
STYLE

Art styles have been around since the beginning of human imagination. The first cave-wall paintings had their styles, which developed and split over time resulting in countless ways and methods of painting. What is a style?

An Artistic Style is characteristics which we can identify as constant, recurring or coherent between different artworks. Artistic style can be identified with a whole artistic culture (Classical Roman, the Song Dynasty in China), with a specific place and time (the early Renaissance in Florence), with a specific group of artists (the Impressionists of Paris), or even with the chronological changes of style of a specific artist (Picasso's Blue period, Rose period, and Cubist period).

Artworks that have certain features in common are considered to have the same style. Sometimes this means that they are part of the same **movement**, but not always. The concept of "movements" in art is usually linked to a specific time (and sometimes place) in history. For instance, there are painters today who still paint in an Impressionistic manner, embracing the concepts that first defined Impressionism in the 19th century. However, because they are contemporary artists who are inspired by the Impressionists, they are not really part of the original "Impressionist movement" as it exists in historical terms. Although art styles can be resurrected from the past, the movement itself is still anchored in its original position on the art history timeline.

Styles can be very difficult to understand, and each one has its own story and point of origin. To express our inner vision, we need to explore some of the main styles that have been developed over the course of human history.

Cultural and Period Style

During the period from Sulla to Caesar (c.90-40bc). artists in Rome from the Greek cities of southern Italy and Sicily had concentrated on the revival of parts of ancient Greek culture. This trend culminated in the Ara Paris, or Altar of the Augustan Peace, erected in 13bc to celebrate the era of prosperity and security during the rule of Augustus.

The sculpture, which blends Hellenistic influence with the universal message of Periklean Athens, is an **Italic-style realistic-record** of the consecration ceremony and was dedicated on 30 January, 9bc. It shares the same formal treatment as Phidias' Panathenaic processional frieze in the Parthenon. On the northern face is a procession, perfectly ordered by family and rank, of the principal figures: priests, augurs, lictors (attendants). Octavian, flamens (priests). Agrippa, the young Cains Caesar, Livia, Tiberius, Antonia Minor and Drusus with their son Germanicus, Domitia and Domitius Ahenobarbus, and Maecenas.

For many centuries to come, this composition typified dynastic propaganda. The arrangement of acanthus scrolls crowded with small animals beneath the figures brings together patrician traditions and the new order of the principate. On the eastern face of the monument Aeneas is shown as the founding father, whose family tree is traced by the tendrils. These were the noble branches of an ancestry rooted in custom. The hypnotic rhythm of the plant spirals changes for the sudden halt of the procession at the entrance to the enclosure, enabling the participants to gather up their robes or turn round, while a cloaked figure in the background, a symbol of winter, places his finger to his lips to impose holy silence.

Classicism

Augustus entrusted the continuity of his ideas to forms of unquestionable beauty. Since Rome appears as the magnified projection of the predominant Greek city-state, its archetype was the Athens of Perikles. The Hellenic figurative tradition was acknowledged most of all in the decoration of civic and religious buildings in Rome. A law was even proposed (but not approved) by Agrippa. Augustus' son-in-law, whereby all original Greek works of art transferred to Italy would be exhibited in public places. Appreciation of Rome's heritage was guaranteed by classicism.
which tempered the acceptance of Hellenic experiments. With craftsmen working to specific models, they were conforming to a single will, taking pride in being part of a collective enterprise, the allegorical transformation of Rome, which conferred upon Augustus the character of Supreme Being. In the official portrait of the princeps, to which the title of Augustus was added in 27bc, the facial features were adapted to meet the rules of classical statuary and the hairstyle made to resemble those of the heroes of Polykleitos. For the court and the citizens in outlying estates and provincial cities who were following the example of Rome, workshops of Athenian sculptors were recruited to provide copies of the most famous originals by Greek sculptors such as Myron and Lysippos. This became the most popular way to furnish a house or villa. Some artists moved to Italy and supplied a wide range of casts, a selection of which were added to Rome's growing collections.

The most famous masterpieces of the moment were copied although it was hard to capture the poetic spirit of the original: the final result depended on the ability of the artist to imbue his copy with some of the original's vitality and energy. At Baiae, one workshop possessed the moulds of dozens of famous works from Athens, from which it turned out statues and bronze herms, monuments with a square shaft bearing a bust. Many of these statues were found in the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum where, along with images of the owner, the heads of philosophers stood side by side with the busts of warriors and the likenesses of heroes, such as Achilles and Pentesilea, and divinities including Minerva, Apollo, Diana. Hermes, Bacchus, and Herakles, In wall-paintings, known as the "second style" (according to the four Pompeian "'styles"), architectural forms created an illusion of space, at the centre of which were reproductions of Hellenistic masterpieces showing mythological scenes.

