

Art Since 1900 is a critical history of modern art that both explores the era's seminal art works and offers rigorous analyses of some of the major methodological approaches that prevail in art history today.

More than one hundred essays, each focusing on a crucial event – such as the creation of an important work, the publication of an artistic manifesto, or the opening of a big exhibition – tell the myriad stories of art from 1900 to the present. Every key turning point and breakthrough in modernism and postmodernism is explored in depth, as are the frequent, passionate and sustained antimodernist reactions that proposed alternative visions of art and the world. The book's uniquely flexible structure allows readers to make their own journeys through the century, either by taking a chronological approach or by following different themes or personalities as they move through the book.

This is a volume that will help students to examine the rhetorical strategies of their discipline and encourage them to understand the importance of critical analysis.

“A remarkable collective work. It criss-crosses the entire twentieth century in complex and fascinating ways. Written by four of the most innovative scholars of modern art history today, it is a landmark”

Briony Fer, *University College London*

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Introductions

Psychoanalysis in modernism and as method

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1900 – 1909

1900a Sigmund Freud publishes *The Interpretation of Dreams*: in Vienna, the rise of the expressive art of Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, and Oskar Kokoschka coincides with the emergence of psychoanalysis.

1900b Henri Matisse visits Auguste Rodin in his Paris studio but rejects the elder artist's sculptural style.

1903 Paul Gauguin dies in the Marquesas Islands in the South Pacific; the recourse to tribal art and primitivist fantasies in Gauguin influences the early work of André Derain, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.

box • The exotic and the naïve

1906 Paul Cézanne dies at Aix-en-Provence in southern France: following the retrospectives of Vincent van Gogh and Georges Seurat the preceding year, Cézanne's death casts Postimpressionism as the historical past, with Fauvism as its heir.

box • Roger Fry and the Bloomsbury Group

1907 With the stylistic inconsistencies and primitivist impulses of *Les Femmes d'Alger*, Pablo Picasso launches the most formidable attack ever on mimetic representation.

box • Gertrude Stein

1908 Wilhelm Worringer publishes *Abstraction and Empathy*, which contrasts abstract art with representational art as a withdrawal from the world versus an engagement with it: German Expressionism and English Vorticism elaborate this psychological polarity in distinctive ways.

1909 F. T. Marinetti publishes the first Futurist manifesto on the front page of *Le Figaro* in Paris: for the first time the avant-garde associates itself with media culture and positions itself in defiance of history and tradition.

box • Eadweard Muybridge and Étienne-Jules Marey

1910 – 1919

1910 Henri Matisse's *Dance II* and *Music* are condemned at the Salon d'Automne in Paris: in these pictures, Matisse pushes his concept of the “decorative” to an extreme, creating an expansive visual field of color that is difficult to behold.

1911 Pablo Picasso returns his “borrowed” Iberian stone heads to the Louvre Museum in Paris from which they had been stolen: he transforms his primitivist style and with Georges Braque begins to develop Analytical Cubism.

box • Guillaume Apollinaire

1912 Cubist collage is invented amid a set of conflicting circumstances and events: the continuing inspiration of Symbolist poetry, the rise of popular culture, and Socialist protests against the war in the Balkans.

1913 Robert Delaunay exhibits his “Windows” paintings in Berlin: the initial problems and paradigms of abstraction are elaborated across Europe.

1914 Vladimir Tatlin develops his constructions and Marcel Duchamp proposes his readymades, the first as a transformation of Cubism, the second as a break with it; in doing so, they offer complementary critiques of the traditional mediums of art.

box • The “Peau de l'Ours”

1915 Kazimir Malevich shows his Suprematist canvases at the “0.10” exhibition in Petrograd, thus bringing the Russian Formalist concepts of art and literature into alignment.

1916a In Zurich, the international movement of Dada is launched in a double reaction to the catastrophe of World War I and the provocations of Futurism and Expressionism.

box • Dada journals

1916b Paul Strand enters the pages of Alfred Stieglitz's magazine *Camera Work*: the American avant-garde forms itself around a complex relationship between photography and the other arts.

box • The Armory Show

1917 After two years of intense research, Piet Mondrian breaks through to abstraction, an event immediately followed by the launching of *De Stijl*, the earliest avant-garde journal devoted to the cause of abstraction in art and architecture.

