



- Pop Art is a movement that developed separately in the US and the UK. In the US it was a reaction against abstract expressionism and it was a return to the hard-edged representational style. In the UK it was an academic movement involving discussion groups and thought about the US pop culture and social changes as seen from afar. Pop Art also has links to earlier movements such as Dada and some of the work of Pablo Picasso, Picabia, Marcel Duchamp and Kurt Schwitters.
- Pop Art in the UK started in the mid 1950s and in the US in the late 1950s and 60s. The exhibition *This is Tomorrow* was in 1956 and Andy Warhol's famous soup cans were shown in 1962.
- In the UK the Independent Group at the ICA in 1952 was a very early precursor to Pop Art. The Independent Group was founded by Eduardo Paolozzi (1924-2005), John McHale (1922-1978) and others and led to the *This is Tomorrow* exhibition in 1956. Other early pop artists were Richard Hamilton (1922-2011), Peter Blake (b. 1932), Patrick Caulfield (1936-2005), Pauline Boty (1938-1966), Bridget Riley (b. 1931), Anthony Caro (1924-2013) and David Hockney (b. 1937).
- In the US early pop artists were Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008), Jasper Johns (b. 1930), Andy Warhol (1928-1987) and Roy Lichtenstein (1923-1997).
- Pop art was heavily involved with advertising, found objects and is seen by some

as an early example of postmodernism.

Notes

- Pop art blurred the previously clear-cut distinction between high and low art. This rejection of any hierarchy in art meant that now art could borrow from any source.
- Pop art, particularly in America, was a reaction against the search of Abstract Expressionists for a way to directly represent the deepest human traumas and passions. Pop artists recognised that there is no single, simple direct line to the truth as everything is interconnected and everything has value.
- Abstract Expressionist artists were passionate and directly involved with their creation. Pop artists were ambivalent and cool. Whether this was an endorsement of capitalism and popular culture or a dispassionate observation is still being debated.
- Pop art recognised that it was part of the capitalist system and was creating works about the system that were themselves within the system as they were tradeable commodities, often with a very high value. Andy Warhol said, **'Business art is the step that comes after art. I started as a commercial artist, and I want to finish as a business artist. Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art. During the hippie era people put down the idea of business. They'd say "money is bad" and "working is bad". But making money is art, and working is art - and good business is the best art.'** Many Pop artists began as commercial artists, Andy Warhol was a magazine illustrator and graphic designer.
- British pop art was more of an intellectual conclusion of an early debate centred largely around the artistic value and relevance of **popular mass culture** by Eduardo Paolozzi (1924-2005), Richard Hamilton (1922-2011) and John McHale (1922-1978) at the Institute of Contemporary Arts and the Independent Group.



BRITISH ART SINCE 1950

1. British Art Since 1950
2. **Pop Art**
3. Figurative Art since 1950
4. David Hockney
5. Feminist Art
6. Conceptual Art & Minimalism
7. The Young British Artists
8. Video and Performance Art
9. Outsider Art & Grayson Perry
10. Summary



Life in the 1950s

- The country was still recovering from the war years. There was rationing until 1954 and in London many streets contained bomb sites.
- The Labour Party led by Clement Atlee won the 1950 general election but only by a majority of five seats so it held another election in 1951 which it lost to the Conservative party led by Winston Churchill with the slogan 'Britain Strong and Free'.
- Before losing power the Labour Party organised The Festival of Britain to encourage a feeling of recovery after the war.
- Elizabeth became Queen in 1952 (the coronation was in 1953).
- There were only 3 million TVs by 1954 and that had been boosted in 1953 by people buying TVs to watch the Coronation.
- Most homes only had a cooker, a vacuum cleaner and a plug-in radio. Only one third had a washing machine, only 15% a fridge and only 10% a telephone.

Entertainment

- People spent most of their leisure time at home – reading, listening to the radio, some watching television or pursuing hobbies. The most popular hobbies were

knitting and needle-work for women, and gardening for men. Children spent a lot of time playing with other children outdoors. They also enjoyed a range of hobbies such as stamp collecting. Families enjoyed playing board games such as Monopoly, Ludo, and Snakes and Ladders.

- The cinema was very popular and there was full programme consisting of a 'B movie' followed by Pathe news followed by the main feature. Saturday morning cinema for children was cheap, popular and offered a full programme including a communal sing song with the words on the screen indicated by a bouncing ball.



Social Problems

- Pea-soupers meant you could not drive and could hardly see far enough to walk. In 1952 12,000 people died from pollution.
- It was the time of the **Cold War** and the imminent threat of a nuclear disaster.

Everyday Life

- Rationing until 1954, so no sweets
- Ice formed on the inside of bedroom windows.
- No health and safety, no children's rights. Physical punishment for children at school and at home.
- Safe to walk the streets, little vandalism, no graffiti.
- Telephone boxes were not vandalised, has a full set of directories and a coin box full of money.
- Everyone had a gramophone, an upright piano and a valve radio.
- Most adults smoked even in the bedroom.
- Many homes did not have a bathroom and had toilets outside.
- Food was wholesome and freshly cooked and many homes did not have fridges. Perishable food was bought every day in small quantities, such as one piece of fruit.

- Sunday dinners were roast and leftovers were used for bubble and squeak on Monday. Families tended to have the same basic, healthy meals and they varied by the day of the week and were repeated each week.
- Daily cod liver oil was common for children. Each child at school had a free one-third of a pint of milk at school. It was warm in summer and often curdled.
- Holidays were taken in the UK, travel was by train, people stayed in bed and breakfast lodgings and bathing costumes were knitted.
- Many social issues and family problems were never openly discussed.

Transport

- Children could play safely in back streets all day as only 14% of households had a car (2 million in 1950).
- Most people took public transport.
- The M1, the first motorway was opened in 1959 and there was no speed limit.
- The Morris Minor was launched in 1948, designed by Alec Issigonis, and becomes one of Britain's best-selling cars
- The first jet aeroplane to carry passengers, called Comet, began a regular passenger service in 1952. It was a small jet and could not carry many people.
- The Mini was launched in 1959, designed by Alec Issigonis, and becomes the best-selling British car of all time. It cost £496 – about the amount of money someone earned in a whole year.



Eduardo Paolozzi (1924–2005), *I was a Rich Man's Plaything*, 1947, printed papers on card, 35.9 x 23.8 cm, Tate

Eduardo Paolozzi (1924–2005), *I was a Rich Man's Plaything*, 1947, printed papers on card, 35.9 x 23.8 cm, Tate

- **Eduardo Paolozzi** (1924–2005) was a Scottish sculptor and artist and one of the pioneers of pop art. He started collecting images from popular American publications and pasting them into scrapbooks when he was a child and continued to do so as an adult. During 1946 and 1947, his last year at the Slade School of Art, he began using such images in a series of collages which, according to Paolozzi, were heavily indebted to Pablo Picasso's (1881–1973) synthetic Cubism of c.1912–18. In 1947, while still an undergraduate, the Mayor Gallery, London, held Paolozzi's first one-man exhibition. Its success allowed him to leave the Slade and live in Paris. It was there, possibly in his flat on the Ile St Louis, that *Dr Pepper*, was made.
- Paolozzi was born in Leith in north Edinburgh and was the eldest son of Italian immigrants. Paolozzi was interned at the start of the war but was released when his father, grandfather and uncle were drowned when a ship taking them to Canada was sunk by a German U-boat. He studied in Edinburgh, St Martin's School and the Slade (1944–47). After the war he worked in Paris (1947–49) and knew Alberto Giacometti, Jean Arp, Constantin Brâncuși, Georges Braque and Fernand

Léger.

- Paolozzi's *I was a Rich Man's Plaything* (1947) is considered the first standard bearer of Pop Art and first to display the word "pop". Paolozzi showed the collage in 1952 as part of his groundbreaking *Bunk!* series presentation at the initial Independent Group meeting in London. Paolozzi, *I was a Rich Man's Plaything*, 1947. These works show he could claim to be the originator of Pop Art. Paolozzi never shows his early 1946-48 work otherwise he would be seen as the creator of Pop Art.

References

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eduardo_Paolozzi



Eduardo Paolozzi (1924–2005), 32. *You Can't Beat the Real Thing*, from *Bunk*, 1972, screenprint and lithograph on paper, 34.7 x 24.9 cm, Tate

- One of 11 collages from a set of 46 (numbered 1-15) reproduced as the portfolio of prints entitled 'Bunk', published in 1972. Most based on complete sheets from magazines of the 1940s and 1950s. The source material, including these collages, was shown at a lecture given by Paolozzi to the newly formed Independent Group at the I.C.A. in 1952 and as such was seminal in the history of Pop Art.
- Paolozzi produced art in a wide variety of media. He designed the mosaics for Tottenham Court Road Station in 1982, in the same year he produced a sculpture near Pimlico underground station and he sculptured 'Head of Invention' which is installed in front of the Design Museum on the Thames at Butler's Wharf, London (1989).