Relief depicting the consecration ceremony, with Augustus,
members of his family, priests, and officials.
Ara Pacis, Rome

The concept of period style first appeared in the writings of the German scholar **Johann Joachim Winckelmann** (1717-1768). Often called the father of art history, Winckelmann developed a historical framework for Greek sculpture that was based on the way the objects looked. The Greeks and the Romans also had written about the works, but their histories and guides primarily discussed specific masterpieces or great artists. Winckelmann, on the other hand, created a structure that relied upon visual characteristics, which he defined with beautiful passages about individual sculptures. This meant that it was possible to relate anonymous works about which little was known to the most famous art of the Ancient world. It also meant that an individual object could be considered, for example, a late example of a style. Date of making no longer determined the group in which a work was placed

At least as important as Winckelmann's definition of **Style** was his adoption of a biological model for its structure. Every style has to have boundaries, places where it begins and ends, and Winckelmann conceived of these in terms of the sequence of natural growth. Each style began with its birth (the early stage), progressed to maturity (the middle or classic phase), a decline (the late) and, finally, disappearance. Using this scheme arranges works into a very specific order and it is an order that implies value judgments. Early or late examples, which in Winckelmann's view stand at the beginning or end of a style, are necessarily incomplete and thus imperfect. The mature, often called the classic, represents the fullest, the best, definition of the style. This order is so common in modern art history that it is hard to conceive of it as the result of choices. Lang's definition of style, however, explained above, reminds us how much this scheme too depends upon interpretation.

Using variations of Winckelmann's model, historians and critics have created definitions of period style for many other kinds of art. One of the most important was developed by Heinrich Wofflin (1864-1945) in Principles of Art History, published in German in 1915 and still read in English translation today. Two aspects of his book have been particularly influential. First is the way Wolfflin defined period style. He believed that analysis of particular works of art would "reveal the connection of the part to the whole" and he decisively rejected the "analogy of bud, bloom, decay. He created groups, not sequences, and defined their boundaries by opposing different uses of the same formal elements. This method of analyzing by opposition and comparison is still the way many art historical lectures are organized. Wolflin took for granted that his groups were ultimately arbitrary, and discussed how many other ways the same material could be divided. The specific concepts used by Wolfflin to define certain period styles have been very influential. The idea of "linear" versus "painterly," linked to a fundamental change in the way European art from the 15th and 16th centuries looks compared to that from the 17th century, still appears in survey texts today. Historians also continue to use the word "painterly." The other pairs Wolflin explained in Principles have been less influential: plane/recession, closed/open form, multiplicity/unity, and clearness/unclearness.

Even in translation, Wölfflin's analyses of particular works of art are exceptional. Like Winckelmann, he wrote about what he saw masterfully. His application of the concept of the painterly to sculpture, for example, results in a beautiful and vivid description of Gian Lorenzo Bernini's bust of Cardinal Borghese (Borghese Gallery, Rome):

The surfaces and folds of the garment are not only of their very nature restless, but are fundamentally envisaged with an eye to the plastically indeterminate. There is a flicker over the surfaces and the form eludes the exploring hand. The highlights of the folds flash away like lizards, just like the highlights, heightened with white, which Rubens introduces into his drawings. The total form is no longer seen with a view to the silhouette. . . . [The shoulders have] a contour which, restless in itself, at all points leads the eye beyond the edge [of the sculpture]. The same play is continued in the head. Everything is arranged with a view to the impression of change. It is not the open mouth which makes the bust baroque, but the fact that the shadow between the lips is regarded as something plastically indeterminate. . . . [I]t is fundamentally the same design that we found [above] in [paintings by] Frans Hals and Lievens. For the transformation of the substantial into the unsubstantial which has only a visual reality, hair and eyes are in this case always especially characteristic. The "look" is here obtained by three holes in each eye.

Wölfflin summed up the alternative, the linear style, in one sentence about a portrait bust of Pietro Mellini by Benedetto da Majano (Museo Nazionale, Florence): "The essential point is that the form is enclosed in a firm silhouette, and that each separate form – mouth, eyes, the separate wrinkles – has been given an appearance of determinateness and immobility based on the notion of permanence."

Through this and many other comparisons, Wölfflin argued for a division between the two periods, based on a fundamental change in the artistic style. "The whole notion of the pictorial has shifted. The tactile picture has become the visual picture – the most decisive revolution which art history knows." Although he found the linear and the painterly in other places and periods – Impressionist painting, for example, was painterly – it was the movement from what we still call the **Renaissance to the Baroque** that interested him most deeply.

The term **Baroque** probably ultimately derived from the Italian word barocco, which was a term used by philosophers during the Middle Ages to describe an obstacle in schematic logic. Baroque that was primarily associated with the religious tensions within Western Christianity: division on Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. In response to the Protestant Reformation of the early sixteen century, the Roman Catholic Church had embarked in the 1550s on a program of renewal known as the Counter - Reformation. As part of the program, the Catholic Church used art of the magnificent display for the campaign. It was intended to be both doctrinally correct and visually and emotionally appealing so that it could influence the largest possible audience. But as the century progressed the style made inroads into the Protestant countries. Main representatives of this form of Baroque were Bernini and Rubens.

Baroque that use revolutionary technique of dramatic, selective illumination of figures out of deep shadow - a hallmark of Baroque painting. Contrary to the traditional idealized interpretation of religious subjects, Baroque realistically presents models from the streets. Caravaggio is key painter of this form of Baroque.

Baroque that was developed mainly in Flemish countries emphasis realism of everyday life. It has been seen in works of Rembrandt and Vermeer.

Rembrandt,
Harmensz van Rijn
1606 – 1669
The Return of the
Prodigal Son,
c.1669

Caravaggio,
Michelangelo
Merisi da 1571 -
1610
Lute Player,
c.1596

Romanticism made its major appearance in the mid 18th century and continues to be a popular form of art. Since it has so many facets and ideas, it's hard to pinpoint a specific list of how to identify romanticism.

