


- **Dada** was an art movement formed during the First World War in Zurich in 1916 in negative reaction to the horrors and folly of the war. The art, poetry and performance produced by Dada artists is often satirical and nonsensical in nature. Dada artists felt war called into question every aspect of society and their aim was to destroy all traditional values and assumptions. Dada was also anti-bourgeois and aligned with the radical left. The founder of Dada was a writer, **Hugo Ball** and in 1916 he started a satirical night-club in Zurich, the Cabaret Voltaire. Dada became an international movement and was the basis of Surrealism in Paris after the war. Leading artists associated with it include Jean Arp (1886-1966), Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), Francis Picabia (1879-1953) and Kurt Schwitters (1887-1948). Duchamp's questioning of the fundamentals of Western art had a profound subsequent influence.
- **Surrealism** was founded by French poet **André Breton** in Paris in 1924 and it became an international movement including British Surrealism which formed in 1936. Surrealists were strongly influenced by Sigmund Freud (the founder of psychoanalysis) and his theories about the unconscious and the aim of the movement was to reveal the unconscious and reconcile it with rational life. Key artists involved in the movement were Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, René Magritte and Joan Miró. Two broad types of surrealism can be seen: one based on dreamlike imagery and the other on automatism (a process of making which unleashed the unconscious by drawing or writing without conscious thought). Some (such as Max Ernst) used new techniques such as frottage and collage to create unusual imagery.
- **Expressionism** was a modernist movement before WW I, initially in poetry and painting, and originating in Germany. Its typical trait is to present the world solely

from a subjective perspective, distorting it radically for emotional effect in order to evoke moods or ideas. Expressionist artists sought to express the meaning of emotional experience rather than physical reality. The high point of Expressionism is between 1905 and 1920 and its influence spread throughout Europe. It influenced German art for the whole of the twentieth century and informed Abstract Expressionism. It was also a precursor to Neo-Expressionism in the 1980s. What it made important was not the representation of the external world but the way it articulated the artists' feelings. Expressionist artists typically criticized modern society from the point of view of alienation, the hegemony of the elite, the fetishism of objects, consumerism, the objectification of the individual and globalisation.

Notes

- Roland Penrose (1900-1984)
 - 1936 International Surrealism Exhibition marked Surrealism's arrival in England
 - Picasso exhibitions in 1938, 1951, 1960 and 1967
 - 1948 40 Years of Modern Art
 - 1949 40,000 Years of Modern Art
- Dada Artists
 - Louis Aragon (1897–1982), France
 - Jean Arp (1886–1966), Germany, France
 - Hugo Ball (1886–1927), Germany, Switzerland
 - André Breton (1896–1966), France
 - Otto Dix (1891–1969), Germany
 - Theo van Doesburg (1883–1931) Netherlands
 - Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968), France
 - Paul Éluard (1895–1952), France
 - Max Ernst (1891–1976), Germany, USA
 - Julius Evola (1898–1974), Italy
 - George Grosz (1893–1959), Germany, France, USA
 - Raoul Hausmann (1886–1971), Germany
 - John Heartfield (1891–1968), Germany, USSR, Czechoslovakia, Great Britain
 - Hannah Höch (1889–1978), Germany
 - Richard Huelsenbeck (1892–1974), Germany
 - Marcel Janco (1895–1984), Romania, Israel
 - Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven (1874–1927), Germany, USA
 - Clément Pansaers (1885–1922), Belgium
 - Francis Picabia (1879–1953), France
 - Man Ray (1890–1976), France, USA
 - Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes (1884–1974), France
 - Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948), Germany

- Walter Serner (1889–1942), Austria
- Philippe Soupault (1897–1990), France
- Sophie Taeuber-Arp (1889–1943), Switzerland, France
- Tristan Tzara (1896–1963), Romania, France
- Beatrice Wood (1893–1998), USA



NEW WAYS OF SEEING: MODERN BRITISH ART

1. New Ways of Seeing
2. Impressionism, Post-Impressionism & Fauvism
3. Cubism, Abstraction and the British Avant Garde
4. Vorticism and World War One Artists
5. Return to Order: Stanley Spencer
6. **Dada, Surrealism & Expressionism**
7. British Sculpture & Henry Moore
8. World War Two Artists
9. British Figurative Art
10. Summary 1900-1950

- Following last weeks look at the 'Return to Order' movement through the work of Stanley Spencer we will now look at an influential movement called Dada that started during the First World War. Although influential Dada was relatively short lived and was followed by the much longer lived Surrealism movement. We will also look briefly at the germ Expressionism movement as the ideas of Expressionism influenced artists across Europe.



Cabaret Voltaire, 1916, Zurich, Switzerland

Cabaret Voltaire, 1916, Zurich, Switzerland

- Dada was an art movement of the European avant-garde in the early 20th century. It began in 1916 at Cabaret Voltaire, in Zürich, Switzerland. The Dada manifesto was read by Hugo Ball at the launch in Cabaret Voltaire on 14 July 1916. It spread to Berlin shortly thereafter, but the height of New York Dada was the year before, in 1915. It was formed as a negative reaction to the horrors and folly of the war. The art, poetry and performance produced by Dada artists is often satirical and nonsensical in nature. Dada artists felt the war called into question every aspect of a society capable of starting and then prolonging it – including its art. Their aim was to destroy traditional values in art and to create a new art to replace the old. As the artist Hans Arp later wrote:
 - *Revolted by the butchery of the 1914 World War, we in Zurich devoted ourselves to the arts. While the guns rumbled in the distance, we sang, painted, made collages and wrote poems with all our might.*
- Dada rejected everything and a common cry was 'Dada is anti-Dada'.

Notes

- Zurich in 1916 was a gathering place for refugees from all over war-torn Europe and a relatively permissive society. Intellectuals gathered in cafes and discussed the structure of a future society to replace the one that had led to the carnage of the war. Lenin was in Zurich preparing his own revolution in 1916. Another intellectual was Hugo Ball with his wife Emmy Hennings, Tristan Tzara, Arthur Segal, Jean Arp, the Janco brothers and Richard Huelsenbeck, all founders of the

Dada movement. Some were Romanian Jews escaping persecution and other were Germans escaping the war. They were all convinced that the war resulted from outdated bourgeois values and that society with all of its inequalities and brutality need to be replaced by a kinder, more human social order.

- The founder of Dada was the writer, Hugo Ball. In 1916 he started a satirical night-club in Zurich, the Cabaret Voltaire, and a magazine which, wrote Ball, 'will bear the name "Dada". Dada, Dada, Dada, Dada.' It was named Cabaret Voltaire after the French philosopher who also challenged the status quo. It opened in February 1916 and the first events were similar to those Ball had organised in Berlin with mainstream music. Over the months the events became more and more daring until 14 July 1916 when the Dada movement was launched. Some say the launch on 14 July was held in the Waag Hall which was hired for one night. Dada was more an anti-art than an art movement and it consisted of performances aimed at shocking the audience. The outrage resulted in the Cabaret Voltaire closing and it moved to another location which also soon closed. Despite this it moved to other cities. Those artists that did not remain Dadaists became Surrealists.
- Hugo Ball separated himself from Dada in 1920 and became a Christian and his role was taken over by Tristan Tzara, a Romanian and French poet, playwright, and avant-garde performer who played a key role in early Zurich Dada. He was a proponent of pure automatic techniques.
- There are many theories regarding the origin of the name, one was that it was found by sticking a dagger in a dictionary and the point was over the French word 'dada' meaning 'hobby-horse'. It also means 'yeah, yeah' in Romanian. The cabaret soon closed but Dada became an international movement and eventually formed the basis of surrealism in Paris after the war.
- Leading artists associated with it include Arp, Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia and Kurt Schwitters. Duchamp's questioning of the fundamentals of Western art had a profound subsequent influence.
- Ironically, in 2004, Cabaret Voltaire reopened, funded by the city of Zurich and private funders. Presciently, Hugo Ball wrote in 1916, "I have another system now. I want to do it differently....I declare hereby that Expressionism, Dadaism and other "isms" are the worst type of bourgeoisie. All are bourgeoisie, all bourgeoisie. Evil, evil, evil".