Richard Hamilton, *This is Tomorrow*, Group 2, 1956, Whitechapel Art Gallery

***This is Tomorrow*, Group 2, 1956**

- The exhibition's most remembered exhibit was the room created by Group 2, comprising Richard Hamilton, John Voelcker and John McHale, though with help from Magda Cordell and Frank Cordell. It included the Op Art dazzle panels, collage Space modules, and pop art readymade of a Marilyn Monroe poster, the Van Gogh Sunflowers poster, a film advertising billboard of the Forbidden Planet, Robby the Robot, a Jukebox, the strawberry perfumed carpet, an endless reel of film depicting the Royal Navy Fleet at sea, large Guinness beer bottles, a Marlon Brando poster image and a 'CinemaScope' collage mural design, and the design of the Pop art collage poster that were all provided by John McHale.
- **Independent Group (IG)** was a radical group of young artists, writers and critics who met at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) in London in the 1950s, and challenged the dominant modernist and elitist culture dominant at that time, in order to make it more inclusive of popular culture. Artists included Richard Hamilton and Eduardo Paolozzi and in 1956 the IG held the ground-breaking *This is Tomorrow* exhibition.

- **This is Tomorrow, 1956** (the following are notes based on a talk by Rosalind Whyte)
- The exhibition ran from 9 August to 9 September 1956 and 19,000 people attended.
- It launched Pop Art in Britain but it was a decade before the 'official' launch. It was a ground-breaking, collaborative, and not just canvas on walls. There was no text and no interpretation. 37 people were involved in the organisation.
- There were 12 groups of artists each with their own section. Each section was allocated £50 to decorate it.
- Victor Pasmore and Hamilton. Art and architecture need to be integrated (as in Bauhaus). Henry Moore, *West Wind*, 1928 shows the 'humiliation of surface decoration'. Barbara Hepworth *Winged Figure* (1963) has been outside John Lewis for 50 years and is estimated to have been seen by 200 million people a year.
- There is a Pathe news clip of the exhibition on YouTube.
- The second section of the exhibition, shown above, had Robi the Robot with Marilyn Monroe. The carpet was perfumed and there was a free jukebox, The Fun House.
- Richard Hamilton *She*, 1958-61, Tate with a Toastuum (a toaster and vacuum cleaner combined) showing the path of the toast.
- Smithson, Paolozzi (Glasgow), Henderson, Independent Group, ICA. Brutalist Architecture, such as the Heyward and the national.
- Section 10 was Colin St John Wilson, who produced the catalogue design. With Edward Wright who designed the New Scotland Yard triangular sign.
- The show was seen as very American and Robi the Robot stole the show. Robi the Robot was from *Forbidden Planet* a film released the same year.
- Paolozzi never shows his early 1946-48 work otherwise he would be seen as the creator of Pop Art.
- There were other exhibitions that referred to this one:
 - This Tomorrow: Reinventing Architecture 1953-1978*
 - Art and the 60s: This was Tomorrow*, Tate

References

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/This_Is_Tomorrow

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Hamilton_\(artist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Hamilton_(artist))



Richard Hamilton (1922-2011), *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* 1956, 26 x 24.8 cm, collage, Kunsthalle Tübingen, Germany

- **Richard Hamilton** was a member of the Independent Group (IG) at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA). He thought there should be no split between high and low art and called for the democratisation of taste. Hamilton defined Pop Art with *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* a collage 10.25 in (260 mm) x 9.75 in (248 mm), that is now in the collection of the Kunsthalle Tübingen, Germany. It was the first work of pop art to achieve iconic status. Another take on genre painting. John McHale has said his father created this piece but Hamilton has said 'absurd'.
- The painting shows a basement living room stuffed with an amusing range of 'modern' features including:
 - A ceiling that shows a view of Earth from space,
 - Hoover's Constellation, a futuristic floating vacuum cleaner with the slogan "ordinary cleaners reach only this far",
 - a cinema showing 'The Jazz Singer'. It was the first film with synchronised dialogue and had been remade in 1952 but this is the original Warner Bros. film that used the Vitaphone sound-on-disk system.

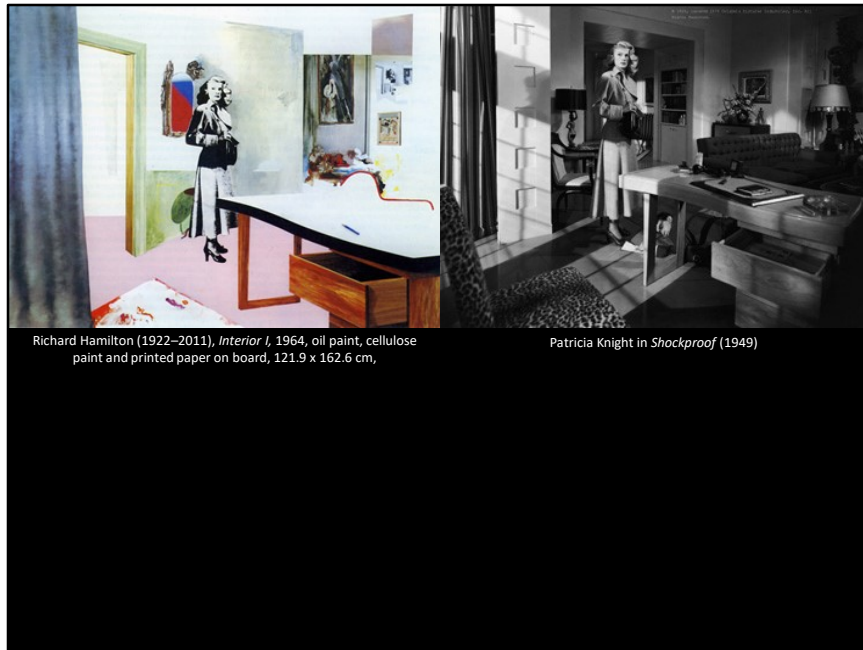
- a Ford Motor company logo on a lampshade,
 - 'Young Romance' magazine,
 - a portrait some say is John Ruskin,
 - A black and white television showing a woman on the phone,
 - A 'Swiss cheese plant' (*Monstera deliciosa*), a popular house plant,
 - A semi-naked man and woman. The man is a Charles Atlas type but is holding a large phallic lollipop labelled "Tootsie Pop". The woman has nipple pasties (covers) and wears what could be a lampshade. The modern Adam and Eve become narcissistic body models.
 - a tin of processed meat,
 - what appears to be an action painting,
 - a modern tape recorder,
 - There is a modern wood floor and G-Plan furniture.
- The collage incorporates many of the features and symbols seen in later Pop Art and Hamilton places the word 'Pop' in the centre of the picture as an ironic reference to a frequent criticism of such art, it is just popular, that is 'low' art, not real 'high' art.

Notes

- Hamilton was born in London. He was educated at the Royal Academy Schools from 1938 to 1940, then studied engineering draughtsmanship at a Government Training Centre in 1940, then worked as a 'jig and tool' designer. He returned in 1946 to the Royal Academy Schools, from which he was expelled for 'not profiting from the instruction being given in the painting school', then attended the Slade School of Art from 1948 to 1951.

Copyright

- This low resolution image of *Just What Is It that Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?* is used as it is necessary for an understanding of the lecture to be able to see the artwork. It is believed that this is fair use and does not infringe copyright.