Romanticism was also formed as a counter reaction towards enlightenment. Since romanticism is based off of strong emotional feelings, intuition, and imagination, it is a stark comparison to "The Age of Enlightenment". All types of artists began creating this phenomenally popular form of art as a way to say "feeling presides over deductive reasoning." It also spawned the birth of romantic nationalism.

Once romanticism started growing, architects took it further and started building romantic structures. This is one type of art that managed to spread to all of the artistic corners, from architecture, to literature, to written art, to music composing, to visual aesthetics.
Romanticism took a long journey through the mid-18th century Europe, to early 19th century America. Once it reached popularity in America, writers began experimenting with Romantic styled writing and literature, and it also became a major part of Christian religion.

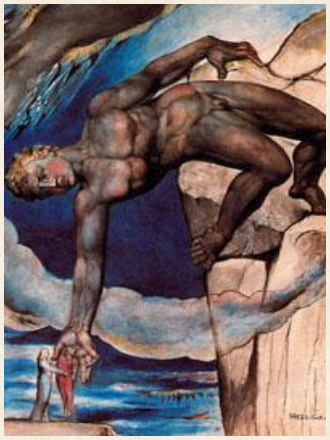
Romantic writers and artists focused heavily on exploring the depths of their relationship with God. This also meant that romanticism rejected intellect and scientific knowledge. This stage of the Romantic Movement is still present in much of our religious art work and music today, and continues to remain popular amongst religion enthusiasts.

Some of the most influential romantic artists were Beethoven, Ayn Rand, J.C. Dahl, and Joseph Vernet. Many more notable artists existed, but these are amongst the most widely recognized. Their art pieces are still loved today, and influence many different types of media and ideas.

Of course, the history of romanticism is ever-evolving. It is still widely popular and influences everything from modern media, to furniture, to college courses. It has a heavy bearing on the way we think, socialize, and interact with those around us.

Romantic arts have become iconic, and the works of those such as Edgar Allen Poe are to remain forever famous. While romanticism is still widely popular and adored, it is no longer a "movement". Our current history is described as post-romanticism.

Famous Romanticist painters include Thomas Cole, Henry Fuseli, Eugene Delacroix and William Blake



William Blake

Henry Fuseli,
Aphrodite fuhrt Paris zum Duell mit Menelaos

Eugene Delacroix Girl Seated in a Cemetery

Naturalism

Realism ,putting itself in a position against Romanticism, first in art refers to the depiction of realistic objects in a natural setting, first Naturalism is a type of art that pays attention to very accurate and precise details, and portrays things as they are.

Some writers restrict the terms "**Naturalism" and "Realism**" for use as labels for period styles of the middle and late nineteenth century in Europe and America, thus making available the terms "naturalism" and "realism," all lowercase, for tendencies of art of any period so long as the works strive for an accurate representation of the visible world. Thus, "Naturalism" is tied to a time and place, whereas "naturalism" is timeless.

One very distinctive visual style is sometimes treated as if it did not exist, because the work of art so directly represents the subject that they seem to be the same thing. This style is called "realistic" or, its near twin, "photographic." These terms are so widely used and misused that they should be avoided whenever possible. Of the two, "photographic" is the less informative because photographs can look like anything. There is no style inherent in the products of a camera. If a certain kind of photograph has been assumed by the writer, then which kind it is must be explained. Since the analogy requires its own explanation, the term "photographic style" creates more problems than it solves.

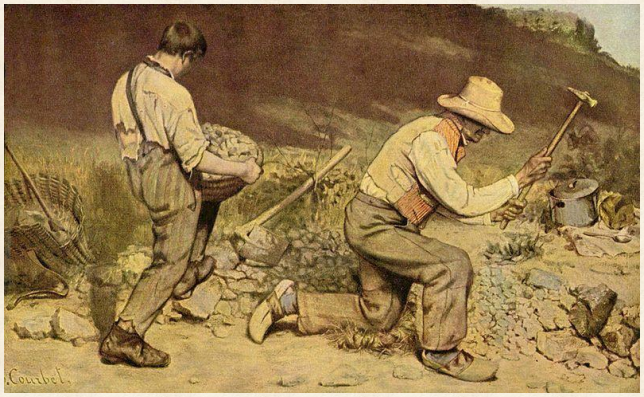
If "realistic" is used to mean a strong likeness to the appearance of things as we see them in the world, then the reader needs to know the particular ways in which the particular work resembles which aspects of the world. Social conventions play a part, since different people and different cultures define the world differently. For all of these reasons, the most useful definition of this style – like that of any other – depends upon noting very specific visual features which are defined very specifically.

Certainly it is tempting to call paintings by Northern Renaissance artists such as Jan van Eyck "realistic." The pictures present an extraordinary amount of visual information about the surfaces of physical things. Texture, color, reflections, all appear in detail so fine that many of the individual brush stokes are invisible. In addition, the pictures convey a sense of three-dimensional light-filled space. A moment's thought, however, is all it takes to realize that what we call "realistic" is actually an illusion created by colored paint applied to a flat surface. Exactly how this illusion has been created is what needs to be explained. Using the term "realistic" does not help in this task.

