museum of Modern Art, New York

Mexican Muralists

A major revival of Mexican art took place in the 1920s and 1930s by artists whose training was in the age-old tradition of fresco painting. Using large murals that all could see and appreciate, the Mexican Muralists usually promoted a political or a social message. These didactic paintings have an unmistakable meaning rendered in an easy-to-read format. The themes generally promote the labor and struggle of the working classes, and usually have a socialist agenda.



Figure 22.20: Diego Rivera, *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda Park*, 1947–1948, fresco, Museo Mural Diego Rivera, Mexico City

Diego Rivera, *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda Park*, 1947–1948, fresco, Museo Mural Diego Rivera, Mexico City (Figure 22.20)

- Fifty-foot-long fresco; thirteen feet high
- Originally in lobby of the Hotel Del Prado
- After 1985 earthquake that destabilized the hotel it was placed in Alameda Park, Mexico City's first city park; built on the grounds of an Aztec marketplace
- Three eras of Mexican history depicted:
 - Conquest and colonization of Mexico by the Spanish
 - Porfirio Diaz dictatorship
 - Revolution of 1910
- Depicts a who's who of Mexican politics, culture, and leadership:
 - Sor Juana (Figure 18.6)
 - Benito Juárez, five term president of Mexico
 - General Santa Ana handing the Keys of Mexico to General Winfield Scott
 - Emperor Maximilian and Empress Carlota
 - José Martí, father of Mexican independence (tipping his hat)
 - General Porfirio Díaz with medals, asleep
 - A police officer ordering a family out of an elitist park
 - Francisco Madero, a martyred president
 - Artist in center, at age ten, holding hands with Caterina ("Death") dreaming of a perfect love (Kahlo is behind him)
- Horror vacui; didactic painting
- Colorful painting
- Revival of fresco painting, a Mexican specialty
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Historicism**
 - Delacroix, *Liberty Leading the People* (Figure 20.4)
 - Raphael, *School of Athens* (Figure 16.3)
 - Olmec Style Mask (Figure 26.5d)

Abstract Expressionism

Sometimes called **The New York School**, Abstract Expressionism of the 1950s is the first American avant-garde art movement. It developed as a reaction against artists like **Mondrian**,

who took the Minimalist approach to abstraction. Abstract Expressionists seek a more active representation of the hand of the artist on a given work. Hence, **action painting** is a big component of Abstract Expressionism.

Willem de Kooning, *Woman, I*, 1950–1952, oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York (Figure 22.21)

- Ferocious woman with great fierce teeth and huge eyes
- Large bulbous breasts are a satire on women who appear in magazine advertising; smile said to be influenced by an ad of a woman selling Camel cigarettes
- Slashing of paint onto canvas
- Jagged lines create an overpowering image
- Smile is a cut out of a female smile from an magazine advertisement
- Blank stare; frozen grin
- Ambiguous environment: vagueness, insecurity
- Combination of stereotypes; ironic comment on the banal and artificial world of film and advertising
- One of a series of six on the woman theme
- Influenced by everything from Paleolithic goddesses to pin-up girls
- Thick and thin black lines dominate
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Images of Women**
 - Manet, *Olympia* (Figure 21.3)
 - Titian, *Venus of Urbino* (Figure 16.4)
 - Neshat, *Rebellious Silence* (Figure 29.14)



Figure 22.21: Willem de Kooning, *Woman, I*, 1950–1952, oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York

Color Field Painting

Color Field Painting lacks the aggression of Abstract Expressionism. It relies on subtle tonal values that are often variations of a monochromatic hue. With **Frankenthaler** the images are mysteriously hovering in an ambiguous space. With artists like Barnett Newman, there is a more clear-cut definition of forms with lines descending through the composition. Color Field Painting was popular in the 1960s.

Helen Frankenthaler, *The Bay*, 1963, acrylic on canvas, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan (Figure 22.22)

- Painted directly on unprimed canvas; canvas absorbs paint more directly
- Uses a runny paint, sometimes thinned with turpentine
- Uses landscape as a starting point; basis for imagery in the works
- Accentuates the two-dimensionality of the canvas
- Worked in the avant-garde New York School at mid-century
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Nature**
 - Su-nam, *Summer Trees* (Figure 29.6)
 - Hokusai, *Great Wave* (Figure 25.5)
 - Bruegel, *Hunters in the Snow* (Figure 14.6)