Richard Hamilton (1922–2011), *Interior I*, 1964, oil paint, cellulose paint and printed paper on board, 121.9 x 162.6 cm

- Hamilton produced many other types of work but this is one that is based on a still taken from a popular film called *Shockproof* (1949). Hamilton was teaching at Newcastle Polytechnic when he found a still from the film on a classroom floor.
- The 1948 photograph became the generator for a series of works playing on the representation of an interior space. Hamilton was struck by the carefully arranged composition of the still, photographed in a specially constructed set. He explained:
 - “Everything in the photograph converged on a girl in a ‘new look’ coat who stared out slightly to right of camera. A very wide-angle lens must have been used because the perspective seemed distorted; but the disquiet of the scene was due to two other factors. It was a film set, not a real room, so wall surfaces were not explicitly conjoined; and the lighting came from several different sources. Since the scale of the room had not become unreasonably enlarged, as one might expect from the use of a wide-angle lens, it could be assumed that false perspective had been introduced to counteract its effect – yet the foreground remained emphatically close and

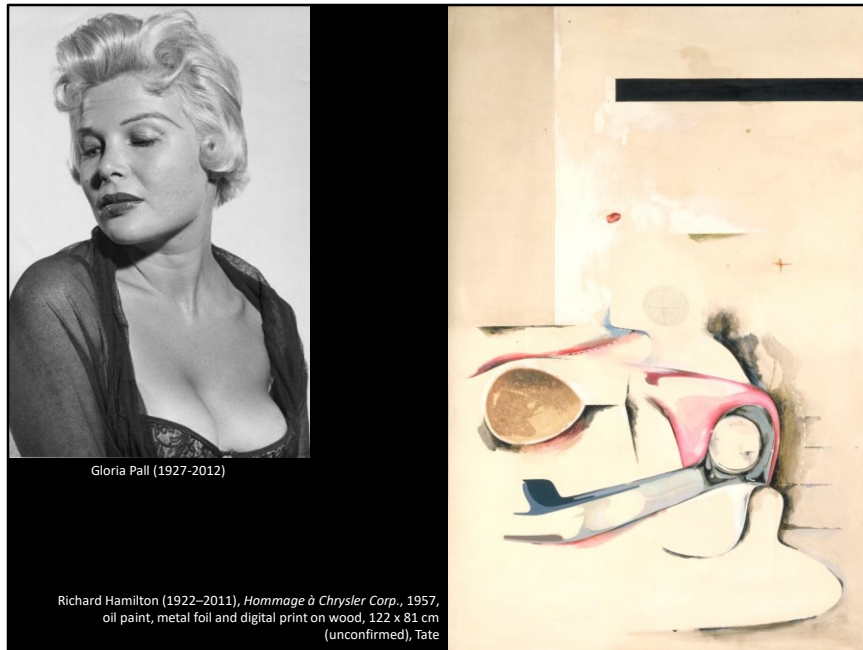
the recession extreme. All this contributed more to the foreboding atmosphere than the casually observed body lying on the floor, partially concealed by a desk. I made three collaged studies and two paintings based on this image of an interior – **ominous, provocative, ambiguous**; a confrontation with which the spectator is familiar yet not at ease.”

(Hamilton, *Collected Works*)

- “The 1948 [sic] film *Shockproof*, in which the actress Patricia Knight stands over the body of a man she has just shot. Hamilton was intrigued by the way the image’s ‘foreboding atmosphere’ was achieved by a distorted use of perspective as much as by its overt content. Hamilton’s research led to a series of collages, the painting *Desk*, and then to a pair of large paintings titled *Interior I* and *Interior II*. Hamilton set the silkscreened images of Patricia Knight in different spaces. Both feature curtains revealing scenes defined by strong, but not always coherent lines of perspective. The first is dominated by a desk and a mirror showing the space outside; in the second, more modern interior, the metallic backing of an Eames chair reflects light from its surroundings, while a TV introduces another external space: Dallas. 1963. and the assassination of President Kennedy completed on 9th September 2011.” (see <http://ndlr.eu/hamiltons-spaces/>)

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Richard Hamilton (1922–2011), *Hommage à Chrysler Corp.*, 1957, oil paint, metal foil and digital print on wood, 122 x 81 cm (unconfirmed), Tate

- “This painting was made by the British artist Richard Hamilton in London in 1957. Hamilton has described it as a ‘compilation of themes derived from the glossies ... an anthology of presentation techniques’ (Hamilton 1982, p.31). It combines different stylistic methods gleaned from a number of magazine advertisements for General Motors, Chrysler and Imperial cars. The woman’s lips are modelled on the mouth of Voluptua, a character from late-night American television, and the shape of the breast is based on a diagram in an advert for an Exquisite Form Bra. The painting has changed in several ways since 1957. Pieces of metal foil were originally pasted onto it, but these are now missing. The brown-egg shaped form was produced in 2004 to replace an enlarged photograph of the air intake on a jet-propelled car, which Hamilton originally printed on thin photographic paper and stuck to the work.” (Tate)
- Voluptua was played by Gloria Pall (1927-2012) an American model, showgirl, film and television actress, author and businesswoman. In late 1954 and early 1955, she developed a television show called "Voluptua" for KABC-TV that caused a furour for what was then seen as obscenity.

References

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The Swinging Sixties

The Swinging 60s

- For a few years in the 1960s London became 'the Swinging City'.
- The baby boom of the 1950s meant that there was a large, young generation. By the mid-60s 40% of the population was under 25.
- National Service was abolished in 1960.
- Young people rebelled against the rules and restrictions of their parents.
- Londoners had more disposable income than ever before.
- Affluence led to a rapid growth in music, fashion and design aimed at the young.
- It was the time of the Beatles (1964) and the mini skirt was introduced by Mary Quant in the late 60s. The bikini came into fashion in 1963.
- However, there was a shortage of housing and slums that were being replaced by tower blocks.

Politics

- Mao Zedong (1893-1976) launched the 'Great Leap Forward' from 1958 to 1961 which is estimated to have resulted in the deaths of up to 46 million people, "one of the most deadly mass killings of human history".
- The Berlin Wall was built in 1961.
- 1962 was the year of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

- In 1963 John F. Kennedy was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas, Texas.
- In 1968 Martin Luther King was assassinated by James Earl Ray in Memphis, Tennessee.
- In America it was the time of the Vietnam war (1955-1975), anti-war demonstrations, the gay rights and civil rights movements and 'second wave' feminism. Between 1960 and 1969 violent crime in America nearly doubled.

Science

- The space race dominated the 1960s with Yuri Gagarin the first man in space in 1961 and on 20 July 1969 Apollo 11 became the first human spaceflight to land on the moon.
- In 1960 the female birth-control pill was launched in the US.
- In 1964 the first minicomputer, DEC's PDP-8, was launched, the BASIC programming language was created and the world's first supercomputer, the CDC 6600, was introduced.
- In 1967 the first heart transplant was performed by Christiaan Barnard and the first cash machine (ATM) was opened by Barclays Bank.
- In 1968 the computer mouse was demonstrated and the first prototype of the Internet was introduced.



Peter Blake (born 1932), *Self-Portrait with Badges*, 1961, 174.3 x 121.9 cm, Tate
 Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) , *The Blue Boy*, 1770, 177.8 x 112.1, The Huntington, California

- Blake's self-portrait shows his equal respect for historical tradition and modern popular culture. He may have based this image on Thomas Gainsborough's famous portrait *The Blue Boy*. But Blake's blue fabric is not silk but denim – a material associated at the time with American youth culture.
- Blake's fascination with American popular culture is further emphasised by his baseball boots, jeans and denim jacket, the badges, and the magazine dedicated to Elvis Presley, who had just become well known in Britain. Blake uses these objects like a traditional portrait painter, to suggest his interests or achievements. The flatness of many areas, such as the badges on the jacket, emphasizes the painted surface. His American clothes are bright and new compared to the drab and indistinct British garden behind him. This painting brings together the explosion of consumerism in the US, of fashion and music in the UK, and of youth culture in both countries.
- Perhaps Gainsborough's most famous work, it is thought to be a portrait of

Jonathan Buttall (1752–1805), the son of a wealthy hardware merchant, although this has never been proven. It is a historical costume study as well as a portrait: the youth in his 17th-century apparel is regarded as Gainsborough's homage to Anthony van Dyck, and in particular is very close to Van Dyck's portrait of Charles II as a boy. The painting was a response to Joshua Reynolds' lecture in which he said that even a Rubens or Titian could not make a picture 'splendid and harmonious' if the main mass of the picture was a blue or grey and the background a 'warm, mellow colour'.

Peter Blake

- Peter Blake went to the Royal College of Art and currently lives in Chiswick. During the 1950s he became one of Britain's best known pop artists. His paintings included advertisements, musical hall entertainment and wrestlers. In the 'Young Contemporaries' exhibition of 1961 he exhibited alongside David Hockney and R.B. Kitaj. He won the (1961) John Moores junior award for *Self Portrait with Badges*. He came to wider public attention when, along with Pauline Boty and others he featured in Ken Russell's Monitor film on pop art, *Pop Goes the Easel*, broadcast on BBC television in 1962. From 1963 Blake was at the centre of swinging London and came into contact with leading figures of popular culture.

References

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Peter Blake (born 1932), design of the Beatles *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover, 1967

- *Sgt. Pepper's* album cover was designed by the pop artists Peter Blake and Jann Haworth from an ink drawing by McCartney.[199] It was art-directed by Robert Fraser and photographed by Michael Cooper. The front of the LP included a colourful collage featuring the Beatles in costume as the *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, standing with a group of life-sized cardboard cut-outs of famous people.
- The final grouping included singers such as Bob Dylan and Bobby Breen; the film stars Marlon Brando, Tony Curtis, Marlene Dietrich and Marilyn Monroe; the artist Aubrey Beardsley; the boxer Sonny Liston and the footballer Albert Stubbins. Also included were the comedians Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy (as well as comedian W.C. Fields) and the writers H. G. Wells, Oscar Wilde, Lewis Carroll and Dylan Thomas.
- Best known for his cover for the 1967 Beatles album *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, for which he received only £200. 'I could be bitter about only getting £200 for *Sgt Pepper*. But I have to move on,' says Sir Peter Blake. The cost of producing the cover was £3,000 when an album cover typically cost £50.