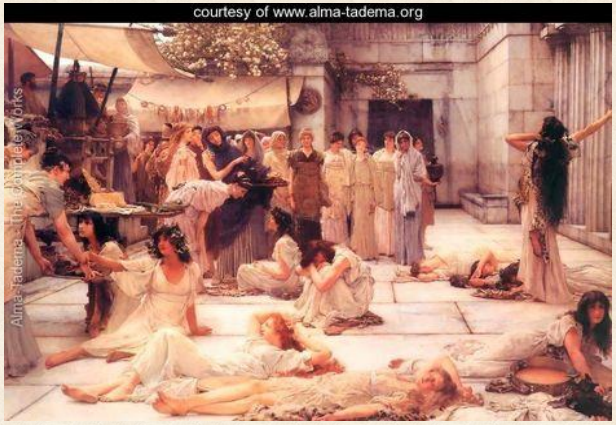
Realism in art is a term used referring to art that reveals truth, thus emphasizing sordid, ugly or hard realities of life such as kitchen sink realism, regionalism and social realism. Everyday objects, dilemmas, situations, characters and any 'true to life' situations are rendered in realism. Theatre drama is discarded, as well as the lofty, the unreal or the exaggerated.

Defined as a faithful reality representation, realism is based on the 'objective reality dogma' and is focused on showing middle and lower class society sans the dramatization or the idealizations. Examples of realist paintings are Gustave Courbet's the 'Stone-Breakers,' created in 1849, Oswald Achenbach's Abendstimmung in der Campagna, painted in 1850 and Ilya Repin's 'They did not Expect Him,' painted in the years 1884-1888.

Main representatives of the school of Realists include Honore Daumier, Gustave Courbet, Gustave Dore, Jean Francois Millet, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, Pierre-Etienne Theodore and Charles-Francois Daubigny. Other artists known for Realism in art include Edgar Degas, John William Waterhouse, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema and Ford Madox Brown, Georg von Dillis, Friedrich Wasmann, Wilhelm von Kobell, Carl Blechen and Adolf Menzel. American realists include Augustus St Gaudens who was a sculptor, James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Francis Coates Jones and Winslow Homer.



Gustave Courbet 'Stone-Breakers,'
1849



Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema
The Women Of Amphissa

Jean-François Millet
The Bouquet of Daisies

Gustave Dor é Illustrations to The Bible:
Suffer little children to come unto me...

Personal Style

The idea of a **personal style**, which in the Western tradition goes back to the Greeks, seems to apply easily to the work of many artists. All art historians rely on it. Countless lectures, books, and exhibitions define the style found in art made by a single person. Inevitably, however, any definition of style puts as much outside as remains inside its boundaries. The usual way to minimize this problem is to create more divisions, perhaps a chronological ordering into early, middle, and late. The late or "old age" style has come to be valued as an especially interesting phenomenon, sometimes even as the culmination of an entire career. Other methods of organization may group the works of an artist by subject or medium.

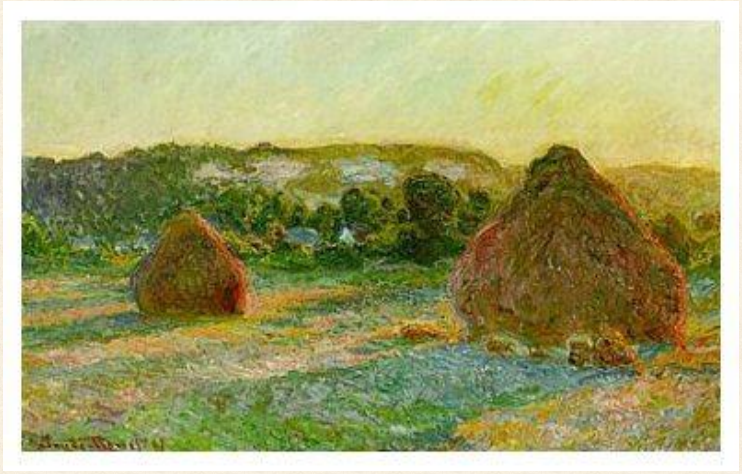
Personal style is limited to the production of one artist, a specific historical individual. Works by others that look similar can be considered part of a school, or described as "in the style of." For some art historians, style can be found in the "touch," the viewer's sense of the hand of the artist working the material. Roger Fry, for example, argued that Cezanne's genius began with the way he applied paint. A late 19th-century art historian named Giovanni Morelli (1816-1891) found recognizable individuality in details too insignificant for the artist to have considered consciously, such as the shape of ears. There are many ways to conceptualize the relationship, and most art historians use a mix of qualities to define a personal style.

The traditional approach to deciding whether a particular artist painted a particular work, in the absence of documents that link them explicitly, is called connoisseurship. After careful looking and using many other relevant examples as the basis for comparisons, the art historian making an attribution comes to a decision based not so much on research as on intuition. The work "feels" right, meaning that it seems to resemble other works that can be identified conclusively as being by the artist. Sometimes another connoisseur challenges that judgment, "feeling" something else entirely and redefining the personal style. The history of art is filled with such changes in attribution. Usually the person who undertakes the job of gathering all of the works associated with one particular person decides what to include and what to leave out. This collection, often called by its French name of catalogue raisonne, reflects and, over time, shapes a general consensus. Since attribution influences the value a work has on the art market, it may matter a great deal.