References

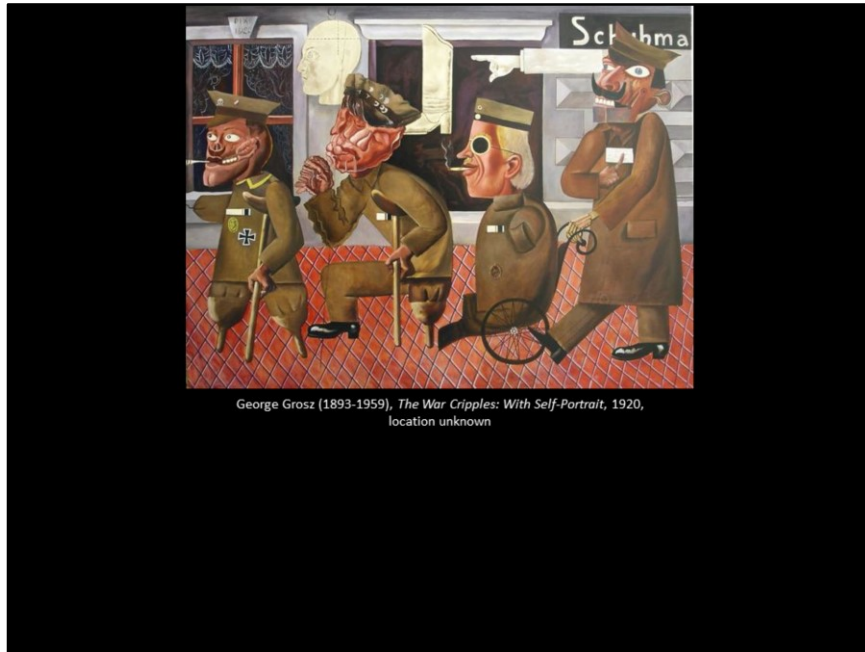
- <https://olgaistefan.wordpress.com/2009/11/19/cabaret-voltaire-from-dada-to-nietniet/>



The First International Dada Fair, Berlin, 1920

Left to right: Raoul Hausmann, Hannah Höch (seated), Dr. Otto Burchard, Johannes Baader, Wieland Herzfelde, Margarete Herzfelde, Otto Schmalhausen (seated), George Grosz, John Heartfield.

- The exhibition was organised by George Grosz and John Heartfield and Grosz contributed Otto contributed with his canvas entitled *War Cripples: A Self-Portrait* (1920) which portrayed four war invalids with severely broken bodies and spirits. Many Dada artists and writers actually ended up committing suicide, it somehow was their ultimate stand against war.
- In the 1937 catalogue of the censored 'Degenerate Art' exhibition, there is a direct quotation from Hitler, who in 1934 said, **"With the exhibition, and with the destruction of a number of works from it, the Nazis wanted to prove the moral decadence, the degeneracy of Weimar. Of all their enemies, the Nazis chose Otto Dix and George Grosz as exemplary degenerates in the exhibition."**
- George Grosz (1893) has passionate views and after escaping arrest by the Weimar Republic he joined the Communist Party of Germany. He spent five months in Russia and met Lenin and Trotsky. Following this he resigned from the Communist Party as he rejected all forms of dictatorial rule. He was bitterly anti-Nazi and left Germany in 1933 for the USA shortly before Hitler came to power.



George Grosz (1893-1959), *The War Cripples: With Self-Portrait*, 1920, location unknown

George Grosz (1893-1959), *The War Cripples: With Self-Portrait*, 1920, location unknown

- Grosz documents the uncomfortable truth behind the bourgeois façade. He was fascinated by street life and appears to have loved the ugliness of it. He uses various techniques, such as staring eyes, to create a feeling of violence and menace. His style softened around 1924 when he got married and had a child and in 1933 he emigrated to America and reverted to being a graphic artist.
- Grosz shows victims, such as dead soldiers, crippled victims of war, beggars and prostitutes and those that were guilty such as war-mongers in the military, nationalistic politicians, the bourgeoisie who continued to indulge in luxurious living despite the war and rich industrialists who had profited from the war.



Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968), *Bottle Rack*, 1914, replica 1961, 49.8 x 41 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art

- One artist who has had more influence than the others is Marcel Duchamp. The term anti-art, a precursor to Dada, was coined by Marcel Duchamp around 1913 when he created his first readymades. Dada, in addition to being anti-war, had political affinities with the radical left and was also anti-bourgeois.
- Marcel Duchamp claimed to have bought the *Bottle Rack* at a department store called Bazar de l'Hôtel de Ville near the Paris city hall. The *Bottle Rack* was a typical, metal rack used for the drying of bottles, but the spiky, aggressive appearance of the piece earned it the name of Hedgehog. Unlike the earlier *Bicycle Wheel* (1913) or *Pharmacy* (1913), the *Bottle Rack* was not modified in any way, making it **the first, "true" example of a readymade**. The *Bottle Rack* also had an inscription scribbled on its side, much like the infamous R. Mutt of Duchamp's *Fountain* (1917) piece, though the actual words remain a mystery as Duchamp had forgotten the inscription by the time it had been thrown out. The original piece was destroyed, mistaken as garbage due to its appearance and thrown out by Duchamp's sister and stepsister after the artist left France in 1914 for the United States. While the original no longer survives, the legacy of the work lives on, with replicas residing in prominent museums, such as the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Norton Simon Museum, and the Moderna Museet.
- Dada was active from 1916 to roughly 1924 in Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne,

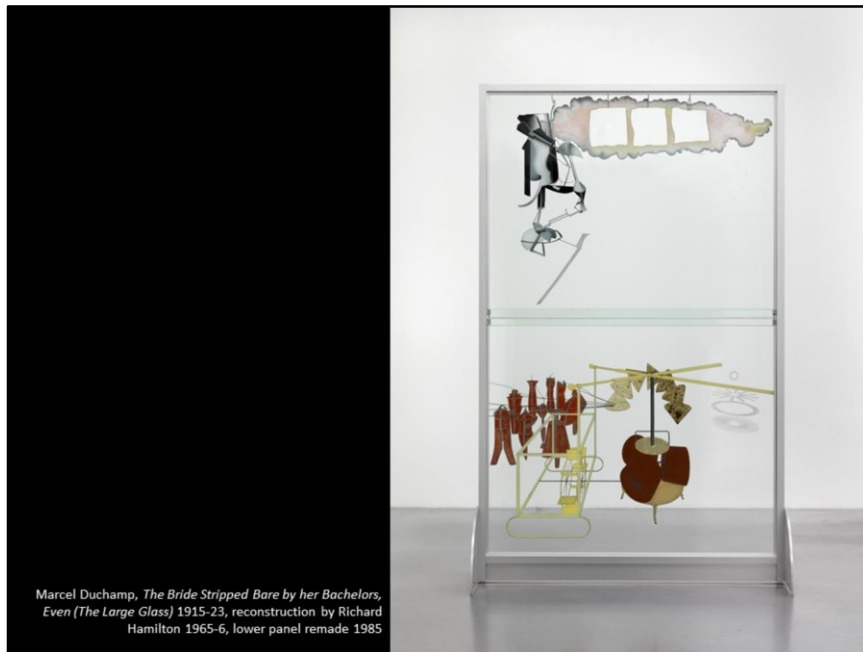
Paris, and New York. The artists affiliated with Dada did not share a common style or practice so much as the wish, as expressed by French artist Jean (Hans) Arp, 'to destroy the hoaxes of reason and to discover an unreasoned order.'

- Duchamp's first readmade was *Bicycle Wheel* of 1913, a bicycle wheel mounted on a wooden stool. Others include *In Advance of a Broken Arm* of 1915, a snow shovel that was given that title and *Fountain*, a men's urinal.
- Duchamp deliberately chose ordinary, functional and rather dull objects. He chose them he said '...based on a reaction of visual indifference, with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste...'
- Readymades were not selected by Duchamp for their beauty but were ordinary manufactured objects that were selected and sometimes modified to create art. Duchamp was making the point that as he was an artist he could create art by the simple process of isolating it from its surroundings (selecting it) and presenting it as art. It is art because he says it is.
- More recently the Young British Artists Damien Hirst and Tracey Emin have created art works that could be described as readymades although examples such as Emin's *My Bed* (1998) have been constructed to highlight an aspect of her personal life.
- The term readymade was itself readymade as it was used at the end of the nineteenth century to describe manufactured objects that were not handmade.
- The theory behind the readymade was explained in an anonymous editorial published in the May 1917 issue of avant-garde magazine *The Blind Man* run by Duchamp and two friends:
 - 'Whether Mr Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life, and placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view – created a new thought for that object.'
- There are four important points here:
 - First, the choice of object is itself a creative act. It is not necessary to demonstrate a skill at representation.
 - Secondly, by cancelling the 'useful' function of an object it becomes art. A urinal is not art until it is selected and exhibited when it loses its function and becomes art.
 - Thirdly, that the addition of a title to the object and its presentation in a gallery or exhibition demonstrate 'a new thought' and create a new meaning.
 - Fourthly, what is art is defined by the artist.
- This move from artist-as-maker to artist-as-chooser is often seen as the beginning of the movement to conceptual art, as the status of the artist and the object are called into question. At the time, the readymade was seen as an assault on the conventional understanding not only of the status of art and the artist but its very

nature. If art is what is chosen by an artist then how do we know who is an artist?
Who authenticates the artist?