1918 Marcel Duchamp paints *Tu m'*: his last ever painting summarizes the departures undertaken in his work, such as the use of chance, the promotion of the readymade, and photography's status as an "index."

box • Rose Sélavy

1919 Pablo Picasso has his first solo exhibition in Paris in thirteen years: the onset of pastiche in his work coincides with a widespread antimodernist reaction.

box • Sergei Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes

box • Rappel à l'ordre

1920—1929

1920 The Dada Fair is held in Berlin: the polarization of avant-garde culture and cultural traditions leads to a politicization of artistic practices and the emergence of photomontage as a new medium.

1921 The members of the Moscow Institute of Artistic Culture define Constructivism as a logical practice responding to the demands of a new collective society.

box • Soviet institutions

1922 Hans Prinzhorn publishes *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*: the "art of the insane" is explored in the work of Paul Klee and Max Ernst.

1923 The Bauhaus, the most influential school of modernist art and design in the twentieth century, holds its first public exhibition in Weimar, Germany.

1924 André Breton publishes the first issue of *La Révolution surréaliste*, establishing the terms of Surrealist aesthetics.

box • Surrealist journals

1925a While the Art Deco exhibition in Paris makes official the birth of modern kitsch, Le Corbusier's machine aesthetics becomes the bad dream of modernism and Aleksandr Rodchenko's Workers' Club advocates a new relationship between men and objects.

box • Black Deco

1925b Curator Gustav F. Hartlaub organizes the first exhibition of Neue Sachlichkeit painting at the Kunsthalle, Mannheim: a variation of the international tendencies of the *rappel à l'ordre*, this new "magic realism" signals the end of Expressionism and Dada practices in Germany.

1926 El Lissitzky's *Demonstration Room* and Kurt Schwitters's *Merzbau* are installed in Hanover, Germany: the architecture of the museum as archive and the allegory of modernist space as melancholia are dialectically conceived by the Constructivist and the Dadaist.

1927a After working as a commercial artist in Brussels, René Magritte joins the Surrealist movement in Paris, where his art plays on the idioms of advertising and the ambiguities of language and representation.

1927b Constantin Brancusi produces a stainless-steel cast of *The Newborn*: his sculpture unleashes a battle between models of high art and industrial production, brought to a head in the US trial over his *Bird in Space*.

1927c Charles Sheeler is commissioned by Ford to document its new River Rouge plant: North American modernists develop a lyrical relation to the machine age, which Georgia O'Keeffe extends to the natural world.

box • MoMA and Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

1928 The publication of "Unism in Painting" by Wladyslaw Strzeminski, followed in 1931 by a book on sculpture he coauthored with Katarzyna Kobro, *The Composition of Space*, marks the apogee of the internationalization of Constructivism.

1929 The "Film und Foto" exhibition, organized by the Deutscher Werkbund and held in Stuttgart from May 18 to July 7, displays a spectrum of international photographic practices and debates: the exhibition demarcates a climax in twentieth-century photography and marks the emergence of a new critical theory and historiography of the medium.

1930—1939

1930a The introduction of mass consumer and fashion magazines in twenties and thirties Weimar Germany generates new frameworks for the production and distribution of photographic imagery and helps foster the emergence of a group of important women photographers.

1930b Georges Bataille reviews *L'Art primitif* in *Documents*, making apparent a rift within the avant-garde's relation to primitivism and a deep split within Surrealism.

box • Carl Einstein

1931 Alberto Giacometti, Salvador Dalí, and André Breton publish texts on "the object of symbolic function" in the magazine *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*: Surrealism extends its aesthetic of fetishism and fantasy into the realm of object-making.

1933 Scandal breaks out over the portrait of Lenin by Diego Rivera in the murals for the Rockefeller Center: the Mexican mural movement produces public political mural work in various American locations and establishes a precedent for political avant-garde art in the United States.

1934a At the First All Union Congress of Writers, Andrei Zhdanov lays down the doctrine of Soviet Socialist Realism.

1934b In "The Sculptor's Aims," Henry Moore articulates a British aesthetic of direct carving in sculpture that mediates between figuration and abstraction, between Surrealism and Constructivism.

1935 Walter Benjamin drafts "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," André Malraux initiates "The Museum without Walls," and Marcel Duchamp begins the *Boîte-en-Valise*: the impact of mechanical reproduction, surfacing into art through photography, is felt within aesthetic theory, art history, and art practice.