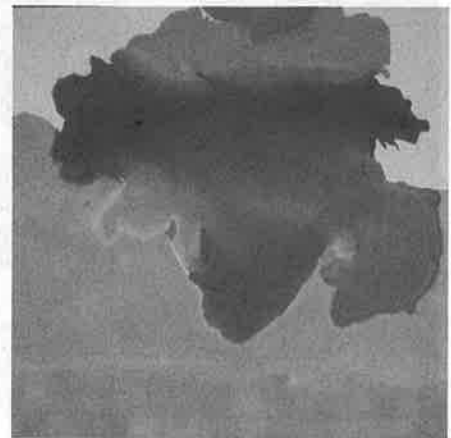


Figure 22.22: Helen Frankenthaler, *The Bay*, 1963, acrylic on canvas, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan

Pop Art

Pop, or Popular, Art is a term coined by an English critic in 1955 about a movement that gathered momentum in the 1950s and then reached its climax in the 1960s. It draws on materials of the everyday world, items of mass popular culture like consumer goods or famous singers—the Pop artist saw no distinction between “high” art or the design of mass-produced items. It glorifies, indeed magnifies, the commonplace, bringing the viewer face to face with everyday reality. Most Pop Artists proclaim that their art is not satirical, although sometimes this is

hard to believe given the images they used and the scale used to display them. It is generally thought that Pop Art is a reaction against Abstract Expressionism.

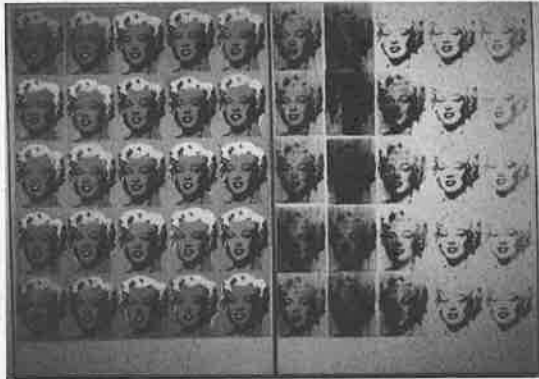


Figure 22.23: Andy Warhol, *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962, oil, acrylic, silkscreen enamel on canvas, Tate Gallery, London

Andy Warhol, *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962, oil, acrylic, silkscreen enamel on canvas, Tate Gallery, London (Figure 22.23)

- Screen-printing photographic images onto backgrounds of rectangular shapes
- Repeated imagery drains the image of Monroe of meaning
- Fifty images from a film still from a movie, *Niagara* (1953)
- Reproduction of many denies the concept of the unique work of art
- Cult of celebrity
- Left, in color, represents her in life; right, in black and white, represents her death; work done four months after her tragic death
- Marilyn's public face appears highlighted by bold, artificial colors
- Private persona of the individual submerged beneath the public face
- Social characteristics magnified: brilliance of blonde hair, heavily applied lipstick, seductive expression

■ Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Human Identity

- Tlatilco Female Figure (Figure 1.5)
- Rodriguez, *Spaniard and Indian Produce a Mestizo* (Figure 18.5)
- Neshat, *Rebellious Silence* (Figure 29.14)

Claes Oldenburg, *Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks*, 1969–1974, cor-ten steel, aluminum, and cast resin, painted with polyurethane enamel, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut (Figure 22.24)

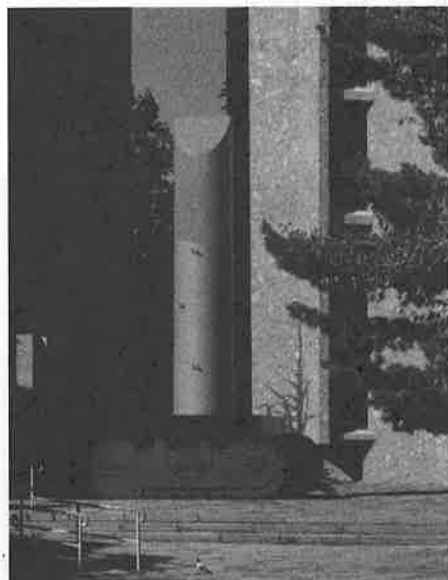


Figure 22.24: Claes Oldenburg, *Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks*, 1969–1974, cor-ten steel, aluminum, and cast resin, painted with polyurethane enamel, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

- First installed on Beinecke Plaza, New Haven, in 1969
- Intended as a platform for public speakers; rallying point for anti-Vietnam era protests
- Erected secretly
- Tank-shaped platform base with lipstick ascending—anti-war symbolism
- Male and female forms unite: themes of death, power, desire, and sensuality
- Sculpture made of inexpensive and perishable materials (plywood tracks and an inflatable vinyl balloon tip)