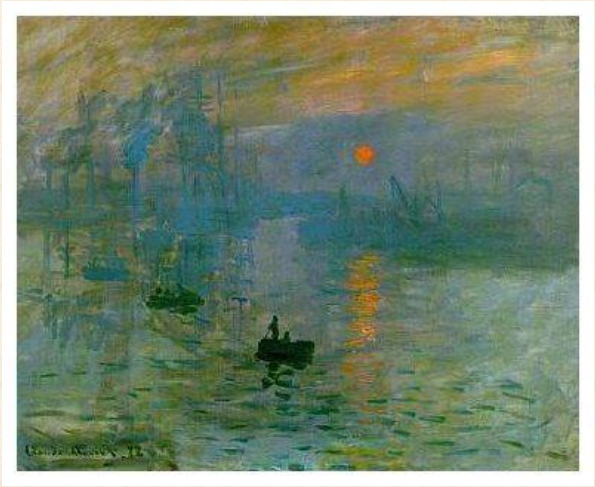
Attribution is, for the most part, a scholarly activity. Nonetheless, just knowing the name of the artist can transform what a work looks like. This is an important example of seeing based on expectations. A very famous instance of false attribution happened with the 17th-century Dutch artist Jan Vermeer. Previously unknown paintings appeared in Holland during the 1930s and were attributed to him. At least one senior scholar proclaimed one work to be by Vermeer, which led to others being associated with the one that had been declared authentic. After World War II, they were revealed to be forgeries by an unsuccessful artist named Han van Meegeren. He painted a new fake in the courtroom during his trial to prove that he was, in fact, the one who had made the pictures. It is hard to imagine today how anyone ever associated them with Vermeer. The change in taste that inevitably comes with the passage of time has made them seem awkward and even ugly.

An understanding of personal style also influences how historians relate an artist to his or her contemporaries. In 1979, Robert Herbert described **Claude Monet's** style in a lengthy and extremely detailed analysis. He began his article:

The belief that Monet's art was one of improvisation is so firmly established that it dominates the 20th-century view of **Impressionism.** Monet planted his easel in front of his motif, we are told, and devised a method of instant response to nature, despite rain or winter frost. He was so determined to seize a special moment of color-light that he abandoned his canvas when conditions altered, and turned to another, only later going back to the first when the same moment was again available.



Claude Monet (1840-1926)
Wheatstacks - End of Summer (oil on canvas, 1890-91)



Claude Monet (1840-1926)
Impression Sunrise (oil on canvas, 1872)

Furthermore, according to this belief, Monet’s interest in color-light overwhelmed all other considerations, including choice of subject. Herbert set out to prove the contrary – that Monet’s art was the result of as much calculation and study as a Renaissance landscape, or one by Paul Ceanne. “If it could be proved that Monet’s art was not spontaneous, if it could be proved that it involved a long process,” Herbert wrote, then the conventional opposition of Monet’s technique to Cezanne’s, and of Impressionism to Post-Impressionism, in fact the “whole edifice of Impressionist criticism would come tumbling down.”

Claude Monet (1840-1926)
Water Lilies and Japanese Bridge (oil on canvas, 1899)

Herbert analyzed the whole of Monet's career with immensely close readings of important paintings. In this respect, his study resembles Roger Fry's of Cézanne's art, but Herbert did not use the categories of formal analysis, and subject was very important to him. On the important question of the speed with which Monet worked, for example, he wrote:

In the mid-1870s at Argenteuil, some [of Monet's] paintings were done very quickly, in large buttery strokes, but more numerous are canvases like the famous Bridge at Argenteuil [Musee d'Orsay, Paris], which were worked on repeatedly, with drying time between the sessions. Their brushwork is varied to suit the imagery: smooth for sky, choppy for foliage, horizontal with lapping curves and diagonals for water, and directional strokes for boats and bridges. In each successive session Monet applied his paint quite frankly in strokes of one color, but frequently he wanted to change or enrich the color while retaining the underlying texture of "spontaneity." He therefore added thin surface colors. In the canvas [Bridge at Argenteuil], separate surface hues can be detected easily along the furled sail and, in the water, among the reflections of the toll house. The most remarkable spot is just ahead of the bowsprit of the farthest sailboat. There one stroke was allowed to dry, and then was artfully colored over (reading from left to right) in pale blue, peach, medium blue, orange-tan and then medium blue again.

These complexities of technique became greater and more prominent as Monet's career went on, so that by the early 1880s, "paintings that were really done very quickly were very rare." Based on these and many other similar analyses, Herbert created a new understanding of Monet's art. He also changed the way historians view the art of Monet's contemporaries and the style of painting called **Impressionism.**

Many artists contributed to the first exhibition of **Impressionist** painting in 1874 but Pierre Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), Camille Pissarro (1831-1903), Edgar Degas (1834-1917), Alfred Sisley (1839-99) and Henri Marie Raymond de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901) were the main figures who formed the backbone of the movement

Alfred Sisley
Flood at Port Marly (oil on canvas, 1876)

Edgar Degas
Four Dancers (oil on canvas, 1899)

Camille Pissarro
Gelee Blanche - Hoarfrost (oil on canvas, 1873)

Pierre Auguste Renoir
Fruit of the Midi (oil on canvas, 1881)

Beyond Impressionism

Impressionism was the first movement in the canon of modern art and had a massive effect on the development of art in the 20th century. Like most revolutionary styles Impressionism was gradually absorbed into the mainstream and its limitations became frustrating to the succeeding generation. Artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Cezanne, Paul Gauguin and Georges Seurat, although steeped in the traditions of Impressionism, pushed the boundaries of the style in different creative directions and in doing so laid the foundations of art in the 20th century. For historical convenience these artists have been labeled as **Post Impressionists** but, apart from their Impressionist influence, they don't have much in common. Van Gogh pushed art towards **Expressionism**, Cezanne towards **Cubism,** and Gauguin and Seurat towards **Fauvism** and **Divisionism.**

Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) is one of the most relevant and probably the most famous artist of **Post Impressionism Era**. He was an artist of great influence in areas such as expressionism, fauvism and abstract art. He was raised in a cultured Holland home that was very religious as his father was a Pastor.