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/glossary/r/readymade>



Marcel Duchamp, *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)* 1915-23, 2.7 m tall, reconstruction by Richard Hamilton 1965-6, lower panel remade 1985

- This is another work by Duchamp that was carefully constructed over time. The glass of the original was accidentally smashed and it was never repaired. The original is in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. This is a copy made by the artist Richard Hamilton under Duchamp's direction. There are two other copies in Stockholm and Tokyo.
- Books have been written about its complex meaning which Duchamp carefully worked out using sketches and notebooks. In summary, with an element of fun he shows the erotic encounter between the 'Bride', in the upper panel, and her nine 'Bachelors' gathered timidly below in an abundance of mysterious mechanical apparatus in the lower panel.
- The Bride is a mechanical, almost insect-like, group of monochrome shaded geometric forms located along the left-hand side of the glass. She is connected to her halo, a cloudy form stretching across the top. Its curvilinear outline and grey shading are starkly offset by the three undulating squares of unpainted glass evenly spaced over the central part of the composition.
- The Bachelors' earthbound, lower domain, referred to by Duchamp as The Bachelor Machine, is a collection of much warmer, earthier colours of brown and golden tones. The Bachelors' Domain centres on the nine "Malic Moulds." These dark brown shapes have a central vertical line, some with horizontal ones across

them. They resemble the empty carcasses of clothes hanging from a clothesline, much more than they do actual men. They are interconnected through a spider web of thin lines, tying them to the seven conical cylinders.

- Most critics, however, read the piece as an exploration of male and female desire as they complicate each other. One critic, for example, describes the basic layout as follows: "*The Large Glass* has been called a love machine, but it is actually a machine of suffering. Its upper and lower realms are separated from each other forever by a horizon designated as the 'bride's clothes.' The bride is hanging, perhaps from a rope, in an isolated cage, or crucified. The bachelors remain below, left only with the possibility of churning, agonized masturbation."
- However, more recently critics have seen the work as ridiculing criticism and mocking the solemnity of the viewer determined to find a 'key'. Duchamp said, 'I believe that the artist doesn't know what he does. I attach even more importance to the spectator than to the artist.'

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/room-stripped-bare-even>



Max Ernst (1891–1976), *Dadaville*, c.1924, painted plaster and cork on canvas, 68 x 56 x 6.3 cm, Tate

- Tate site, 'Ernst was a key figure in the anarchic circles of Cologne Dada before moving to Paris and the emerging Surrealist movement. This strange work dates from that moment of transition. The use of rough cork is typical of Ernst's inventive exploration of materials. By making the walls of the Dada city from this unexpected substance, he may offer a wry reflection on Dada's temporary, but resilient, nature.'
- The title suggests it is a Dada town but it is unclear whether we are trapped inside by this gate or are outside and cannot get in. The use of porous, fragile cork suggests that Dada is fragile or that theories (a town is a complex structure, like a theory) about the meaning of Dada are fragile.
- Early photographs show the cork strips were originally more regular, and all four vertical cork strips had four regular, button-like corks.



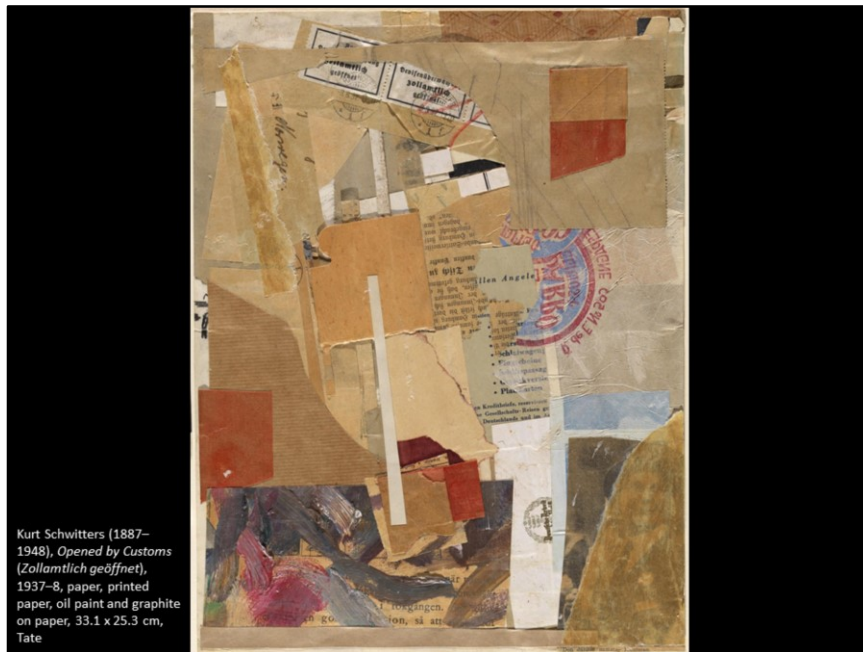
Man Ray (1890–1976), *Cadeau (Gift)*, 1921, editioned replica 1972, flat iron and nails, 17.8 x 9.4 x 12.6 cm, Tate

- This is one of the most famous icons of the Surrealist movement. It is an ordinary flat-iron (a readymade) that has been transformed by the addition of a row of 14 tacks. Man Ray made the object one afternoon after visiting a hardware store with a fellow artist. It has erotic and sadistic associations that are reinforced by a remark Man Ray once made. He said he had once used it to tear the dress of a beautiful eighteen-year old black girl as she danced. He found the effect of the young girl dancing with her dress torn to ribbons very beautiful.
- The Tate iron is one of five trial pieces made before an edition of eleven was published. The original flat iron design could not be found so all five are different. It was found to be difficult to stick on the tapestry tacks and various glues were tried.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/man-ray-cadeau-t07883>

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/man-ray-cadeau-t07883/text-summary>



Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948), *Opened by Customs (Zollamtlich geöffnet)*, 1937–8, paper, printed paper, oil paint and graphite on paper, 33.1 x 25.3 cm, Tate

- Tate site, “Schwitters made this collage in Norway, shortly after emigrating from Nazi Germany. Among the pieces of rubbish he incorporated are various kinds of wrapping paper and fragments of German and Norwegian newspapers. The title was chosen by the artist’s son, from a pair of German customs labels included in the work, and stamped with the place and date ‘Hannover 3.8.37’. He later explained: ‘my father wanted certain parts of his Collages read and understood, intellectually, and he often made these the actual titles of his works. Usually, they were witty, ironical or even sarcastic.’”
- Kurt Schwitters (1887-1948) was a German artist who studied Arts & Crafts in Hanover and Dresden. He was influenced by Expressionism and Cubism and in 1918 created his own form of Dada called merz, a nonsense word that he adopted as a type of brand. He used rubbish materials such as labels, bus tickets and bits of broken wood in his collages and constructions. He was a fiend of Arp and van Doesburg.
- In 1923 he started to build fantastic merz construction in his house, which he called merz-building or merzbau...