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Pauline Boty (1938-1966), *Colour Her Gone*, 1962, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

- Pauline Boty (pronounced 'boat-ee') is little known outside the art world but in the early sixties she was one of the hottest talents on the London Pop art scene, a contemporary of David Hockney and Peter Blake. She died from cancer in 1966 at the age of just 28, and her work was stored away in a barn and largely forgotten. In the last decade her paintings have begun to be shown again, and in 1999 Tate bought *The Only Blonde in the World*, her portrait of Marilyn Monroe.
- She was a founder of the British Pop art movement and the only female painter. She died in 1966 aged 28 from a rare form of leukaemia. She was pregnant at the time and she had to decide between chemotherapy and aborting the child or having the baby. She had the baby called Katy and four months later Pauline died. The sad ending is that her daughter Katy killed herself with a heroin overdose.
- Sabine Durrent wrote in 1993, "Even now, grown men with grey hair in dark houses in Notting Hill cry at the sound of Pauline Boty's name."
- Other contemporary portraits of Marilyn – including those by Richard Hamilton and Andy Warhol – present a more overtly sexualised image of the actress, but Boty's rendition is unusual because it presents an informal view. The painting was

produced in 1962, the year that Marilyn died.

- Mid-60s Pop art changes and gets darker. Pauline died at the point it changed and is forever associated with the initial free love and happy period.

Notes

- Boty literally brought Bob Dylan to England, collecting him from London Airport and putting him up in her apartment while he recorded.
- The 1965 film *Darling*, starring Julie Christie, was rumoured to be based on Boty's affair with director Philip Saville.
- Boty had a number of minor acting roles, including an uncredited appearance as one of Alfie's girlfriends in the 1966 Michael Caine film.
- Sir David Frost once wrote that Boty was his 'ideal girl', while fellow artist Peter Blake was a persistent but ultimately unsuccessful suitor.

Biography from Tate site

- Boty studied stained glass at Wimbledon School of Art (1954–8), and at the Royal College of Art, London (1959–61). Painting became the focus of her practice after finishing college.
- Boty became a well-known personality in London during the 1960s, attracting attention for her striking looks and minor roles in television drama as well as through her reputation as a painter. By 1963 she had evolved a Pop vocabulary in her paintings using images of celebrities with a celebratory and humorous approach to female sexuality.
- In *Celia and her Heroes*, the fabric designer Celia Birtwell is portrayed against a variety of images including a portrait of Elvis, a painting by Blake and a portrait of David Hockney (whose 1961 etching *Myself and My Heroes* is slyly alluded to in her own title). Her work then began to include more serious subject-matter, with a number of political paintings such as *Count Down to Violence* (1964), which incorporate multiple images of destruction and aggression. One of her most celebrated works, *It's A Man's World II*, (1965–6), the title of which was borrowed from a hit song by James Brown, humorously appropriates images from soft porn, while adopting a harsher and more critical tone than in her earlier work.
- After her early death from leukaemia, Boty's work was largely ignored until the 1990s, when interest was rekindled in her female perspective on Pop concerns.

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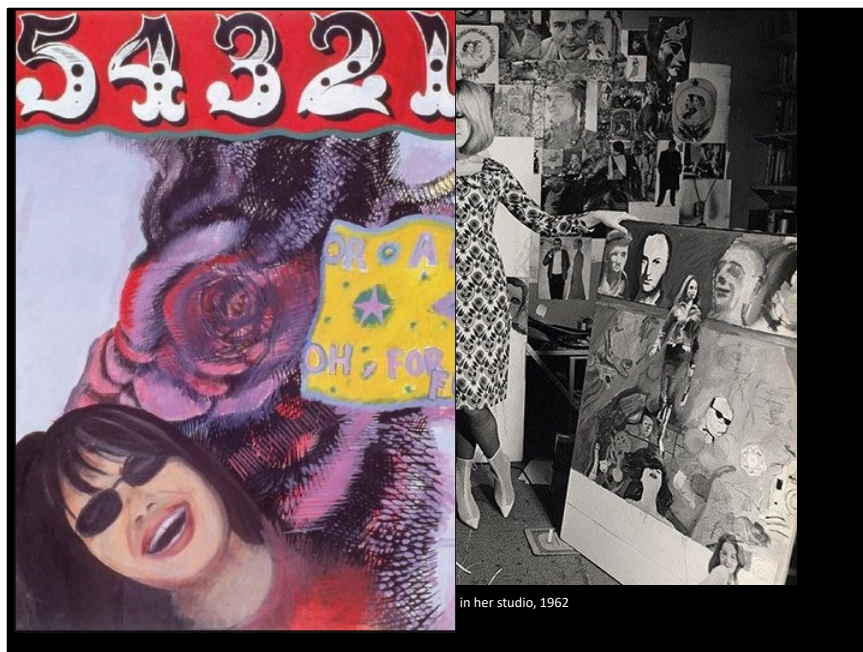
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- Pauline Boty (1938-1966) in her studio, 1962
- She was a highly accomplished artist and, later, actor and broadcaster. Her natural beauty was later used by her detractors to diminish her role and her art.
- She appeared in one film (Alfie) and 13 TV programmes.
- She attended Wallington County Girls School before going to the Royal College of Art.

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Sue Tate, 'Gendering the Field: Pauline Boty and the Predicament of the Woman Artist in the British Pop Art Movement', PhD thesis, 2004, Bath Spa University, <http://researchspace.bathspa.ac.uk/1463/1/Sue%20Tate%20-%202004.pdf>



Patrick Caulfield (1936–2005), *Vases of Flowers*, 1962, household paint on hardboard, 121.9 x 121.9 cm, Tate

- *Vases of Flowers* is characteristic of Caulfield's paintings of the early 1960s. Flat images of objects are paired with angular geometric shapes, isolated against vivid areas of flat colour.
- The painting shows Caulfield's use of gloss paint on board and his hard, linear technique. His preference for cheap and readily available house paint, applied to a flat surface, recalls the anonymous technique of the sign painter, dispensing with visible brushstrokes and unnecessary detail.
- English painter and printmaker. He began his studies in 1956 at Chelsea School of Art, London, continuing at the Royal College of Art (1960–63), one year below the students identified as originators of Pop art.

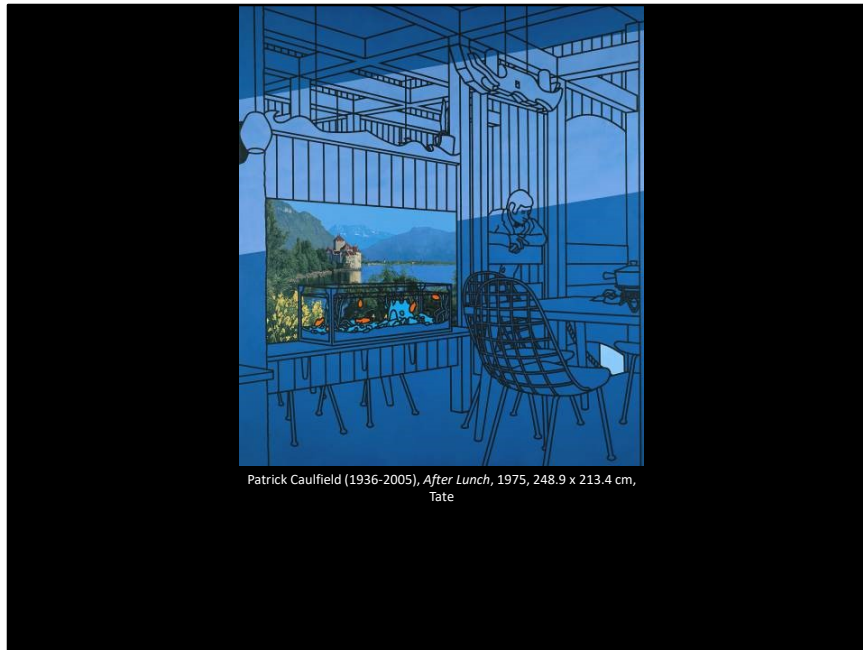
Notes

- "English painter and printmaker. He began his studies in 1956 at Chelsea School of Art, London, continuing at the Royal College of Art (1960–63), one year below the students identified as originators of Pop art. In the early 1960s Caulfield's painting was characterised by flat images of objects paired with angular geometric devices

or isolated against unmodulated areas of colour. He adopted the anonymous technique of the sign painter, dispensing with visible brushwork and distracting detail and simplifying the representation of objects to a basic black outline in order to present ordinary images as emblems of a mysterious reality. He deliberately chose **subjects that seemed hackneyed** or ambiguous in time: not only traditional genres but **self-consciously exotic and romantic themes** and **views of ruins** and the Mediterranean. Gradually Caulfield's attention shifted to the architectural elements to which he had earlier made isolated reference. Caulfield began to insert highly detailed passages in the manner of **Photorealism** into his characteristically stylised idiom, playing to great effect with ambiguous definitions of **reality and artifice**. Always a slow and exacting worker, he sustained a **high level of pictorial invention**. During the 1980s he again turned to a more stripped-down aesthetic, particularly in large paintings in which the precise disposition of only a few identifiable elements miraculously transforms an ostensibly abstract picture through the creation of a vivid sense of place.” (Tate website and Grove Art Online)