Van Gogh discovered Impressionism and Neo-Impressionism in Paris where he met Paul Gauguin and other Impressionists. In his paintings he reflected his internal state of mind, as his famous Starry Night painting shows. This painting was also the prelude of Expressionism, another formidable art form. With his close association with Gauguin, Van Gogh was able to persuade him to join him in Arles, France. Both founded an art school but were unsuccessful in the ventures.

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Van Gogh suffered from mental fits of madness. During one of his mental bouts, he cut a part of his left ear with a razor while pursuing Gauguin. Ironically, this was the time where he was able to produce most of his famous art pieces with his recognizable style, using bright colors. He produced 900 paintings and 1,100 drawings; these were in the last ten years of his life. He stayed in a mental asylum at Saint-Remy where he later committed suicide.

Wheatfield with Crows
(oil on canvas, 1890)

Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890)
View of Arles (Orchard in Bloom with Poplars) (oil on canvas, 1890)

Van Gogh, were not appreciated at all at certain times. Today they are considered among the best artists of humankind. It is interesting to see that during his lifetime, Van Gogh sold only one painting, while today, his painting Portrait of Dr. Gachet (1905) has sold by as much as 82,5 million dollars.

Symbolism

Symbolism originated in France, and was part of a 19th-century movement in which art became infused with mysticism. French Symbolism was both a continuation of the Romantic tradition and a reaction to the realistic approach of impressionism. It served as a catalyst in the outgrowth of the darker sides of Romanticism and toward abstraction.

The term Symbolism means the systematic use of symbols or pictorial conventions to express an allegorical meaning. Symbolism is an important element of most religious arts and reading symbols plays a main role in psychoanalysis. Thus, the Symbolist painters used these symbols from mythology and dream imagery for a visual language of the soul.

Not so much a style of art, Symbolism was more an international ideological trend. Symbolists believed that art should apprehend more absolute truths which could only be accessed indirectly. Thus, they painted scenes from nature, human activities, and all other real world phenomena in a highly metaphorical and suggestive manner. They provided particular images or objects with esoteric attractions.

There were several, rather dissimilar, groups of Symbolist painters and visual artists. Symbolism in painting had a large geographical reach, reaching several Russian artists, as well as American. The closest to Symbolism was Aestheticism. The Pre-Raphaelites, also, were contemporaries of the earlier Symbolists, and have much in common with them. Symbolism had a significant influence on Expressionism and Surrealism, two movements which descend directly from Symbolism proper. The work of some Symbolist visual artists directly impacted the curvilinear forms of the contemporary Art Nouveau movements in Europe and Les Nabis.

Gustav Klimt's home city was the fascinating turn-of-the-century Vienna of the belle epoque. With its two million inhabitants, the city was the fourth largest in Europe, and it witnessed a cultural flowering unparalleled elsewhere. Artists and intellectuals developed enormous creativity, torn as they were between reality and illusion, between the traditional and the modern. With inhabitants such as Sigmund Freud, Otto Wagner, Gustav Mahler and Arnold Schonberg, the city was a "laboratory of the apocalypse", a late bloom, a last creative tumult before its decline.

The dominant haute bourgeoisie, known for its pretentiousness, its splendid banquets, its inordinate love of pleasure, had a catalytic effect on the city's culture.

Gustav Klimt
The Kiss

The work of **Paul Cezanne**, Georges Seurat and tribal art are said to be the main influences behind **Cubism**, but this has been disputed many times, even by Braque himself. The idea behind Cubism is to show the essence of an object by displaying it from many different angles and points of view and the same time. In other words, an object is broken up, analyzed from many different perspectives and reassembled in abstract form.

The Cubist Movement began as an intellectual revolt against the artistic expression of previous eras. The cubists didn't use the sensual appeal of paint, texture and color, subject matter with emotional charge or mood; the play of light on for, movement, atmosphere, and the illusionism that proceeded from scientifically based perspective.

The cubists used fragmented and redefined pictures within a shallow plane or within several interlocking and often invisible planes.

Paul C é zanne (1839-1906)
Bibemus Quarry (oil on canvas, 1895)

Georges Braque (1882-1963)
Viaduct at L'Estaque (oil on canvas, 1908)

Guitar & Violin by Picasso
(Oil on canvas 1912-13)

Analytic Cubism was the first phase of Cubism that was developed. Analytic Cubism was based on reducing natural forms to their basic geometrical parts. These three dimensional parts were then reconciled on a two-dimensional plane using subdued colors to the point where painting were nearly monochromatic.

Synthetic Cubism grew out of the Analytic Cubism movement, though it was more constructionist in intent rather than the analytical and destructionist. Synthetic Cubism developed into artwork that was more decorative, appealing and easier to interpret with roots in collage. In fact, **Picasso** pasted oil cloth onto canvas, incorporating the real world onto canvas, in some of his Synthetic Cubism works such as his "Guitar and Violin" masterpiece.