1936 As part of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, and other photographers are commissioned to document rural America in the grip of the Great Depression.

box • Works Progress Administration

1937a The European powers contest one another in national pavilions of art, trade, and propaganda at the International Exhibition in Paris, while the Nazis open the "Degenerate Art" exhibition, a vast condemnation of modernist art, in Munich.

1937b Naum Gabo, Ben Nicholson, and Leslie Martin publish *Circle* in London, solidifying the institutionalization of geometric abstraction.

1940—1944

1942a The depoliticization of the American avant-garde reaches the point of no return when Clement Greenberg and the editors of *Partisan Review* bid farewell to Marxism.

1942b As World War II forces many Surrealists to emigrate from France to the United States, two shows in New York reach on this condition of exile in different ways.

box • Exiles and émigrés
box • Peggy Guggenheim

1943 James A. Porter's *Modern Negro Art*, the first scholarly study of African-American art, is published in New York as the Harlem Renaissance promotes race awareness and heritage.

1944a Piet Mondrian dies, leaving unfinished *Victory Boogie-Woogie*, a work that exemplifies his conception of painting as a destructive enterprise.

1944b At the outbreak of World War II, the "Old Masters" of modern art—Matisse, Picasso, Braque, and Bonnard—consider their refusal to flee occupied France as an act of resistance against barbarity: discovered at the Liberation, the style they had developed during the war years presents a challenge to the new generation of artists.

Roundtable | Art at mid-century

1945—1949

1945 David Smith makes *Pillar of Sunday*: constructed sculpture is caught between the craft basis of traditional art and the industrial basis of modern manufacturing.

1946 Jean Dubuffet exhibits his "*hautes pâtes*," which confirm the existence of a new, scatological trend in postwar French art, soon to be named "*informel*."

box • Art brut

1947a Josef Albers begins his "Variant" paintings at Black Mountain College in North Carolina a year after László Moholy-Nagy dies in Chicago: imported to the United States, the model of the Bauhaus is transformed by different artistic imperatives and institutional pressures.

1947b The publication of *Possibilities* in New York marks the coalescence of Abstract Expressionism as a movement.

1949 *Life* magazine asks its readers "Is he the greatest living painter in the United States?": the work of Jackson Pollock emerges as the symbol of advanced art.

1950—1959

1951 Barnett Newman's second exhibition fails: he is ostracized by his fellow Abstract Expressionists, only later to be hailed as a father figure by the Minimalist artists.

1953 Composer John Cage collaborates on Robert Rauschenberg's *Tire Print*: the indexical imprint is developed as a weapon against the expressive mark in a range of work by Rauschenberg, Ellsworth Kelly, and Cy Twombly.

1955a The first Gutai exhibition in Japan marks the dissemination of modernist art through the media and its reinterpretation by artists outside the United States and Europe, also exemplified by the rise of the Neoconcretist group in Brazil.

1955b The "Le mouvement" show at the Galerie Denise René in Paris launches kineticism.

1956 The exhibition "This is Tomorrow" in London marks the culmination of research into postwar relations between art, science, technology, product design, and popular culture undertaken by the Independent Group, forerunners of British Pop art.

1957a Two small vanguard groups, the Lettrist International and the Imaginist Bauhaus, merge to form the Situationist International, the most politically engaged of all postwar movements.

box • Two theses from The Society of the Spectacle

1957b Ad Reinhardt writes "Twelve Rules for a New Academy": as avant-garde paradigms in painting are reformulated in Europe, the monochrome and grid are explored in the United States by Reinhardt, Robert Ryman, Agnes Martin, and others.

1958 Jasper Johns's *Target with Four Faces* appears on the cover of *Artnews* magazine: for some artists like Frank Stella, Johns presents a model of painting in which figure and ground are fused in a single image-object; for others, he opens up the use of everyday signs and conceptual ambiguities alike.

box • Ludwig Wittgenstein

1959a Lucio Fontana has his first retrospective: he uses kitsch associations to question idealist modernism, a critique extended by his protégé Piero Manzoni.