References

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Caulfield



Patrick Caulfield (1936-2005), *After Lunch*, 1975, 248.9 x 213.4 cm, Tate

- “Caulfield's paintings explore alternative ways of picturing the world. *After Lunch* was one of his earliest works to combine **different styles** of representation. In this case, what appears to be a **photomural of the Château de Chillon** hanging in a restaurant is depicted with **high-focus realism**, contrasting with the **cartoon-like black-outlined imagery** and fields of saturated colour of its surroundings. Caulfield deliberately makes the relationship between these varying representational methods uneasy and ambiguous, so that the picture appears more real than the everyday world around it.” (Tate website)
- *Pop Art*, Eric Shanes:

“Patrick Caulfield was born in London in 1936. He studied at Chelsea School of Art between 1956 and 1960, and then at the Royal College of Art between 1960 and 1963. His initial one-man exhibition was held at the Robert Fraser Gallery in London in 1965, and he first showed in New York the following year. Many exhibitions followed globally. Retrospectives of Caulfield's prints were mounted in 1973, 1977, 1980 and 1981, in which year a large retrospective of his paintings was held in Liverpool and London. He died in 2005.

Caulfield was another painter within the Pop/Mass-Culture Art tradition who consistently **amplified the vulgarity of things**. By flattening and simplifying his forms, and by frequently taking his subject-matter from the **most ordinary of interiors** such as hotel lobbies, dining rooms, restaurants, bars, cafés and offices, as well as domestic spaces containing retro or just **badly designed furniture**, he transformed what was already banal into a subtle form of kitsch. In later years he indulged his penchant for painting still-lives of food, ceramics, flowers, wine glasses, desk lights, lanterns, pipes and the like, often pushing the images to the verge of abstraction. In the present painting Caulfield explored the contrast between two types of imagery: his customary flattened and simplified forms, and photographic realism, with all its detailing and complex naturalistic colours. The waiter lolls on a support, presumably tired from his lunchtime exertions. The intensity of the overall mauve colouring is sharpened by the contrasting colours of the landscape mural, fish tank and goldfish."

References

Eric Shanes, *Pop Art*, 2009



Allen Jones (b. 1937) *First Step*, 1966, 92 x 92 cm, Royal Academy

- Jones was born in Southampton and was one of the **original pop artists**. He is now a **Senior Academician**. In an interview in 2014 he said “Abstract Expressionism had swept everything away. You couldn’t go back to representing the figure through some moribund visual language”. He never wanted to show the struggle in producing the work the way that Pollock and de Kooning did and he had to find a new way of representing the human figure.
- In 1959, he enrolled at the Royal Academy and with his colleagues Hockney, Kitaj and Peter Phillips he set out to find a way to combine mass culture and high art.
- His independence resulted in him being **expelled after one year**.
- He was excited by the ideas of Futurism, the speed and the movement.
- In 1964-65 he lived in New York and returned a fully-fledged Pop Artist.

References

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allen_Jones_\(artist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allen_Jones_(artist))



Allen Jones (b. 1937), *Chair*, 1969, acrylic paint on glass fibre and resin with perspex and leather, cast no. 6, 77.5 x 57.1 x 99.1 cm, Tate

- The **breakthrough, and the controversy came in 1969** when he produced three female figures, each slightly larger than life size, called '**Hatstand**', '**Table**' and '**Chair**'. They were cast in fibreglass in editions of 6 by Gems Wax Models Ltd of Notting Hill, London, a firm of commercial sculptors who made (and make) **shop window mannequins** and sculptures for waxworks. Stylistically the figures are similar to those in Jones's paintings of c.1967–8. The ICA exhibition of his work **resulted in stink bombs, smoke bombs** being thrown and when 'Chair' was shown at the Tate in 1986 **paint was poured over it**. In 1970, he received a phone call from Stanley Kubrick who was making *A Clockwork Orange* and he wanted Jones to design the furniture. Jones refused so Kubrick simply copied Jones's work.
- Jones wrote, "The **erotic impulse** transcends cerebral barriers and demands a **direct emotional response**. Confronted with an abstract statement people readily defer to an expert; but confronted with an erotic statement **everyone is an expert**. It seems to me a **democratic idea** that **art should be accessible to everyone** on some level, and eroticism in one such level. Jones considers that the three sculptures 'Hatstand', 'Table' and 'Chair' are the most radical statements that he

has made.”

- This was produced at the same time as **second wave feminism**. First wave was female suffrage and second wave a radical call for fundamental social and cultural change so that women would be treated as **equal to men in all circumstances**. This work has always been controversial. At one level it is clearly presenting a **women as a sex object**. However, the **objectification is so blatant** that **Jones could be criticising a society** that treats women in this way.
- “Did second-wave feminists shoot the messenger? Or did he mangle the message? The debate is still open.” (Zoe Williams, *The Guardian*)
- Jones wrote, “In a way the feminist critique is a total red herring. It’s not what the work is about.”
- In 1979, the art historian Lisa Tickner wrote, “The exploitation of already exploitative material cannot be seen as politically neutral.”
- More recently, Jones has said, “I think of myself a feminist” and argued that his early work was “commenting on exactly the same situation that was the source of the feminist movement.”
- “Allen Jones (born 1937) has been demonised. In 1969 he made a group of three sculptures of scantily-clad female figures. They were slightly larger than life and arranged in positions that enabled them (with the addition of a glass top or padded seat) to be turned into a table, a chair and a hat stand. These super-mannequins were highly modelled, wigged and leather-booted, and unavoidably realistic. When first exhibited in 1970 they provoked outrage among the feminist community. Jones’s 1978 retrospective of graphic art at the ICA caused a near riot even though the sculptures weren’t shown. In 1986, when the chair went on display, it had acid thrown over it by an incensed extremist.
- The price of being controversial is usually increased fame, but for Jones it has resulted in his **work being ostracised** in this country. His last museum show here was a selection of prints at the Barbican in 1995. Before that, the most recent survey of his work took place at the Serpentine Gallery in 1979, which means that **he hasn’t had a proper retrospective** in Britain for 35 years. This is **scarcely believable**: Jones is a hugely popular and successful figure in Europe (particularly in Germany), and is featured in museums all over the world. He has worked extensively in America and China, and is widely celebrated for the part he played in the origins of Pop Art in the 1960s.” (Andrew Lambirth, *The Spectator*, 1 Nov 2014)

Notes

The three figures wore Atomage, a brand created by designer and magazine editor John Sutcliffe. He has been credited for introducing leather and rubber wear to the mainstream in post-war Britain.