Surrealism was a means of reuniting conscious and unconscious realms of experience so completely that the world of dream and fantasy would be joined to the everyday rational world in "an absolute reality, a surreality." The major surrealist painters were Jean Arp, Max Ernst, Andre Masson, Rene Magritte, Yves Tanguy, **Salvador Dali,** Pierre Roy, Paul Delvaux, and Joan Miro. With its emphasis on content and free form, surrealism provided a change to the existing, highly formalistic Cubist Movement and was largely responsible for bringing about in modern painting the traditional value on content.

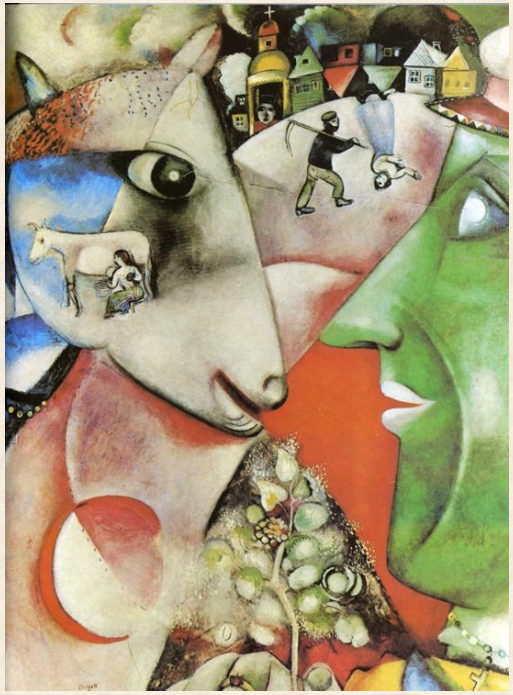
Salvador Dali
Crucifixion 1954

Marc Shagall was a Russian born French painter (1887-1985), who painted with vivid colors and was influenced by Cubism, Surrealism and Fauvism. He once said:

Art is the unceasing effort to compete with the beauty of flowers and never succeeding.

What the artist is referring to in this quote is the beauty of Nature and how Nature is often a great source of inspiration for artists. And when you really look at nature and think about it, it really is inspirational. Maybe artists are able to see and express their wonder at nature better than most of the rest of us.

Take a moment, and really look at a tree, a flower or the simplest plant in the world. Don't think of it's name, just look at this object in nature as if you had never seen it before. Isn't it the most amazing thing you have ever seen, and not even the best artist in the world can recreate its magnificence, and yet a very good artist who acquires his inspiration from nature or from just about everything and anything can recreate the feelings we get when we truly look at objects in nature and let ourselves just FEEL.



Marc Chagall. I and the Village. 1911.
Oil on canvas. 191 x 150.5 cm

Born out of the Expressionist movement, **Abstract** Expressionism movement is derived from the emotional intensity of the traditional Expressionists while drawing from the anti-figurative ideals of abstract schools like Futurism and Cubism. Abstract art is in Abstract art can be an exaggeration or simplification of line, form, shape or color. What abstract art is not is an exact depiction of anything. Abstract Expressionism conveys its emotion as artists typically paint rapidly, with force on large canvasses to express what they are feeling at that moment in time. Typical of Abstract Expressionism, the artist expresses himself purely through the use of form and color with no actual object represented in the piece. The painters who came to be called "Abstract Expressionists" shared a similarity of outlook rather than of style-an outlook characterized by a spirit of revolt and a belief in freedom of expression.

Wasilii Kandinsky was the first artist to push painting towards total abstraction. He is quoted as saying, "Of all the arts, abstract painting is the most difficult. It demands that you know how to draw well, that you have a heightened sensitivity for composition and for colors, and that you be a true poet. This last is essential."

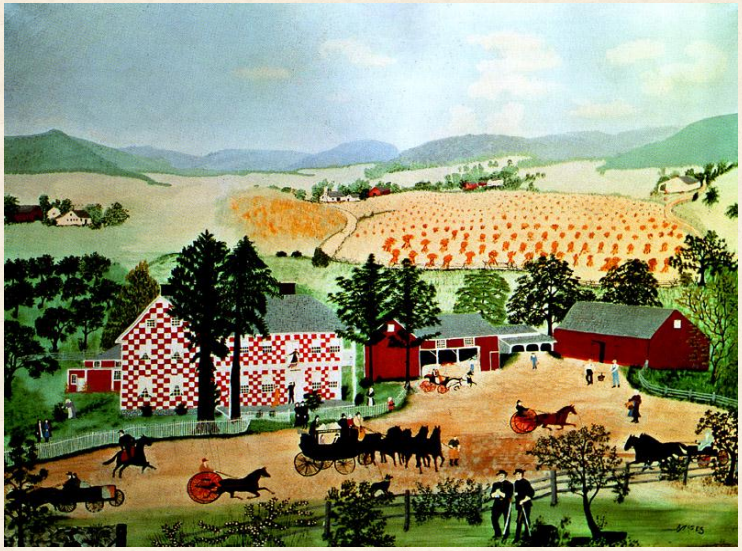
Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944)
Composition IV (oil on canvas, 1911)

Jackson Pollock (1912-1956) was an abstract expressionist painter known for his "drip and pour paintings". His works are a perfect example of non-representational art in that they do not seek to represent any particular natural forms that we would be able to recognize. He felt that his paintings were an enactment of nature instead of a picture (or representation) of it. He sought to capture the rhythm of nature flowing through him by getting into a trance-like state while painting.