1959b At the San Francisco Art Association, Bruce Conner shows *CHILD*, a mutilated figure in a high chair made in protest against capital punishment: a practice of assemblage and environment is developed on the West Coast by Conner, Wallace Berman, Ed Kienholz, and others that is more scabrous than its equivalents in New York, Paris, or elsewhere.

1959c The Museum of Modern Art in New York mounts "New Images of Man": existentialist aesthetics extend into a Cold War politics of figuration in the work of Alberto Giacometti, Jean Dubuffet, Francis Bacon, Willem de Kooning, and others.
box • Art and the Cold War

1959d Richard Avedon's *Observations* and Robert Frank's *The Americans* establish the dialectical parameters of New York School photography.

1960—1969

1960a Critic Pierre Restany organizes a group of diverse artists in Paris to form Nouveau Réalisme, redefining the paradigms of collage, the ready-made, and the monochrome.
box: The neo-avant-garde

1960b Clement Greenberg publishes "Modernist Painting": his criticism reorients itself and in its new guise shapes the debates of the sixties.
box • Leo Steinberg: the flatbed picture plane

1960c Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol start to use cartoons and advertisements as sources for paintings, followed by James Rosenquist, Ed Ruscha, and others: American Pop art is born.

1961 In December, Claes Oldenburg opens *The Store* in New York's East Village, an "environment" that mimicked the setting of surrounding cheap shops and from which all the items were for sale: throughout the winter and the following spring, ten different "happenings" would be performed by Oldenburg's Ray Gun Theater in *The Store* locale.

1962a In Wiesbaden, West Germany, George Maciunas organizes the first of a series of international events that mark the formation of the Fluxus movement.

1962b In Vienna, a group of artists including Günter Brus, Otto Mühl, and Hermann Nitsch come together to form Viennese Actionism.

1962c Spurred by the publication of *The Great Experiment: Russian Art 1863–1922* by Camilla Gray, Western interest wanes in the Constructivist principles of Vladimir Tatlin and Aleksandr Rodchenko, which are elaborated in different ways by younger artists such as Dan Flavin, Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt, and others.
box • Artforum

1963 After publishing two manifestos with the painter Eugen Schönebeck, Georg Baselitz exhibits *Die Grosse Nacht im Eimer* (Great Night Down the Drain) in Berlin.

1964a On July 20, the twentieth anniversary of the failed Stauffenberg coup against Hitler, Joseph Beuys publishes his fictitious autobiography and generates an outbreak of public violence at the "Festival of New Art" in Aachen, West Germany.

1964b *Thirteen Most Wanted Men* by Andy Warhol is installed, momentarily, on the facade of the State Pavilion at the World's Fair in New York.

1965 Donald Judd publishes "Specific Objects": Minimalism receives its theorization at the hands of its major practitioners, Judd and Robert Morris.

box • Maurice Merleau-Ponty

1966a Marcel Duchamp completes his installation *Etant Donnés* in the Philadelphia Museum of Art: his mounting influence on younger artists climaxes with the posthumous revelation of this new work.

1966b The exhibition "Eccentric Abstraction" opens in New York: the work of Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse, Yayoi Kusama, and others points to an expressive alternative to the sculptural language of Minimalism.

1967a Publishing "A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey," Robert Smithson marks "entropy" as a generative concept of artistic practice in the late sixties.

1967b The Italian critic Germano Celant mounts the first Arte Povera exhibition.

1967c For their first manifestation, the four artists of the French group BMPT paint in public, each artist repeating exactly from canvas to canvas a simple configuration of his choice: their form of Conceptualist painting is the latest in a line of attacks against "official" abstraction in postwar France.

1968a Two major museums committed to the most advanced European and American art of the sixties—the Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven and the Städtisches Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach—exhibit the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher, placing them at the forefront of an interest in Conceptual art and photography.

1968b Conceptual art manifests itself in publications by Sol LeWitt, Dan Graham, and Lawrence Weiner, while Seth Siegelaub organizes its first exhibitions.

box • Artists' journals
box • Deskillung

1969 The exhibition "When Attitudes Become Form" in Bern and London surveys Postminimalist developments, while "Anti-Illusion: Materials/Procedures" in New York focuses on Process art, the three principal aspects of which are elaborated by Richard Serra, Robert Morris, and Eva Hesse.

1970—1979

1970 Michael Asher installs his Pomona College Project: the rise of site-specific work opens up a logical field between modernist sculpture and Conceptual art.