References

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/nov/10/allen-jones-sexist-art-royal-academy-review>



Peter Phillips (b. 1939), *For Men Only – Starring MM and BB* (1961), Oil, wood and collage on canvas

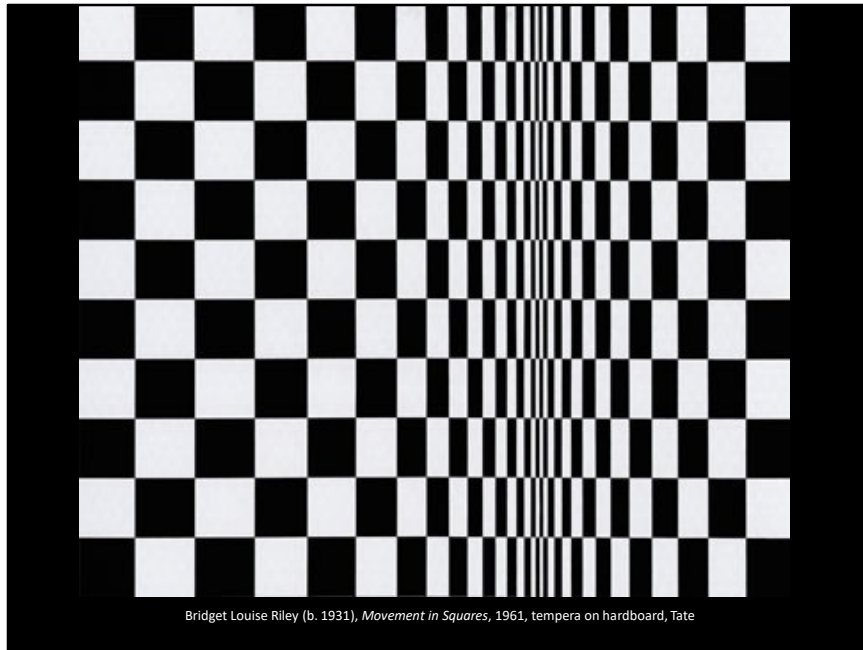
- Phillips' *For Men Only, Starring MM and BB*, is an oil and collage on canvas, painted in 1961. The subject matter features 1950's starlettes Marilyn Monroe and Brigitte Bardot, tortoise and hare, and strip-tease vignette. Phillips recalls his father, a carpenter, made the wooden frames for the bottom portion of the painting. According to Phillips, "It was a good painting – it worked. It was a sign of the times."
- As an originator of Pop art, Phillips was born in Birmingham and trained at the Royal College of Art with his contemporaries David Hockney, Allen Jones, R.B. Kitaj and others figures in British Pop Art. When he was awarded a Harkness Fellowship he moved to New York, where he exhibited alongside American counterparts Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and James Rosenquist. Phillips later returned to Europe, where he now resides and continues to paint and exhibit.
- Between 1959 and 1962, Phillips studied at the Royal College of Art where he saw reproductions of work by Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg. He was particularly aligned to American culture and reflected its commercial iconography

and aggressive advertising style in his dynamic montage paintings.

- From 1962 to 1963, he taught at the Coventry College of Art and the Birmingham College of Art. In 1963, he was represented at the Paris Biennale, and in 1964 his work was included in the Pop Art exhibition shown at the Hague, Vienna and Berlin.
- In 1964, Phillips was awarded the Harkness Fellowship, which brought him to New York where he lived from 1964 until 1966 and while there travelled throughout the United States with his close friend, Allen Jones.
- In 1970 he married and made frequent trips to Africa, the Far East and the US. During the 1970s he lived in Switzerland. In the 70s and 80s he had numerous retrospectives.
- Phillips resides in Europe, where he continues to paint and exhibit. He travels frequently to New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sydney.
- Over thirty of his prints are in the Tate Collection.

References

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Phillips_\(artist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Phillips_(artist))



Bridget Louise Riley (b. 1931), *Movement in Squares*, 1961, tempera on hardboard, Tate

- Born in Norwood, the daughter of a businessman. She spent her childhood in Cornwall and Lincolnshire and studied at Goldsmiths' College and the Royal College of Art.
- Between 1956 and 1958 she nursed her father, who had been involved in a serious car crash, and herself **suffered a breakdown**. After this she worked in a glassware shop and also, for a while, taught children. She eventually joined the **J. Walter Thompson advertising agency**, as an illustrator, where she worked part-time until 1962. The large Whitechapel Gallery exhibition of **Jackson Pollock**, in the winter of 1958, was to have a major impact on her.
- Her **early work was figurative** with a semi-impressionist style. She began painting in a semi-impressionist style and changed to pointillism in 1958 until 1960 when she started painting Op-art and exploring the potential of optical phenomena.
- Around **1960 she began to develop her signature Op Art style** consisting of black and white geometric patterns that explore the dynamism of sight and produce a disorienting effect on the eye.

- *Movement in Squares* is one of her **earliest works** in the Op-Art style. From 1961 to 1964 she worked with the contrast of black and white, occasionally introducing tonal scales of grey. Works in this style comprised her first 1962 solo show at Musgrave's Gallery One, as well as numerous subsequent shows.

References

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bridget_Riley



Bridget Riley (born 1931), *Cataract 3*, 1967, British Council

- The Cataract series was a defining moment in her career and she was the first British artist and the first woman artist to win the International Prize for Painting at the 1968 Venice Biennale.



David Hockney (b. 1937), *Tea Painting in an Illusionistic Style*, 1961, 232.5 x 83 x 3.8 cm, Tate

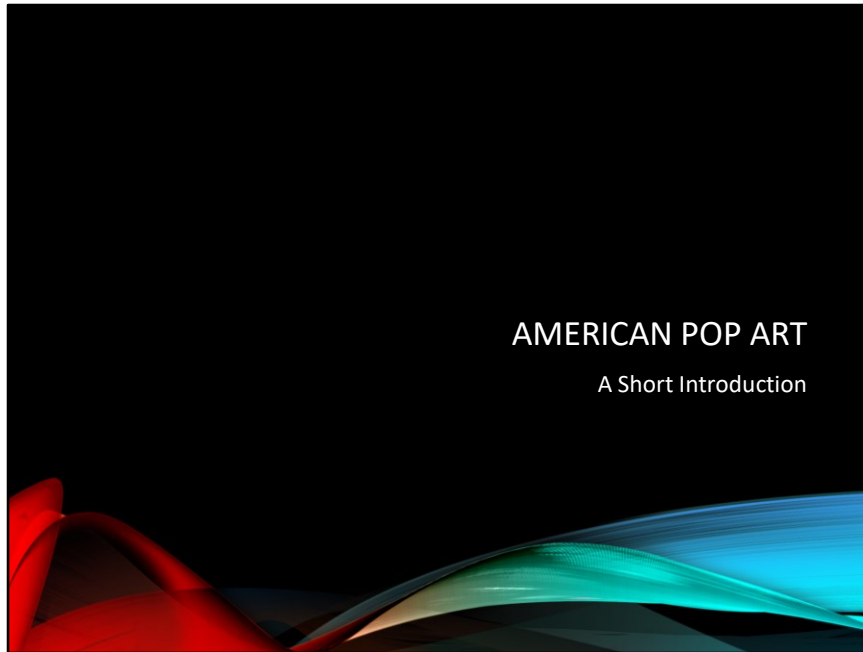
- This is one of the four *Demonstrations of Versatility* which Hockney exhibited at the *Young Contemporaries* student show in February 1962.
- In a conversation with the American artist Larry Rivers Hockney said of these works: 'I **deliberately set out to prove I could do four entirely different sorts of picture like Picasso**. They all had a sub-title and each was in a different style, Egyptian, illusionistic, flat - but looking at them later I realized the attitude is basically the same and you come to see yourself there a bit.'
- Also known as *The Third Tea Painting*, this is the last of a series of three paintings based on Typhoo Tea packets, made while Hockney was still a student at the Royal College of Art. The tea paintings marked a **return to the depiction of recognisable images**, after Hockney's **early attempts at abstraction**. In his studio at the College he was surrounded by tea packets:
 - I used to go into the Royal College of Art very early in the morning ... before Lyons had opened in South Kensington, and I used to **make my own tea** in there ... it was **always Typhoo tea**, my mother's favourite ... The tea packets piled up with the cans and tubes of paint ... and I just thought, in a

way it's like still-life paintings for me ... There was a packet of Typhoo tea, a very ordinary popular brand of tea, so I used it as a motif. **This is as close to pop art as I ever came.**

- This painting shows a figure apparently seated within the confines of a narrow cubicle (the Typhoo Tea box, complete with painted inscriptions including the misspelt 'TAE'. 'I am a bad speller, but to spell a three-letter word wrong!! But it's drawn in perspective and it was quite difficult to do. I took so long planning it that in my concern for flatness or abstraction **I spelt it wrong.**'
- The picture employed a **shaped canvas**, the first work by a Royal College student in which the stretcher departed from the traditional rectangle. Hockney made the stretcher himself. His intention was that, if the **blank canvas was already illusionistic**, he 'could ignore the concept of illusionistic space and paint merrily in a flat style - people were always talking about flatness in painting in those days'. He soon abandoned the device, although it was taken up by other artists, notably Allen Jones in his 1962 Bus paintings.