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/schwitters-opened-by-customs-t00214>

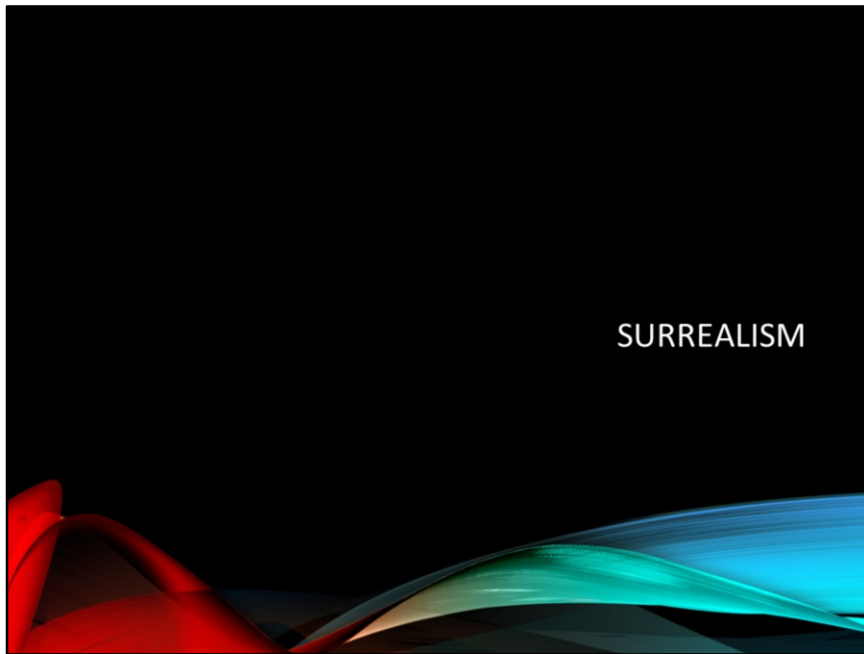


Kurt Schwitters (1887-1948), Merzbau 1933, reconstruction by Peter Bisseger 1981-3, 393 x 580 x 460 cm, Sprengel Museum, Hannover

- Kurt Schwitters: Reconstructions of the *Merzbau*
- One of the most important art works and myths in modern art, the inspiration for many installation artists, and still one of the most well known and published works by Kurt Schwitters (1887-1948), the *Merzbau*, in fact, no longer exists. It was destroyed in a British air raid in October 1943 in Hannover. By 1937, when Schwitters left his hometown to follow his son into exile in Oslo, the *Merzbau* comprised a total of eight rooms in his house at 5 Waldhausenstraße in Hannover.

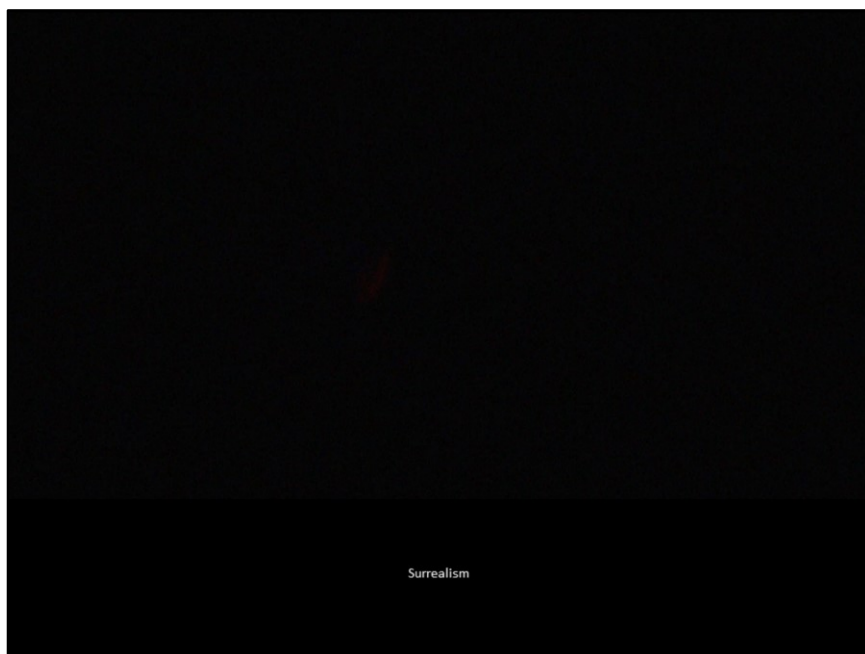
References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/08/kurt-schwitters-reconstructions-of-the-merzbau>



References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/glossary/s/surrealism>



Peter Capaldi's five minute introduction to Surrealism from the Tate website.



René Magritte (1898-1967), *The Treachery of Images* (or *Ceci n'est pas une pipe*), 1928-29, 63.5 x 93.98 cm, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

- Surrealism
- Taken from a talk by Magritte, upset the names, disrupt the order, create the mystery so they no longer conform to our clever or naïve idea of them.
- French poet André Breton launched this movement in Paris in 1924
- It became an international movement including British surrealism which formed in 1936
- They were strongly influenced by Sigmund Freud (the founder of psychoanalysis) and his theories about the unconscious
- The aim of surrealism was to reveal the unconscious and reconcile it with rational life
- Key artists involved in the movement were Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, René Magritte and Joan Miró
- Two broad types of surrealism can be seen: the oneiric (dream-like imagery) and automatism (a process of making which unleashed the unconscious by drawing or writing without conscious thought)
- Some (such as Max Ernst) used new techniques such as frottage and collage to create unusual imagery



- International Surrealist Exhibition, 1936 at which Salvador Dalí attempted to deliver a lecture whilst wearing a deep-sea diver's suit and holding two hounds on a leash, but he had to be rescued after nearly suffocating
- 12 June to 4 July 1936
- First brought Surrealism to London. It was well received by artists as Britain had always had a tradition of whimsy, fantasy and dreams through artists such as Fuseli, Dadd, Burne-Jones and Lewis Carol. The exhibition was very influential but although Surrealism was the longest lived and most influential movement of the twentieth century it could be said to have quickly died away in Britain.
- At the time it caused an immense stir and it is often quoted by art historians but it not change the approach of many artists. Like an exploding rocket it was bright and entertaining for a short period but quickly died away. One reason is that many artists left Europe in 1938-40 for the US. Franco launched his coup in July of the same year.
- Surrealism was a reaction against the 'return to order' and classicism and it was inspired by the work of Sigmund Freud.
- Automatic art took root in the US and gave rise to action painting.
- Andre Breton, What is Surrealism, 1924. David Gascoyne organised Surrealism with Roland Penrose, Herbert Read, Henry Moore and others.
- The art works from Denmark were impounded by the police as obscene and they were eventually sent back.
- Some of the more well known artists and art works are:
 - Man-Ray, *Observatory Time: The Lovers (The Lips)*, 1932-34, 91 x 244 cm
 - Max Ernst, *The Elephant Celebes*, 1921, Tate

- Alberto Giacometti, *The Palace at 4am*, 1932, Museum of Modern Art, New York. Giacometti said the work relates to "a period of six months passed in the presence of a woman who, concentrating all life in herself, transported my every moment into a state of enchantment. We constructed a fantastical palace in the night—a very fragile palace of matches. At the least false movement a whole section would collapse. We always began it again."
 - Francis Picabia, *Spanish Night*, 1922, 150 x 186 cm, private collection. Picabia changed his ideas as often as he changed his shirt. He was regarded as uncategorisable.
 - Pablo Picasso, *The Studio*, 1934, 128 x 159.4, Indiana University Art Museum
 - Miro, *Harlequins Carnival*, 1924
 - Magritte, *On the Threshold of Liberty*, 1930. He disagreed with the Surrealists over their rejection of religion.
 - Pablo Picasso, *The Woman with the Golden Breasts*, 1914 The Surrealists tried to claim Picasso but he was in a category of his own.
 - Giorgio de Chirico, *The Philosophers Conquest*, 1914, 125.1 x 99.1 cm, The Art Institute of Chicago
 - Giorgio de Chirico, *The Child's Brain*, 1914
 - Salvador Dali, *The Dream*, 1931
 - Salvador Dali, *Paranoiac Face*, 1935
 - René Magritte, *The Annunciation*, 1930, 113.7 x 145.9, Tate
 - Man-Ray, *The Rope Dancer Accompanies Herself with Her Shadows*, 1916, Museum of Modern Art, New York
 - Paul Klee, *The Mask of Fear*, 1932, 100.4 x 57.1 cm, Museum of Modern Art, New York
 - Paul Klee, *Siesta of the Sphinx*, 1932
 - Dora Maar, *Le Simulateur* (The Simulator or The Pretender), 1936
- The exhibition was well attended, there were traffic jams in Piccadilly for the first time.
 - Penrose bought several of the works afterwards.
 - The exhibition was educational and there were lectures.
 - Dylan Thomas walked around offering people cups of string and asking if they wanted it 'weak or strong'.
 - Critics did not like it, nice boys but immature.