- Refurbished with steel, aluminum, fiberglass; reinstalled in 1974 in front of Morse College at Yale
- First monumental sculpture by Oldenburg
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: War and Battle Commemorations**
 - Column of Trajan (Figure 6.16)
 - Lin, Vietnam Veterans Memorial (Figures 29.4a, 29.4b)
 - *Siege of Belgrade* (Figures 18.3a, 18.3b)

HAPPENINGS

The word “happening” was coined in the late 1950’s to describe an act of performance art that is initially planned, but involves spontaneity, improvisation, and often audience participation. Happenings continue today in various formats, including Flash Mobs, Improvisational Theatre, and Performance Art.

Yayoi Kusama, *Narcissus Garden*, first seen in 1966, installation of mirrored balls, Venice (Figures 22.25a and 22.25b)

- Internationally renowned Japanese-born artist
- Got her start showing large works of art featuring huge polka dots
- One of the foremost innovators of Happenings
- Works in a wide variety of media, including installations

Narcissus Garden

- Artist originally featured the work as a non-participant in the 1966 Venice Biennale
- 1500 large, mirrored, stainless steel balls placed on a lawn under a sign that said “Your Narcissism for Sale”
- Artist offered the balls for sale for 1200 lira (\$2 dollars each) as a commentary on the commercialism and vanity of the current art world
- *Narcissus Garden* references the ancient myth of Narcissus, a young man who is so enraptured by his image in reflecting water that he stares at it indefinitely until he becomes a flower
- Installation later moved to water, where the floating balls reflect the natural environment—and the viewers—around the work; water placement makes a stronger connection to the ancient myth
- Balls move with the currents of the water and wind, reflecting organically made ever-changing viewpoints
- Installation has been exhibited in many places around the world, both in water and in dry spaces
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Human Identity and Image**
 - Sherman, *Untitled 228* (Figure 29.10)
 - Wall Plaque from Oba’s Palace (Figure 27.3)
 - Narmer Palette (Figures 3.4a and 3.4b)

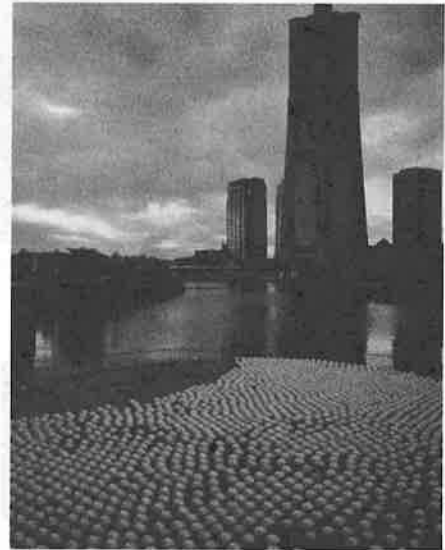


Figure 22.25a: Yayoi Kusama, *Narcissus Garden*, 2001, mirrored balls, this installation at Yokohama Triennale entitled “Narcissus Sea.”



Figure 22.25b: Yayoi Kusama, *Narcissus Garden*, artist sells balls at the Venice Biennale 1966

Site Art

Sometimes called Earth Art, Site Art is dependent on its location to render full meaning. Often works of Site Art are temporary, as in the works of **Christo** and **Jeanne-Claude**. Other times the works remain, but need the original environment intact in order for it to be fully understood. Such items are often called **earthworks**. Site Art dates from the 1970s and is still being done today.

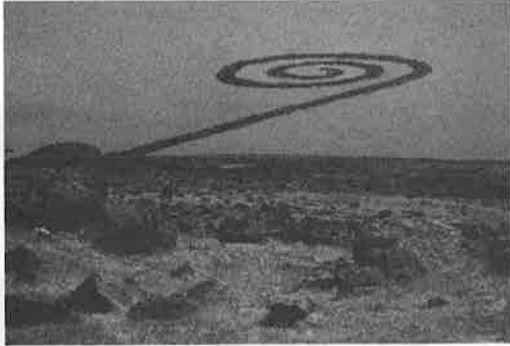


Figure 22.26: Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, 1970, mud, salt crystals, rocks, water coil, Great Salt Lake, Utah



Figure 22.27a: Robert Venturi, John Rauch, and Denise Scott Brown, House in New Castle County, 1978-1983, wood frame and stucco, Delaware



Figure 22.27b: Music Room of House in New Castle County

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, 1970, mud, salt crystals, rocks, water coil, Great Salt Lake, Utah (Figure 22.26)