References

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In America

- I have focused on British Pop Art but the best known names are from the US including Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol. In America Pop Art was a reaction by these artists against the Abstract Expressionists such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko.
- Abstract Expressionism divided into two types:
 - Action Painting, as seen in the work of Jackson Pollock
 - Colour Field, as seen in the work of Mark Rothko
- Abstract expressionism can be related to a type of Surrealism known as automatic painting. Surrealist can be divided into the representation of dreams in a precise yet enigmatic form and the creation of art using automatic or semi-automatic processes. These automatic processes were thought to enable the artist to access and represent hidden, subconscious feelings.
- Leading American artists of the period were:
 - Jackson Pollock
 - Barnett Newman
 - Robert Rauschenberg
 - Jasper Johns

- Mark Rothko
- Roy Lichtenstein
- Andy Warhol
- Willem de Kooning



Jackson Pollock (1912–1956), *Summertime: Number 9A*, 1948, oil paint, enamel paint and commercial paint on canvas, 84.8 x 555 cm, Tate

Hans Numuth, Jackson Pollock, photograph

Jackson Pollock (1912–1956), *Summertime: Number 9A*, 1948, oil paint, enamel paint and commercial paint on canvas, 84.8 x 555 cm, Tate
Hans Numuth, Jackson Pollock, photograph

- During his lifetime, Pollock enjoyed considerable fame and notoriety; he was a major artist of his generation. Regarded as reclusive, he had a volatile personality, and struggled with alcoholism for most of his life. In 1945, he married the artist Lee Krasner, who became an important influence on his career and on his legacy. Pollock died at the age of 44 in an alcohol-related single-car accident when he was driving. In December 1956, several months after his death, Pollock was given a memorial retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York.

References

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Barnett Newman, *Eve*, 1950, 238.8 x 172.1 x 5 cm, Tate

- In his landmark essay 'The Sublime is Now' (1948), the American abstract expressionist painter Barnett Newman announced that 'the impulse of modern art' resides in the 'desire to destroy beauty'. The problem with beauty, according to Newman, is that it prevents the artist from realising 'man's desire for the exalted', in other words, for the sublime. In religious art, for Newman in particular, a preoccupation with the beautiful – with its emphasis on the figurative, the perfection of form, and the 'reality of sensation' – has impeded the perception of 'the Absolute'
- 'Newman shared the Abstract Expressionists' interests in myth and the primitive unconscious, but the huge fields of colour and trademark "zips" in his pictures set him apart from the gestural abstraction of many of his peers. The response to his mature work, even from friends, was muted when he first exhibited it. It was not until later in his career that he began to receive acclaim, and he would subsequently become a touchstone for both Minimalists and a second generation of Colour Field painters. Commenting on one of Newman's exhibitions in 1959, critic Thomas B. Hess wrote, "he changed in about a year's time from an outcast or a crank into the father figure of two generations."

- Newman believed that the modern world had rendered traditional art subjects and styles invalid, especially in the post-World War II years shadowed by conflict, fear, and tragedy. Newman wrote: "old standards of beauty were irrelevant: the sublime was all that was appropriate - an experience of enormity which might lift modern humanity out of its torpor."
- His first work to feature his signature 'zip' was *Onement I* (1948).

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Robert Rauschenberg, *Bed*, 1955, oil and pencil on pillow, quilt, and sheet on wood supports, 191.1 x 80 x 20.3 cm, The Museum of Modern Art

- *Bed* is one of Robert Rauschenberg's first Combines, works in which he affixed cast-off items, such as tires or old furniture, to a traditional support. Here he framed a well-worn pillow, sheet, and quilt, scribbled on them with pencil, and splashed them with paint in a style reminiscent of Abstract Expressionism. These bedclothes, legend has it, were Rauschenberg's own when he could not afford a canvas, and the work is thus as personal as a self-portrait, or more so. "Painting relates to both art and life," Rauschenberg said. "(I try to act in that gap between the two.)"
- After seeing *Bed* at its first showing, one critic remarked that the work "recalls a police photo of the murder bed after the corpse has been removed." Rauschenberg would later refute this interpretation, saying "I think of *Bed* as one of the friendliest pictures I've ever painted."
- The dripping paint is reminiscent of Abstract Expressionist Jackson Pollock's paintings, in which the artist would fling, splatter, and pour housepaint onto a canvas. These marks can be seen as both an homage to and a rebellion against Abstract Expressionists.

- Considered by many to be one of the most influential American artists due to his radical blending of materials and methods, Robert Rauschenberg was a crucial figure in the transition from Abstract Expressionism to later modern movements.
- Rauschenberg was born as Milton Ernest Rauschenberg in Texas. His father was of German and Cherokee ancestry and his mother of Anglo-Saxon descent. His parents were Fundamentalist Christians and Rauschenberg was dyslexic. At 16, he was admitted to the University of Texas where he began studying pharmacy. He was drafted into the United States Navy in 1943. He subsequently studied at the Kansas City Art Institute and the Académie Julian in Paris, France, where he met the painter Susan Weil. In 1948 Rauschenberg and Weil decided to attend Black Mountain College in North Carolina. Josef Albers, a founder of the Bauhaus, became Rauschenberg's painting instructor at Black Mountain. Albers' preliminary courses relied on strict discipline that did not allow for any "uninfluenced experimentation". Rauschenberg described Albers as influencing him to do "exactly the reverse" of what he was being taught.
- From 1949 to 1952 Rauschenberg studied in New York where he met fellow artist Cy Twombly. Rauschenberg married Susan Weil in the summer of 1950. Their only child, Christopher, was born in 1951 and they separated in 1952 and divorced in 1953. After the end of his marriage (some say during), Rauschenberg had romantic relationships with Cy Twombly and Jasper Johns.



Jasper Johns (b. 1930), *Three Flags*, 1958, Whitney Museum of American Art

- Jasper Johns (b. 1930) is an American painter, sculptor and printmaker associated with Abstract expressionism, Neo-Dada, and Pop art. He was born in Georgia and spent his early life in South Carolina with his grandparents. He moved to New York before being stationed in Japan during the Korean War. In 1954, he met Robert Rauschenberg and they became long-term lovers. His first show was in 1958 and four of his works were purchased by Alfred Barr, founding director of the Museum of Modern Art.
- Johns is best known for his painting *Flag* (1954–55), which he painted after having a dream of the American flag. His work is often described as Neo-Dadaist, as opposed to pop art, even though his subject matter often includes images and objects from popular culture. Still, many compilations on pop art include Jasper Johns as a pop artist because of his artistic use of classical iconography. Early works were composed using simple schema such as flags, maps, targets, letters and numbers.
- Since the 1980s, Johns typically produces only four to five paintings a year; some years he produces none. His large-scale paintings are much favoured by collectors

and because of their rarity are extremely difficult to acquire. His works from the mid to late 1950s, typically viewed as his period of rebellion against abstract expressionism, remain his most sought after.

- In 1980 the Whitney Museum of American Art paid \$1 million for *Three Flags* (1958), then the highest price ever paid for the work of a living artist. On November 11, 2014, a 1983 version of *Flag* was auctioned at Sotheby's in New York for \$36 million, establishing a new auction record for Johns.



Mark Rothko (1903-1970), *Seagram Murals*, 1959, Tate

On the left is *Red on Maroon Mural, Section 3*, 1959

In the centre, *Black on Maroon*, 1958 (damaged by a vandal 1 2012)

On the right, *Red on Maroon Mural, Section 4* 1959

- Mark Rothko used colour to express the basic human emotions of tragedy, ecstasy and doom. By 1958, the spiritual expression he meant to portray on canvas was growing increasingly dark. Rothko commented on viewers breaking down in tears before his paintings.
- In November 1958, Rothko gave an address to the Pratt Institute and discussed art as a trade and offered:
 - "[the] recipe of a work of art—its ingredients—how to make it—the formula.
 - There must be a clear preoccupation with death—intimations of mortality... Tragic art, romantic art, etc., deals with the knowledge of death.
 - Sensuality. Our basis of being concrete about the world. It is a lustful relationship to things that exist.
 - Tension. Either conflict or curbed desire.

- Irony, This is a modern ingredient—the self-effacement and examination by which a man for an instant can go on to something else.
- Wit and play... for the human element.
- The ephemeral and chance... for the human element.
- Hope. 10% to make the tragic concept more endurable.
- I measure these ingredients very carefully when I paint a picture. It is always the form that follows these elements and the picture results from the proportions of these elements."