International Surrealist Exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries, London showing two sculptures by Moore, 1936

Surrealism Today, Zwemmer Gallery, London, showing *Reclining Figure* 1939 on the floor in 1940

“In 1936 he joined a group of surrealist artists led by painter Roland Penrose and became honorary treasurer of the organising committee for the *International Surrealist Exhibition* which took place at the New Burlington Galleries London, in June that year. Here he exhibited sculptures alongside works by Arp, Giacometti, Brancusi, Calder, and Dalí (slide). He continued to exhibit in exhibitions of surrealist art until 1940 (pop-up). At the same time he also exhibited alongside constructivist artists. He exhibited alongside Nicholson and Mondrian, for example, in an exhibition called *Abstract and Concrete* in 1936, and he also contributed to *Axis*, a literary and artistic journal which sought to place British art within an international context. In 1937, *Axis* published a book of artists’ statements entitled *The Painter’s Object*, edited by Myfanway Piper. Moore’s contribution was an article called ‘The Sculptor Speaks’, which had recently been published in the *Listener*. In his article Moore tried to diminish the importance of the divisions between the different groupings: ‘The violent quarrel between the abstractionists and the surrealists seems to me quite unnecessary. All good art has contained both abstract and surrealist elements, just as it has contained both classical and romantic elements – order and surprise, intellect and imagination, conscious and unconscious.’” (Tate)

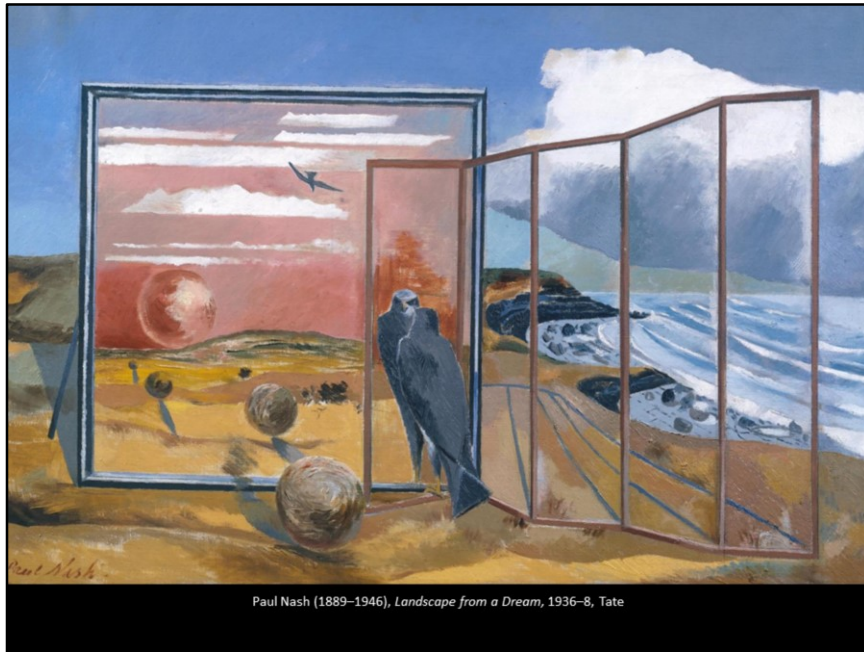
“The Reclining Figure was Moore’s principal and enduring subject. It gave him the

freedom, compositionally and spatially, to 'invent a completely new form-idea'. Moore carved six large reclining figures in Elmwood between 1935 and 1978. The group brought together for this exhibition demonstrates his continuing innovation in interpreting a theme in a particular material. Before the spread of Dutch Elm Disease, Elmwood was the largest and most common tree species native to Britain. The timber has a wide grain, which suited Moore's larger carvings. Elm surpassed stone in the formal possibilities it offered the sculptor. The large 1939 piece, in particular, with its multiple hollows, demonstrates the development of Moore's carving and his aspiration to bring space and form into equilibrium. The sense of growth in wood was significant for Moore. In the spirit of truth to materials, he exploited the pattern of the grain and the length of the timber to define and accentuate different parts of the body. These elm sculptures have been discussed in terms of their sexuality, fecundity and symbolic resonance with the landscape. Moore sought to invest his reclining figures with 'repose' in a perfect union of subject, technique and material." (Reclining Figure, Tate)

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/henry-moore/alice-correia-biography-r1171900>

<http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/henry-moore-0/henry-moore-room-guide/henry-moore-room-7>



Paul Nash (1889–1946), *Landscape from a Dream*, 1936–8, Tate

- Paul Nash was a British surrealist and war artist who was most well-known for his landscape paintings. From 1928, he became particularly influenced by the work of Giorgio de Chirico because of his use of unexpected objects within mysterious landscapes.
- Political upheaval from World War Two spread surrealists around the globe (notably in Belgium, Britain and the former Czechoslovakia). They widely influencing art, literature and the cinema as well as social attitudes and behaviour. The British Surrealist group formed in 1936 with artist Paul Nash and critic Herbert Read among its founding members. Soon after forming, they organised the First International Surrealist Exhibition in London which attracted huge public attention.
- Other British Surrealist artists in the group included Eileen Agar, John Armstrong, John Banting, Ithell Colquhoun, Conroy Maddox, E.L.T. Mesens, Julian Trevelyan. In 1947 the British group merged with the French one.



Leonora Carrington, *The Inn of the Dawn of the Horse*, 1939

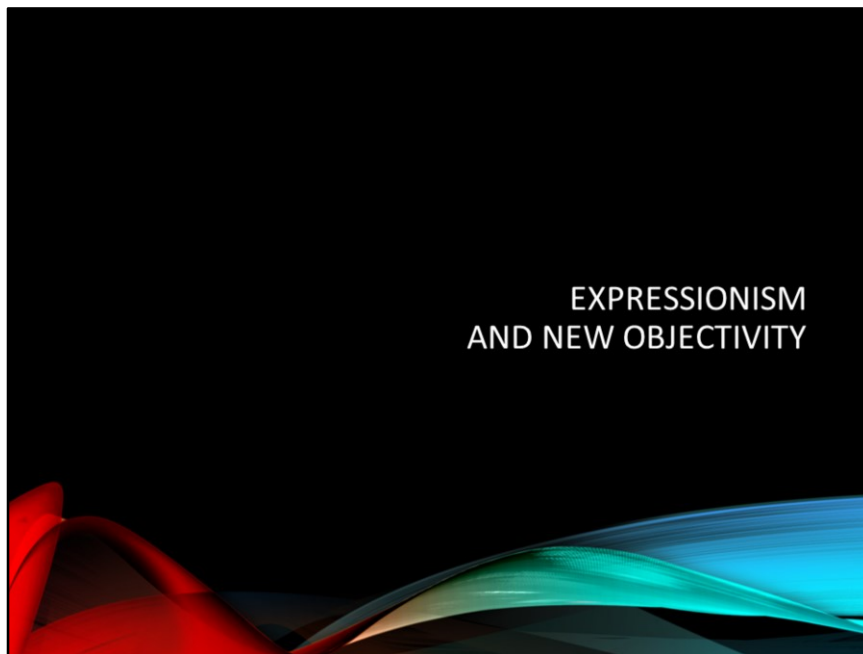
Leonora Carrington (1917-2011), *The Inn of the Dawn of the Horse*, 1939

Leonora Carrington has been described as the last of the great Surrealists. She was born in England but has spent most of her life in Mexico. She was one of the last surviving artists of the 1930s Surrealist movement.



An interview with Leonora Carrington by her cousin, the journalist Joanna Moorhead. This brief clip concerns her view about how we should relate to art works.