- Coil of rock in a part of the Great Salt Lake; located in an extremely remote and inaccessible area that features abandoned mines and mining equipment
- Upon walking on the jetty, the twisting and curling path changes the participant's view from every angle
- Artist used a tractor with native stone to create the jetty
- A jetty is supposed to be a pier in the water; here it is transformed into a curl of rocks sitting silently in a vast empty wilderness

- Coil is an image seen in North American earthworks, cf. Serpent Mound, Ohio
- Artist liked the blood red color of the water due to the presence of bacteria that live in the high salt content
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Spirals and Circular Constructions**
 - Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *The Gates* (Figures 29.3a, 29.3b)
 - Great Serpent Mound (Figure 26.4)
 - Stonehenge (Figures 1.12a, 1.12b)

POSTMODERN ARCHITECTURE

Postmodern architecture, generally thought to emerge in the late 1970s and early 1980s sees the achievements of the International Style as cold and removed from the needs of modern cities with their cosmopolitan populations. Postmodernists see nothing wrong with incorporating ornament, traditional architectural expressions, and references to past styles in a modern context. Philip Johnson, himself a contributor to the International Style, as well as someone who worked on the Seagram Building (Figure 22.18), began the shift away to a Postmodern ideal with the AT&T building.

Robert Venturi, John Rauch, and Denise Scott Brown, House in New Castle County, 1978-1983, wood frame and stucco, Delaware (Figures 22.27a and 22.27b)

- House designed for a family of three
- Wife: musician; hence music room with two pianos, an organ, and a harpsichord
- Husband: bird watcher; large windows facing the woods

- Post-modern mix of historical styles
- Venturi's comment on the International Style: "Less is a bore."
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Homes**
 - Jefferson, Monticello (Figures 19.5a, 19.5b)
 - Alberti, Palazzo Rucellai (Figure 15.2)
 - LeCorbusier, Villa Savoye (Figure 22.17)

VOCABULARY

- Abstract:** works of art that may have form, but have little or no attempt at pictorial representation (Figure 22.14)
- Action Painting:** an abstract painting in which the artist drips or splatters paint onto a surface like a canvas in order to create the work
- Assemblage:** a three-dimensional work made of various materials such as wood, cloth, paper, and miscellaneous objects
- Biomorphism:** a movement stressing organic shapes that hint at natural forms
- Cantilever:** a projecting beam that is attached to a building at one end, but suspended in the air at the other (Figure 22.15)
- Collage:** a composition made by pasting together different items onto a flat surface
- Color field painting:** a style of abstract painting characterized by simple shapes and monochromatic color
- Documentary photography:** a type of photography that seeks social and political redress for current issues by using photographs as a way of exposing society's faults
- Earthwork:** a large outdoor work in which the earth itself is the medium (Figure 22.26)
- Ferroconcrete:** steel reinforced concrete; the two materials act together to resist building stresses
- Frottage:** a composition made by rubbing a crayon or a pencil over paper placed over a surface with a raised design
- Happening:** an act of performance art that is initially planned but involves spontaneity, improvisation, and often audience participation
- Harlem Renaissance:** a particularly rich artistic period in the 1920s and 1930s that is named after the African-American neighborhood in New York City where it emerged. It is marked by a cultural resurgence by African-Americans in the fields of painting, writing, music, and photography
- Installation:** a temporary work of art made up of assemblages created for a particular space, like an art gallery or a museum (Figure 22.25b)
- Mobile:** a sculpture made of several different items that dangle from a ceiling and can be set into motion by air currents
- Ready-made:** a commonplace object selected and exhibited as a work of art
- Silkscreen:** a printing technique that passes ink or paint through a stenciled image to make multiple copies (Figure 22.23)
- Venice Biennale:** a major show of contemporary art that takes place every other year in various venues throughout the city of Venice; begun in 1895 (Figure 22.25b)

SUMMARY

Early modern art is characterized by the birth of radical art movements. Avant-garde artists, with the help of their progressive patrons, broke new ground in rethinking the traditional figure, and in the use of color as a vehicle of expression rather than description.

Artists moved in many directions; for example, abstract art was approached in entirely different ways by artists as diverse as Kandinsky and Mondrian. Other artists, such as Brancusi, come close to the abstract form, using representational ideas as a starting point. Still others, such as Surrealists, see conventional painting as a beginning, but expanded their horizons immediately after that.