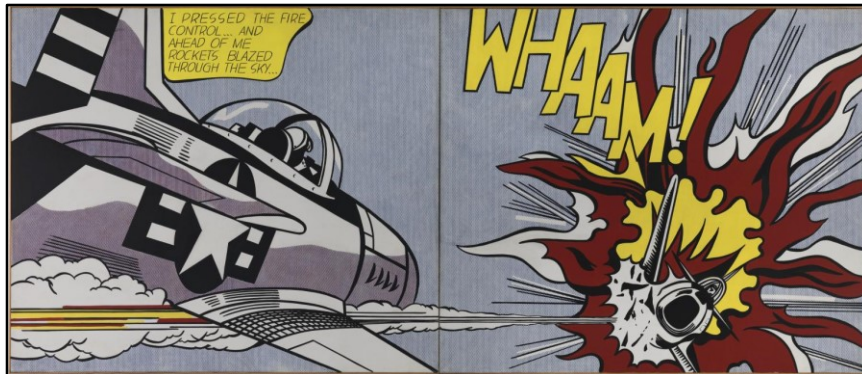
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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Rothko



Roy Lichtenstein (1923–1997), *Whaam!*, 1963, acrylic paint and oil paint on canvas, 172.7 x 406.4 cm, Tate

Roy Lichtenstein (1923–1997), *Whaam!*, 1963, acrylic paint and oil paint on canvas, 172.7 x 406.4 cm, Tate

Pop Art in America

- In America artists like Lichtenstein and Warhol reacted against the painterly approach of the Abstract Expressionists and their spiritual message and elitist assumptions. Although, as we have seen, Rothko was concerned about his paintings adorning the walls of a restaurant for the rich and elite he still produced large paintings in the tradition of fine art. Artists such as Lichtenstein and Warhol wanted to remove the distinction between fine art and popular art. Although, in the UK there were discussions and seminars and deep thought about the anthropological implications, in the US Pop Art was simply a reaction against the fine art industry. A slap in the face rather than a reasoned argument.
- *Tate website:* *Whaam!* is based on an image from *All American Men of War* published by DC comics in 1962. Throughout the 1960s, Lichtenstein frequently drew on commercial art sources such as comic images or advertisements, attracted by the way highly emotional subject matter could be depicted using detached techniques. Transferring this to a painting context,

Lichtenstein could present powerfully charged scenes in an impersonal manner, leaving the viewer to decipher meanings for themselves.

- One world of images, Pop Art, Op-Art, popular culture and the mass media. Art as a part of the world of images.
- Lichtenstein employs his usual comic-book style: stereotyped imagery in bright primary colours with black outlines, coupled with imitations of mechanical printer's **Ben-Day dots**. The use of these dots, which were invented by Benjamin Day to simulate colour variations and shading, are considered Lichtenstein's "signature method".

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Andy Warhol (1928-1987), *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962, Tate

Andy Warhol (1928-1987), *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962, Tate

- We see 25 images of Marilyn Monroe in garish colours and 25 on the right in black and white. These silkscreen prints are based on a still from the film *Niagara* made in 1953 the year Marilyn died from an overdose of sleeping pills. Although they initially look the same they are all slightly different as Warhol hand printed the images and changed the registration of each colour. In the right panel he has blurred and faded the images suggesting the star's death. The contrast between the bright colours and the monochrome also suggests life and death and the title, 'Diptych' suggest a religious altar piece. A secular altar to the popular star Marilyn Monroe.
- The image is repeated 25 times in each panel which both reinforces the effect and negates the effect by creating an all-over abstract pattern.

Background Notes, Andy Warhol (1928-1987), *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962

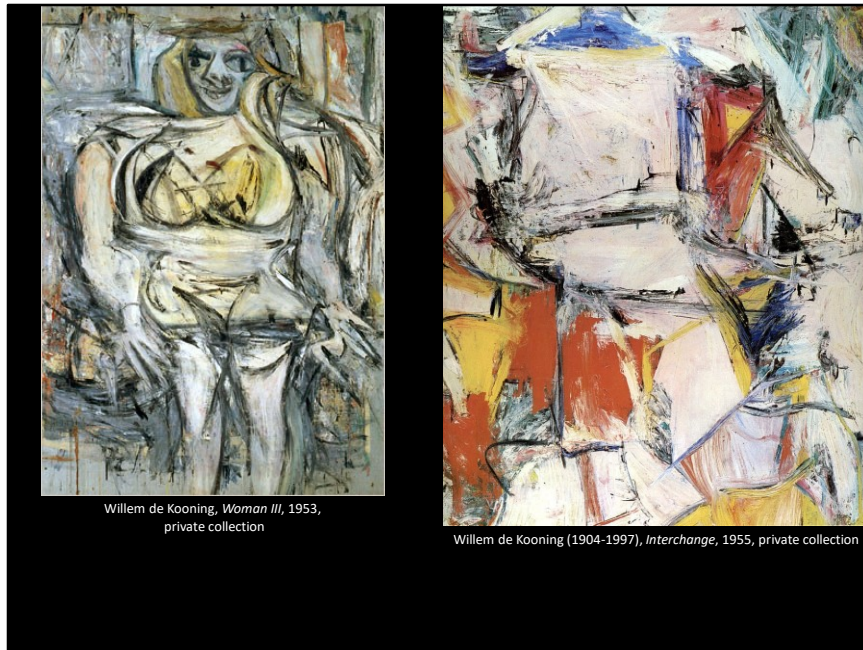
- Tate caption: Marilyn Monroe died in August 1962, having overdosed on barbiturates. In the following four months, Warhol made more than twenty silkscreen paintings of her, all based on the same publicity photograph from the 1953 film *Niagara*. Warhol found in Monroe a fusion of two of his consistent

themes: death and the cult of celebrity. By repeating the image, he evokes her ubiquitous presence in the media. The contrast of vivid colour with black and white, and the effect of fading in the right panel are suggestive of the star's mortality.

- Andy Warhol (1928-1987) was born in Pittsburgh and his name was originally 'Warhola'. As a child he developed St. Vitus' Dance and he became a hypochondriac and a fear of hospitals and doctors. He was often bedridden and was an outcast at school. In bed he drew and collected pictures of movie stars which helped establish his personality and preferences. When he was 13 his father died in an accident.
- He moved to New York in 1949 and became a successful commercial artist working for titles such as *Harper's Bazaar* and *Glamour*. He was awarded the Art Directors' Club Medal in 1957 for his shoe advertisements. His first one-man exhibition of drawings was in 1952 and he started create paintings based on newspaper title pages in 1960. In 1962 he started to use silkscreen printing to produce 'Campbell's Soup Cans', 'Coca-Cola Bottles', portraits of Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor, Elvis Presley, Jackie Kennedy, and later also car crashes, the electric chair, flowers and so on, sometimes with rows of repeated images.
- Warhol appreciated intense Hollywood glamour. He once said: **'I love Los Angeles. I love Hollywood. They're so beautiful. Everything's plastic, but I love plastic. I want to be plastic.'**
- He is one of the most influential artists of the post-war period and has produced 232 works. He is the most famous proponent of Pop-Art which he used to depict consumer goods and iconic people in order to explore his fascination with celebrity and mortality. Although most famous for his silkscreen prints he often used photography and created some ground-breaking films. The highest price ever paid for a Warhol painting is \$105 million for a 1963 canvas titled *Silver Car Crash (Double Disaster)*. In his will Warhol said that his entire estate — with the exception of a few modest legacies to family members — would go to create a foundation dedicated to the 'advancement of the visual arts'. Warhol had so many possessions that it took Sotheby's nine days to auction his estate after his death; the auction grossed more than \$20 million.

References

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andy_Warhol



Willem de Kooning (1904-1997), *Woman III*, 1953, private collection
 Willem de Kooning (1904-1997), *Interchange*, 1955, private collection

- Willem de Kooning was born in the Netherlands and his parents divorced when he was three. He joined a firm of commercial artists when he left school and attended evening classes in art. In 1926 he travelled to the US as a stowaway. In 1927 he moved to New York and supported himself as a house painter. He met the Armenian artist Arshile Gorky and they became close friends and Gorky became an important influence. In 1934, and in 1935 was employed in the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration, for which he designed a number of murals. He married in 1943 which began a lifelong partnership affected by alcoholism, lack of money, love affairs, quarrels and separations. De Kooning's well-known *Woman* series, begun in 1950 and culminating in *Woman VI*, owed much to Picasso, not least in the aggressive, penetrative breaking apart of the figure, and the spaces around it. De Kooning led the 1950s art world into abstract expressionism. "From 1940 to the present, *Woman* has manifested herself in de Kooning's paintings and drawings as at once the focus of desire, frustration, inner conflict, pleasure".
- Some of de Kooning's paintings have been sold in the 21st century for near record

prices. In November 2006, David Geffen sold his oil painting ***Woman III*** to Steven A. Cohen for **\$137.5 million**, just below the record at the time of \$140 million, which involved the same people in the same month for Jackson Pollock's No. 5, 1948. In September 2015 David Geffen sold de Kooning's oil painting ***Interchange*** for **\$300 million** to hedge fund billionaire Ken Griffin. As of 2016 this is **the highest price ever paid for a painting**, even when inflation is taken into account.



Next week we will cover five more well-known figurative artists:

1. R. B. Kitaj (1932-2007) was an American artist with Jewish roots who spent much of his life in England.
2. Lucien Freud (1922-2011)
3. Francis Bacon (1909-1992)
4. Frank Auerbach (b. 1931)
5. Euan Uglow (1932-2000), British painter famous for nudes