Show section 5:57 to 6:45

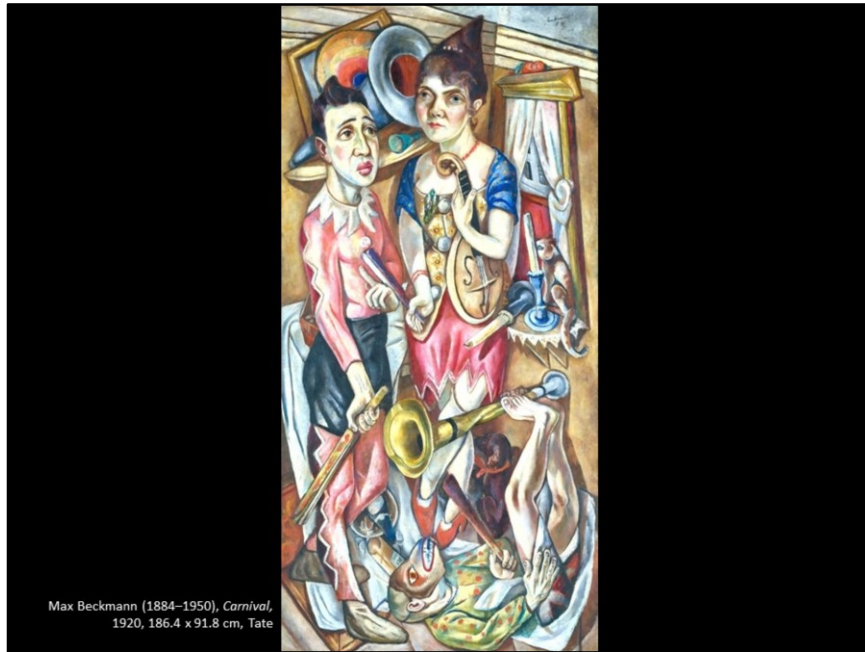


- Expressionism in art is more accurately called German Expressionism but the influence of German expressionist artists spread across Europe and America. It was a rebellion against cultural and social institutions and it coincided roughly with the Weimar Republic. By 1933 German museums were full of Expressionist work and it was regarded as representing modern German art. Over 250 journals and periodicals were dedicated to the movement shows that even though it was niche it was a well-established niche. The Nazis rejected Expressionism because of its links to Bolshevism and the Weimar Republic.
- Expressionism is notoriously difficult to define, in part because it "overlapped with other major 'isms' of the modernist period: with Futurism, Vorticism, Cubism, Surrealism and Dada." (Richard Murphy)
- The term refers to an "artistic style in which the artist seeks to depict not objective reality but rather the subjective emotions and responses that objects and events arouse within a person." It is arguable that all artists are expressive but there are many examples of art production in Europe from the 15th century onward which emphasize extreme emotion. The difference is that Expressionism does not shun the violently unpleasant. One frequently quoted example of a precursor to Expressionism that embodies the same spirit is Edvard Much, *The Scream* of 1893.
- Early on there were two main groups of **German expressionist** artists: **Die Brücke (the Bridge)** founded in 1905 led by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, and **Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider)** led by Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc and founded in 1911.
- Expressionism was in particular the **dominant form of art in Germany**, and it was represented in many different facets of public life—in dance, in theatre, in

painting, in architecture, in poetry, and in literature. Expressionists abandoned nature and sought to express emotional experience, often centring their art around inner turmoil (angst), whether in reaction to the modern world, to alienation from society, or in the creation of personal identity. In concert with this evocation of angst and unease with bourgeois life, expressionists also echoed some of the same feelings of revolution as did Futurists.

- Later **New Objectivity** (in German: Neue Sachlichkeit) arose in Germany during the 1920s as a **reaction against Expressionism**. The term was coined by Gustav Friedrich Hartlaub, the director of the Kunsthalle in Mannheim, who used it as the title of an art exhibition staged in 1925 to showcase artists who were working in a post-expressionist spirit. As these artists—who included **Max Beckmann**, Otto Dix, and **George Grosz**—rejected the self-involvement and romantic longings of the expressionists, Weimar intellectuals in general made a call to arms for public collaboration, engagement, and **rejection of romantic idealism**.

Britain, almost alone among all the countries of northern Europe remained unaffected by Expressionism during the 1920s-40s although British artists were aware of the movement. Most German artists emigrated to America where it entered the mainstream thanks to Hollywood.

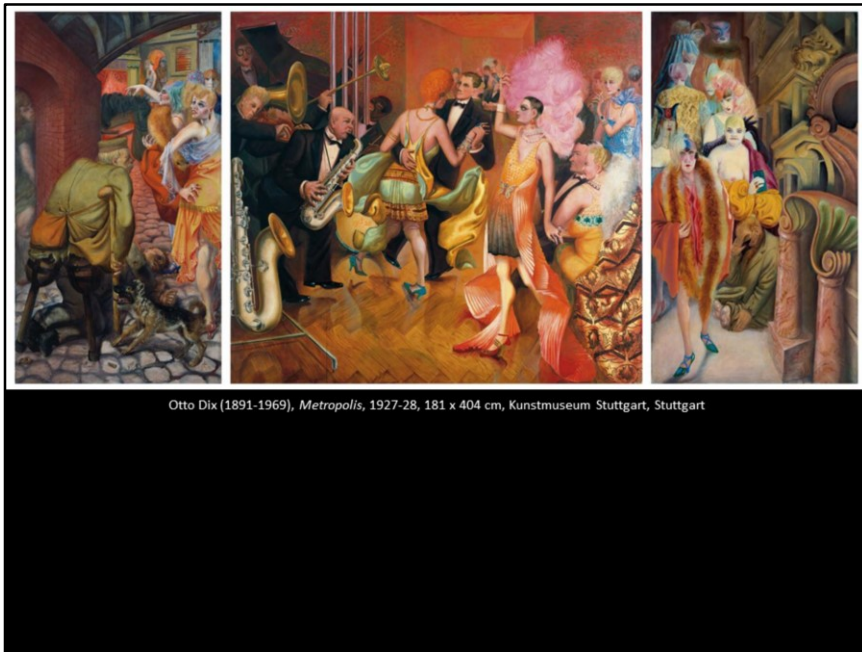


Max Beckmann (1884–1950), *Carnival*, 1920, 186.4 x 91.8 cm, Tate

- Expressionism
- Tate website, 'This work represents the climax of Carnival, a season of fancy dress parties, masked balls and street processions with wild music and dancing. The two figures are based on close friends of the artist, who is possibly represented by the masked clown. Beckmann's work, with its grotesque and distorted figures, epitomised what the Nazis considered to be 'degenerate' art. He was dismissed from his teaching post in Frankfurt in 1933. Several of his works were included in the 1937 Degenerate Art show, prompting him to leave Germany for Amsterdam.'

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/beckmann-carnival-t03294>



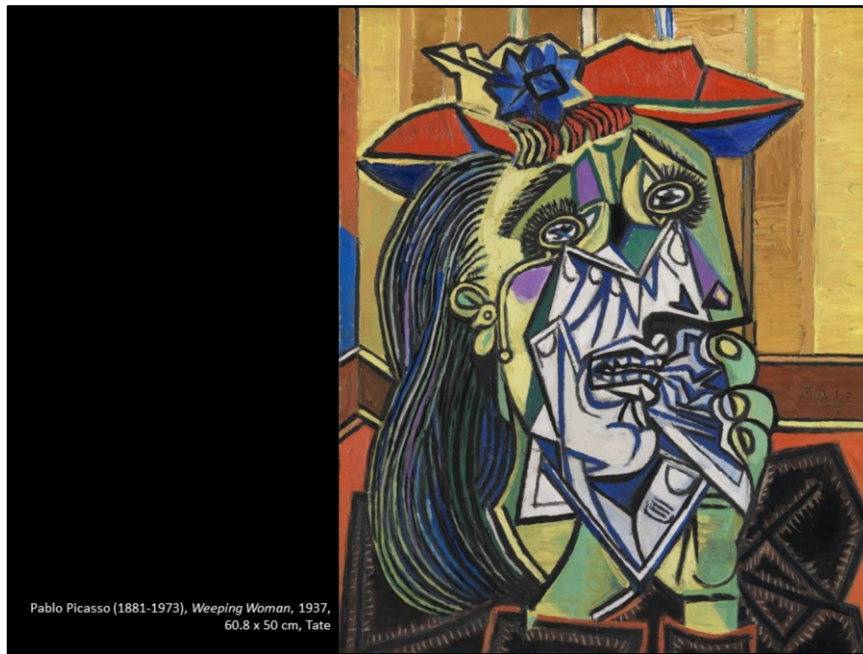
Otto Dix (1891-1969), *Metropolis*, 1927-28, 181 x 404 cm, Kunstmuseum Stuttgart, Stuttgart

- The Weimar Republic is the unofficial name of the German state between 1919 and 1933 when Adolf Hitler became Chancellor. It faced numerous problems including hyperinflation, political extremism and a difficult relationship with the victors of WWI. The people of Germany blamed the Weimar Republic rather than their wartime leaders for the country's defeat and for the humiliating terms of the Treaty of Versailles. However, the Weimar Republic government successfully reformed the currency, unified tax policies, and organized the railway system. Weimar Germany eliminated most of the requirements of the Treaty of Versailles and negotiated repayment down or away.
- The political problems meant that the middle-class suffered through taxation and unemployment and society reduced to the unemployed and the super rich. The super rich lived for the day and adopted a hedonistic lifestyle. The unemployed look for simple solution and blamed the political elite. A large part of the unemployed were the disabled from WWI. The middle-class had to survive by begging and prostitution.
- German hyperinflation in this period is legendary. Paper money became worthless, people had to carry sacks of money and prices increased during the day. In 1919, one loaf of bread cost 1 mark; by 1923, the same loaf of bread cost 100 billion marks.
- This triptych by Otto Dix shows a cross section of society at the time. The centre

panel shows the super rich enjoying themselves in a nightclub while in the left and right panels the streets outside are full of beggars, the disabled and prostitution. The left panel shows the lowest forms of prostitution and the right panel shows a different class of prostitute.