Modern architects embrace new technology, using it to cantilever forms over open space, imitate the machine aesthetic of Art Deco, or espouse the complete artistic concept of the Bauhaus. Whatever the motivations, modern architecture is dominated by clear, clean, simple lines, paralleling some of the advances made in painting and sculpture.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Multiple-Choice

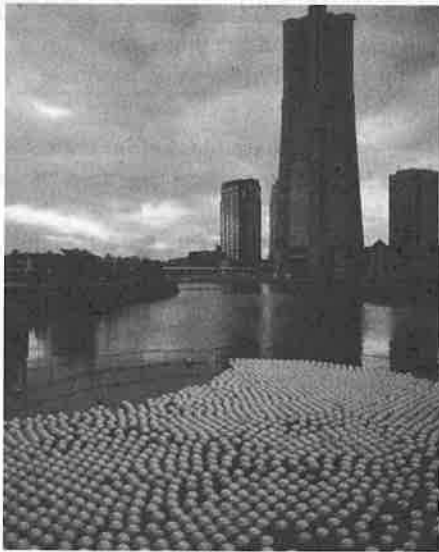
1. Robert Smithson's works, like *Spiral Jetty*, were inspired by
 - (A) Surrealist paintings
 - (B) Aztec temple structures and complexes
 - (C) Buddhist stupas and toranas
 - (D) American Indian earthworks
2. The *Memorial Sheet for Karl Liebknecht* commemorates a moment in the
 - (A) Franco-Prussian War of 1870
 - (B) Communist uprising in 1919
 - (C) erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961
 - (D) collapse of the Stock Market in 1929
3. Cuban artist Wifredo Lam sought to combine his Hispanic heritage with
 - (A) flat areas of color used in Japanese prints
 - (B) facial designs inspired by African masks
 - (C) abstract patterning popularized by painters of the New York School
 - (D) found objects used by the Dadaists
4. Alfred Stieglitz's photographs have been compared to
 - (A) Surrealist paintings because of their odd juxtapositions
 - (B) Cubist paintings because of the tonal values and the arrangement of shapes
 - (C) Impressionist paintings because of their atmospheric effects
 - (D) Realist paintings because of the concentration on the plight of the hard-working poor

5. Frida Kahlo's artwork expresses all of the following concerns EXCEPT

- (A) Mexican and Pre-Columbian motifs
- (B) European-style Surrealism
- (C) frescos and Mexican muralism
- (D) autobiographical episodes translated into personal visions

Short Essay

This work is Yayoi Kusama's *Narcissus Garden*. The photo on the right shows the artist at its first installation.



Where was this work first shown?

Why did this work cause a scandal when it was first shown?

How has the media used in this work created a variety of interpretations?

ANSWER KEY

1. **D** 2. **B** 3. **B** 4. **B** 5. **C**

ANSWERS EXPLAINED

Multiple-Choice

1. **(D)** The circular patterns seen in such earthworks as Great Serpent Mound formed a general inspiration for Smithson's works.
2. **(B)** The *Memorial Sheet for Karl Liebknecht* commemorates a moment in the Communist uprising in 1919 in Berlin, Germany.

3. **(B)** Cuban artist Wifredo Lam was influenced by African masks. Cuban ancestry is a mixture of European and African heritages, and his work often mirrors that combination.
4. **(B)** The development of Cubism is simultaneous with Stieglitz's experiments in photography. There is a strong parallel between Cubism's refined artistic palette and the subtle tonal shades in Stieglitz's photographs. Moreover, there is a comparison between Cubism's sharp angles and thoughtful compositional varieties in Stieglitz.
5. **(C)** Frida Kahlo did not paint murals or work in fresco.

Short-Essay Rubric

Question	Points	Key Points in a Good Response
Where was this work first shown?	1	Artist originally featured the work as a non-participant in the 1966 Venice Biennale
Why did this work cause a scandal when it was first shown?	2	<p>Answers could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1,500 large-mirrored, stainless steel balls placed on a lawn under a sign that said "Your Narcissism for Sale" ■ Artist offered the balls for sale for 1,200 lira (\$2 dollars each) as a commentary on the commercialism and vanity of the current art world
How has the media used in this work created a variety of interpretations?	2	<p>Answers could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Narcissus Garden references the ancient myth of Narcissus, a young man who is so enraptured by his image in reflecting water that he stares at it indefinitely until he becomes a flower. ■ The installation was later moved to water, where the floating balls reflect the natural environment—and the viewers—around the work; water placement makes a stronger connection to the ancient myth. ■ Balls move with the currents of the water and wind, reflecting organically made, ever-changing viewpoints. ■ The installation has been exhibited in many places around the world, both in water and in dry spaces.