Folk (Naive) Art

Folk art often is done by untrained artists who make their art for decorative or utilitarian purposes and does not come out of the fine art tradition. Folk Artists are typically from rural or pre-industrial societies, and are more closely related to craftsmen than they are to fine artists. The qualities of folk art include accessible materials such as fabric, paper, metal and clay as well as carvings. Some examples of folk art are carved figures, masks, puppetry, textiles and signs.
Folk Art is characterized by a **naive style**, in which traditional rules of proportion and perspective are not employed.
Closely related terms are Outsider Art, Self-Taught Art and Naive Art.
Well-known Folk Artists include the American painters Grandma Moses and Edward Hicks, and the Canadian painter Maud Lewis.

Anna Mary Robertson Moses, better known as **Grandma Moses,** is arguably the greatest American folk painter of the twentieth century. She is without a doubt the most famous such artist, and possibly one of the most famous and accomplished women of all time. Moses' extreme fame seemingly lifted her out of her original folk art context, creating a perceptual gap between her generation of self-taught artists and the nineteenth-century folk tradition from which they all descended. Today, as the significance of twentieth-century self-taught art is being reappraised, Moses continues to stand apart, an outsider even within this genre of outsiders. Nor, despite admirable strength of character and integrity of vision, has Moses been heralded by feminist art historians, possibly because they are put off by the quaintness of the artist's public persona.

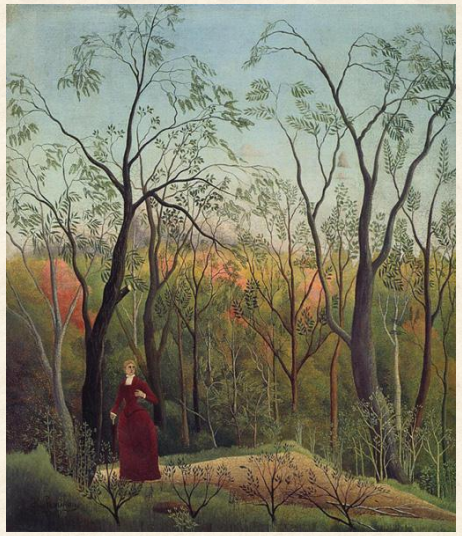


Moses the artist is, however, no anomaly, even if the extraordinary circumstances of her late-life career are unique. Her work belongs to a long and rich tradition of American folk art, as exemplified both in this century and before.

Checkered House was a local legend. Situated along the Cambridge Turnpike, it was an inn where stagecoach drivers had changed horses as far back as the eighteenth century. During the Revolutionary War, the inn served as General Baum's headquarters and field hospital. Its checkerboard front made the house a distinctive landmark that was remembered long after it burned in 1907.
Moses painted a number of versions of "Checkered House," in both winter and summer. When asked how she managed to come up with a new composition each time, she said she imagined the scene as if she were looking at it through a window. By then shifting her viewpoint slightly, she could cause the elements to fall into place differently.

The history of naive art is both the history of the complex evolution of the many art forms lying outside the fine arts tradition and of the critical attempts to disentangle a distinct strand from this broader fabric. In the course of the 19th century in Europe, the arts and crafts of rural peoples (normally termed FOLK ART, or sometimes ‘peasant art’) and the urban traditions of semi-skilled craftsmen gradually faltered in the face of growing industrialization. Factory products enfeebled the individual impulse to fashion handmade artefacts; itinerant portrait painters (‘limners’) found their trade dwindling after the advent of photography; and in general the rise of an industry-based economy and the growth of cities sapped the vitality of vernacular and communally recognized artwork such as embroidery, toymaking, the carving of ships’ figureheads, painted targets and so forth. Similar developments took place in North America, though at a slower pace, partly determined by a wilful defence of inherited models on the part of culture-conscious immigrants.

Hicks Edward
The Peaceable Kingdom
1834



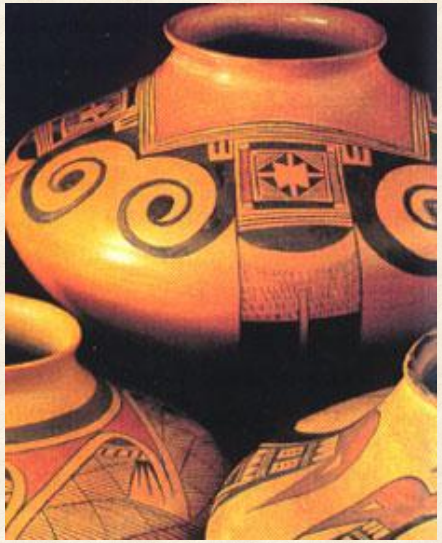
Henri Rousseau
The Walk in the Forest, 1886

Folk Art around the world

Wall Quilt, India

Angel Mola, Panama

Mexican Votive Painting



Pueblo Pottery

Art appreciation is not a difficult concept and it may result from different art influences, popularity, and exposure to different types of art, the need to follow a fad or a style, cultural decisions and many other factors. But for a few the appreciation of art is because of a need to discover, see, and admire a certain quality of an art form and style.

Although we don’t need anyone to tell us how to react to art, there is also a bit of truth in the saying “knowledge is power”. When we read more about art and what the different art styles and movements were and how they affect art and artists today, we will know more about why an artist presented his work in a certain way, and we will be better able to appreciate the art for what it really is, whether we like it personally or not. The more we learn about art the less distant and strange it will be to us.