References

<https://utopiadystopiawwi.wordpress.com/new-objectivity/otto-dix/metropolis/>



Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *Weeping Woman*, 1937, 60.8 x 50 cm, Tate

Expressionism had an influence across Europe. This is Pablo Picasso's *Weeping Woman*.

- **Description.** There are four paintings in this room connected with the Spanish Civil War. This is Pablo Picasso's *Weeping Woman*, one of the most famous paintings in the Tate. I would like to start by asking you how it makes you feel? Despair? Sadness? Misery? Many people still find it upsetting. Picasso's distortion of her face accentuates the pain and anguish. The jagged black lines seem to be revealing the bones underneath the skin and the handkerchief she stuffs in her mouth could be a shard of glass. Picasso uses slightly repellent, acidic colours that make us feel uncomfortable and, to me, her clothing looks like the black mouths of hell we find in medieval religious paintings. Her eyes have even left their sockets in horror at what she has seen and float in little boats.
- **Guernica.** But what has she seen and why is she weeping? The clue is the year it was painted, 1937. It was the year after the Spanish Civil War started. Picasso had just heard that General Franco had asked the German and Italian air forces to bomb the quiet Basque town of Guernica in northern Spain on market day. There were about 10,000 people in the town which was destroyed by the bombing. Later women and children were machine gunned as they tried to run away. If you look closely at her pupils, they are an odd shape and some think they show a reflection of the German bombers.
- **Can art change the world?** Before the bombing Picasso rarely painted in response

to political events but once he heard the news he responded by painting *Guernica*, now in the Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid. He wrote, **‘Painting is not made to decorate apartments. It is an instrument for offensive and defensive war against the enemy.’**

- **Weeping women.** After finishing *Guernica*, Picasso became obsessed with images of weeping women as a symbol of suffering Spain, of which this is the last and the most famous. The weeping Virgin has always been a traditional image in Spanish art. The model for the painting was his lover Dora Maar who was a gifted photographer, poet and artist who helped Picasso paint parts of *Guernica*. Picasso said **‘Dora, for me, was always a weeping woman...And it's important, because women are suffering machines’**. I am reminded of a line from a Victorian poem [by the poet, Charles Kingsley], **‘For men must work, and women must weep’**. Both sentiments express a particular Victorian attitude—that women are emotional creatures whose role is in the home—and this reflects another way ‘art can change the world’, by reinforcing stereotypes.
- **Is there hope?** One puzzle presented by this weeping woman is whether Picasso intended there to be any sign of hope. The ear, for example, is represented by a tiny bird, possibly a symbol of hope and the flower on her hat could be another indication of a hopeful future. However, I think it is more likely that she is wearing a hat because it is market day and she wants to look her best, making the image even more poignant and hopeless.
- **Donations.** When the dealer Roland Penrose (on 9-10 November 1937) first saw it he was so keen to acquire it that he agreed the price immediately and rushed down the street with it while it was still wet in case Picasso changed his mind. Penrose kept it all his life and gave it to his son who donated it to the Tate. The Tate still depends on donations both large and small, even buying a cup of coffee helps us.

Notes

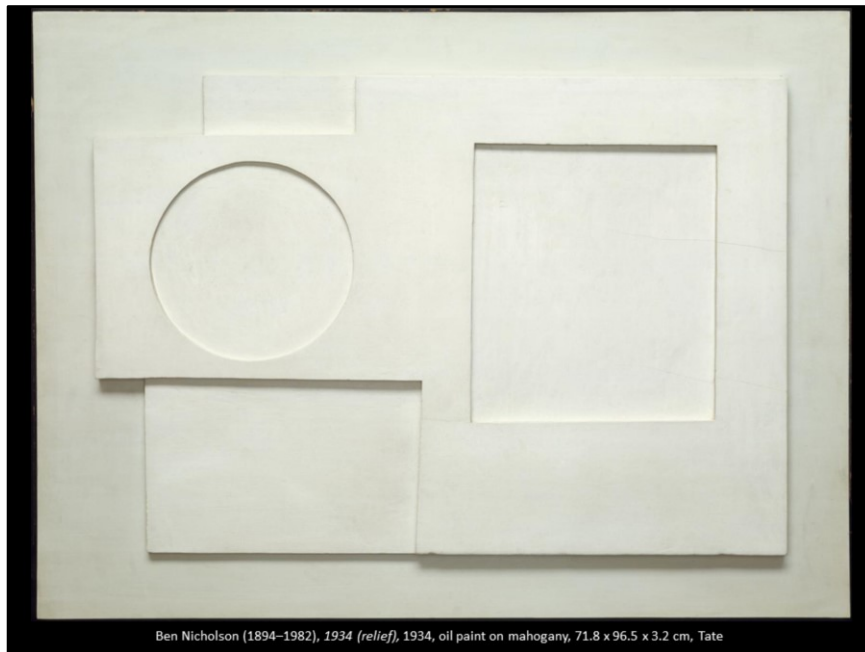
- In 1937, Picasso was working on an assignment to produce a work for the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris International Exposition (June 1937). On April 26 1937 during the Spanish Civil War General Franco asked the Italian and German air forces to bomb the peaceful Basque town of Guernica. Guernica was revered as Basque’s Holy City and guardian of liberty and democracy. It was Monday which was market day and there were an estimated 10,000 people in the small town. Official Basque figures say 1,654 people were killed although German air force figures put the number at 300. Reports of the damage vary but this photograph from the German Federal Archives shows the total destruction that took place. The number of deaths is now estimated to be between 170 and 300 people. There were five waves of 21 German and 3 Italian bombers from 16:30 to 18:30 followed by 29 planes that bombed from 18:00 to 18:45 and strafed civilians in the fields fleeing the town.

- Dora Maar was his tragic muse. She couldn't have children, and they had many rows. She was often depressed and had to have electro-convulsive treatment. She was however a photographer, poet and artist who assisted Picasso with *Guernica* and she was the official photographer who recorded its production.
- There are 9 paintings, 21 drawings and 6 small drawings on matchboxes of single female heads expressing anguish produced by Picasso between May and the end of October 1937 but the Tate's version is the last and the most famous.
- Picasso's mother wrote to him from Barcelona telling him of the burning of a local convent which had produced acrid, eye-watering smoke. The weeping Virgin (Mater Dolorosa), a traditional image in Spanish art, is often represented in sculptures with glass tears, like the one that flows towards this woman's right ear. 'The Weeping Woman' (La Llorona) is a legendary ghost in the folklore of Hispanic America. According to this tradition, she is the ghost of a woman who lost her children and cries while looking for them by the river, often causing misfortune to those who hear her.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/picasso-weeping-woman-t05010>

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/picasso-weeping-woman-t05010/text-catalogue-entry>



Ben Nicholson (1894–1982), 1934 (*relief*), 1934, oil paint on mahogany, 71.8 x 96.5 x 3.2 cm, Tate

Ben Nicholson (1894–1982), 1934 (*relief*), 1934, oil paint on mahogany, 71.8 x 96.5 x 3.2 cm, Tate

- “Like the cubists, Nicholson was interested in the ways in which paintings can represent space. In the 1930s, he made shallow reliefs in which areas of different depths define actual space. In the most radical of these, colour was reduced to just white or grey to achieve a sense of purity. Depth and plain colour make the play of light and shadow an intrinsic part of the work. This emphasis was related to new ideas about living and, especially, to modern architecture, in which natural light and formal simplicity were major concerns.” (Tate)
- Ben Nicholson was the son of two painters and brother of the artist Nancy Nicholson and the architect Christopher Nicholson. He trained as an artist at the Slade School from 1910 to 1914 where he was a contemporary of Paul Nash and Stanley Spencer. He married three times and had six children. His second wife was Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975) from 1938 to 1951 and she had triplets in 1934.
- He was exempt from military service due to asthma and travelled to America in 1917. He began as a figurative artist but was influenced by Synthetic Cubism and later Mondrian and Picasso. He first visited St. Ives in 1928 with fellow artist Christopher Wood. It was in Paris in 1933 that he made his first wood relief, *White Relief*, containing only right angles and circles. In 1937 he was one of the editors of *Circle*, an influential monograph on constructivism. He believed that abstract art should be enjoyed by the general public, as shown by the Nicholson Wall, a mural he created for the garden of Sutton Place in Guildford, Surrey. Nicholson moved to St Ives in 1939.