1971 The Guggenheim Museum in New York cancels Hans Haacke's show and suppresses Daniel Buren's contribution to the Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition: practices of institutional critique encounter the resistance of the Minimalist generation.

box • Michel Foucault

1972a Marcel Broodthaers installs his "Musée d'Art Moderne, Département des Aigles, Section des Figures," in Düsseldorf, West Germany.

1972b The international exhibition "Documenta 5," held in Kassel, West Germany, marks the institutional acceptance of Conceptual art in Europe.

1973 The Kitchen Center for Video, Music, and Dance opens its own space in New York: video art claims an institutional space between visual and Performance art, television and film.

1974 With *Trans-fixed*, in which Chris Burden is nailed to a Volkswagen Beetle, American Performance art reaches an extreme limit of physical presence, and many of its adherents abandon, moderate, or otherwise transform its practice.

1975 As filmmaker Laura Mulvey publishes her landmark essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," feminist artists like Judy Chicago and Mary Kelly develop different positions on the representation of women.

box • Theory journals

1976 In New York, the founding of P.S.1 coincides with the Metropolitan Museum's "King Tut" exhibition: important shifts in the institutional structure of the art world are registered by both alternative spaces and the blockbuster show.

1977 The "Pictures" exhibition identifies a group of young artists whose strategies of appropriation and critiques of originality advance the notion of "postmodernism" in art.

1980—1989

1980 Metro Pictures opens in New York: a new group of galleries emerges in order to exhibit young artists involved in a questioning of the photographic image and its uses in news, advertising, and fashion.

box • Jean Baudrillard

1984a Victor Burgin delivers his lecture "The Absence of Presence: Conceptualism and Post-Modernisms": the publication of this and other lectures by Allan Sekula and Martha Rosler signals a new approach to the legacies of Anglo-American photo-conceptualism and to the writing of photographic history and theory.

1984b Fredric Jameson publishes "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," as the debate over postmodernism extends beyond art and architecture into cultural politics, and divides into two contrary positions.

box • Cultural studies

1986 "Endgame: Reference and Simulation in Recent Painting and Sculpture" opens in Boston: as some artists play on the collapse of sculpture into commodities, others underscore the new prominence of design and display.

1987 The first ACT-UP action is staged: activism in art is reignited by the AIDS crisis, as collaborative groups and political interventions come to the fore, and a new kind of queer aesthetics is developed.

box • The US Art Wars

1988 Gerhard Richter paints *October 18, 1977*: German artists contemplate the possibility of the renewal of history painting.

box • Jürgen Habermas

1989 "Les Magiciens de la terre," a selection of art from several continents, opens in Paris: postcolonial discourse and multicultural debates affect the production as well as the presentation of contemporary art.

box • Aboriginal art

1990—2003

1992 Fred Wilson presents *Mining the Museum* in Baltimore: institutional critique extends beyond the museum, and an anthropological model of project art based on fieldwork is adapted by a wide range of artists.

box • Interdisciplinarity

1993a Martin Jay publishes *Downcast Eyes*, a survey of the denigration of vision in modern philosophy: this critique of visibility is explored by a number of contemporary artists.

1993b As Rachel Whiteread's *House*, a casting of a terrace house in east London, is demolished, an innovative group of women artists comes to the fore in Britain.

1993c In New York, the Whitney Biennial foregrounds work focused on identity amid the emergence of a new form of politicized art by African-American artists.

1994a A mid-career exhibition of Mike Kelley highlights a pervasive concern with states of regression and abjection, while Robert Gober, Kiki Smith, and others use figures of the broken body to address problems of sexuality and mortality.

1994b William Kentridge completes *Felix in Exile*, joining Raymond Pettibon and others in demonstrating the renewed importance of drawing.

1998 An exhibition of large video projections by Bill Viola tours several museums: the projected image becomes a pervasive format in contemporary art.

box • The spectacularization of art

2001 A mid-career exhibition of Andreas Gursky at the Museum of Modern Art in New York signals the new dominance of a pictorial photography, which is often effected through digital means.

2003 With exhibits such as "Utopia Station" and "Zone of Urgency," the Venice Biennale exemplifies the informal and discursive nature of much recent artmaking and curating.

Roundtable | The predicament of contemporary art

Glossary

Further reading

Selected useful websites

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