- His auction record was for *Fiddle and Spanish Guitar*, sold for €3,313,000 by Christie's in 2012.



Francis Bacon (1909-1992), *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*, c.1944, each 94 x 73.7 cm, Tate

Francis Bacon (1909-1992), *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*, c.1944, each 94 x 73.7 cm, oil paint on 'Sundeala' board, Tate

- When this triptych was first exhibited at the end of the war in 1945, it secured Bacon's reputation. The title relates these horrific beasts to the saints traditionally portrayed at the foot of the cross in religious painting. Bacon even suggested he had intended to paint a larger crucifixion beneath which these would appear. He later related these figures to the Eumenides – the vengeful furies of Greek myth, associating them within a broader mythological tradition. Typically, Bacon drew on a range of sources for these figures, including a photograph purporting to show the materialisation of ectoplasm and the work of Pablo Picasso.
- It's not thought that *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* has any specifically Christian reference, but instead was used by Bacon as an image of suffering – he identified the three figures as the Eumenides, the Furies of Greek legend who pursue wrongdoers to a vengeful death.
- It was first exhibited in London in April 1945, the final month of the Second World War. In that same month the British public heard for the first time of the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps when, Richard Dimbleby broadcast his landmark report on the liberation of Belsen, on BBC Radio, and Bacon's image has come to signify the full horror of the inhumanity of the 20th century. One report of its first exhibition recounts that 'Visitors ... were brought up short by images so unrelievedly awful that the mind shut up with a snap at the sight of them'.
- Francis Bacon spoke of this work in an interview in 1955:

- ‘I found an old book in Paris on diseases of the mouth. It must have been a nineteenth century book; I don’t really know quite what date it was. And they were hand-coloured plates of these different diseases of the mouth, and they always interested me and the colours were beautiful. As you know, people read things into everything; they always say that mouths have a strong sexual influence. Well, they probably do. And I have no religious feelings but at the same time I was [going to] do a crucifixion and put these figures around the base of it. And the only reason I ever used the crucifixion [was] because it was an armature on which I could hang certain sensations.’

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/bacon-three-studies-for-figures-at-the-base-of-a-crucifixion-n06171/text-catalogue-entry> a long entry by Matthew Gale (1998)



Francis Bacon (1909–1992), *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, 1953, 153cm x 118.1cm

Diego Velázquez (1599–1660), *Portrait of Innocent X*, circa 1650, 141 × 119 cm, Doria Pamphilj Gallery, Rome

- Bacon 'mashed' his portraits through other images, streaking and sometimes trodden on the floor of his studio using his boots.
- "The painting illustrated on this page is based on an image of Velázquez's great portrait of Pope Innocent X, a subject that Bacon treated – or mistreated - again and again. But the scream was never in Velázquez. Velázquez did not deal in screaming popes. It would have been more than his job of most favoured court painter to Philip IV of Spain was worth. No, the scream is snatched from a famous moment in a film by Eisenstein. Many of Bacon's images are palimpsests. Embedded within any particular image, there is often another image out of which the later image has grown. To what extent then has Bacon rendered this near sacred image utterly unholy, in fact near blasphemous?" (*The Independent*)
- Bacon was a lifelong atheist.

References

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/great-works/great-works-study-after-vel-zquezs-portrait-of-pope-innocent-x-1953-153cm-x-1181cm-by-francis-bacon-8688702.html>



Victor Pasmore (1908–1998), *The Quiet River: The Thames at Chiswick*, 1943–4, 76.2 x 101.6 cm, Tate

Victor Pasmore (1908–1998), *Abstract in White, Green, Black, Blue, Red, Grey and Pink*, c.1963, Perspex and painted wood, 81.5 x 91 x 46 cm, Tate

Victor Pasmore, mural, canteen at Kingston bus garage, 1950, photograph by Colin Tait, Jun 1950

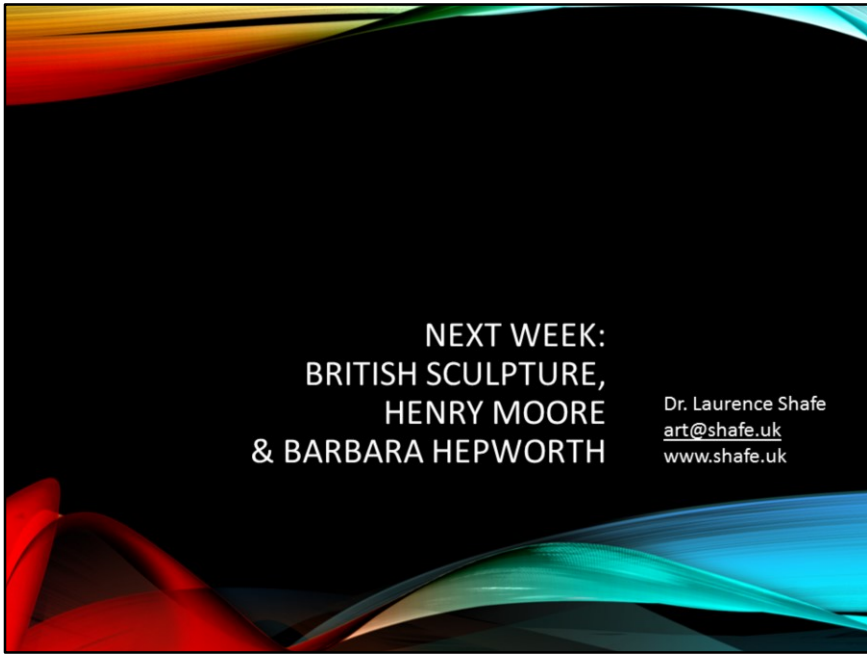
- “In the mid-1940s Pasmore painted a series of views of the Thames at Chiswick. In doing so he was following a tradition which goes back to nineteenth century painters, including Turner and Whistler. Pasmore was aware of these precedents when he worked on the series and, like those artists, concentrated on the subtle light variations and the atmosphere of the scene. The timeless romanticism of the diffused light and the horse and cart belie the reality of the place, which was then an industrial area: the dark form on the right is the roof of an especially odorous vitamin factory.” (Tate)
- Pasmore was born in Surrey and when his father died when he was 19 he was forced to take an administrative job at London County Council. He studied painting part-time at the Central School of Art and he was associated with the formation of the Euston Road School and the first exhibition of abstract art after the war. After experimenting with abstract art he painted a number of romantic, lyrical pictures of the Thames in the style of Turner and Whistler. He was a conscientious objector during the Second World War but his application was refused and he was called up. He refused orders and was court martialled and sentenced to 123 days imprisonment. This qualified him to go to tribunal and this gave him an

unconditional exemption from military service.

- Pasmore was a leading figure in the promotion of abstract art and reform of the fine art education system. From 1943–1949, he taught at Camberwell School of Art. Beginning in 1947, he developed a purely abstract style under the influence of Ben Nicholson becoming a leading figure of the revival of interest in Constructivism. Herbert Read described Pasmore's new style as "**The most revolutionary event in post-war British art**".
- In 1950, he was commissioned to design an abstract mural for a bus depot in Kingston upon Thames and the following year Pasmore contributed a mural to the Festival of Britain that promoted a number of the British Constructivists.
- From 1954 to 1961 he was leader of the art course of Kings College, Durham where he developed a course inspired by the 'basic course' of the Bauhaus that became the model for higher arts education across the UK.
- Pasmore was a supporter of fellow artist Richard Hamilton, giving him a teaching job in Newcastle and contributing a constructivist structure to the exhibition *This Is Tomorrow*.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/pasmore-abstract-in-white-green-black-blue-red-grey-and-pink-t11978/text-summary>



NEXT WEEK:
BRITISH SCULPTURE,
HENRY MOORE
& BARBARA HEPWORTH

Dr. Laurence Shafe
art@shafe.uk
www.shafe.uk