

# Tate Modern

## Media Networks:

Boiler House (North) Level 4 East

15:00-15:45

Laurence Shafe

# Media Networks (Level 4 East)

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- This is based on the new hang in Level 2 East on 27 May 2016.
- Works marked with '\*' are key works not to be missed and the others are optional.
- Each work is shown with the artist followed by the talk itself (typically 3 to 5 minutes), followed by bullet point notes designed to answer possible questions. The section 'Visual Aids' at the end contains additional images that may be used to illustrate related works or ideas.
- Optional sections are shown in square brackets. All quotations are in bold and names are underlined.
- In general, start with the title and the artist followed by a description of the work and end with a link to either the theme of the gallery or the next work. Avoid dates, movements and 'isms' unless directly relevant. Only refer to other works or historic events if they help explain the work being presented.

## Introduction

1. Welcome to Tate Modern. My name is Laurence and I am your guide for the next 45 minutes. There are eight free tours each day in Tate Modern given by volunteer guides like me and this is the last tour of the day.
2. I have a hearing loop for anyone that requires it and if you need a seat there are folding stools over there.
3. We are in Tate Modern, named after Henry Tate, a wealthy nineteenth-century entrepreneur who made his fortune selling sugar cubes. In later life, he gave a lot to charity including what became Tate Britain and, about 100 years later, this building was opened to hold the ever-expanding collection. This building is a converted power station, called Bankside, and we are in the part known as the Boiler House. Down the centre is the Turbine Hall and over the bridge is the Blavatnik Building. This ten-storey extension opened in June 2016 and increased the display area by 60%. On this side of the building, the Boiler House, there are four permanent galleries, two on this floor and two on floor two.
4. Tate Modern is one of the most popular international modern art gallery in the world and we have managed to keep our permanent collection free by charging for temporary exhibitions, some Government funding and the use of volunteers like me. Please help us remain free by having lunch here, buying a book or giving a small donation.
5. Today, I will be looking at some of the ways in which artists over the past hundred years have responded to the impact of mass media and the ever-changing technologies that shape our world in the 'Media Networks' gallery. The gallery raises question about our role in society, the cult of celebrity, feminism, technological change and war.
6. We will be looking at about ten works that I have selected as representative and important and when we finish I will leave you in the final room to continue looking round the gallery. I am happy to take questions as we go around so let's get started in the first room.

## Notes

- **The Founder.** Henry Tate (1819-1899) was the son of a clergyman and set up his own grocery shop when he was 20. He expanded this to a chain of six shops which he sold and became the owner of a sugar refinery in 1859. This was 26 years after slavery had been abolished in the British Empire (1833) and 52 years after Britain had abolished the slave trade (1807). In 1872, Tate bought a German patent for making sugar cubes from Eugen Langen and it was this that made his fortune. The same year he opened a refinery in Liverpool. Towards the end of his life he gave money to many colleges, hospitals and founded Streatham, Balham, South Lambeth and Brixton libraries. In 1897, he spent £150,000 (some say £80,000) on building the National Gallery of British Art ('Tate Gallery' in 1932), endowed it with his personal art collection of 65 contemporary paintings and gave it all to the nation. The famous portico was designed by the architect Sidney Smith. It was separated from the National Gallery in 1954. Tate Britain was extended twice by Joseph Duveen, an art dealer who also paid for an extension at the British Museum, and in 1987 Charles Clore funded the Turner wing.
- **Bankside power station** was designed by Giles Gilbert Scott (1880-1960) who designed Liverpool Cathedral and many of the red telephone boxes. He was the grandson of the prolific Victorian architect George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) who designed the Midland Hotel at St. Pancras and the Albert Memorial. The façade of the building is made from 4.2 million bricks. The chimney is 325 feet (99m) and was designed to be lower than St. Paul's Cathedral opposite (365 feet, 111m). At its peak, the power station generated 300 megawatts but it became uneconomic and too polluting and was closed in 1981. The turbine hall is 509 feet (155 m) long, 115 feet (35 m) wide and 85 feet (26 m) high. The conversion was carried out by Herzog & de Meuron at a cost of £134 million of which £50 million was from the Millennium Commission. Tate Modern opened in 2000 and had become one of the most visited museums of modern and contemporary art in the world.
- **Attendance.** According to Wikipedia and the Tate Annual Report 2014-15 the four Tate galleries received 7.9 million visitors and Tate Modern 5.7 million. The Louvre was number one with 9.7 million, number two was the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art with 6.1 million, the British Museum was number three with 5.6 million and Tate Modern was number four.
- **Extension.** Within four years of opening our success meant we started planning to expand the gallery. This new extension, again designed by Herzog & de Meuron, cost £260 million and opened on 17 June 2016. This ten-storey extension, now called the Blavatnik Building, increases the display space by 60%. Len Blavatnik is the UK's richest person and has been a UK citizen since 2010.
- **Gender balance.** Nearly 40% (38%) of the artists on display at Tate Modern are women and 50% of the monographic rooms are by women.
- **Management.** The Director of the Tate is Maria Balshaw who was previously Director of the Whitworth (University of Manchester) and Manchester City Galleries, and Director of Culture for Manchester City Council. The previous Director, since 1988, was Sir Nicholas Serota (b. 1946). The Director of Tate Modern is Frances Morris and of Tate Britain Alex Farquharson.
- **Media networks.** Look at some of the ways in which artists over the past hundred years have responded to the impact of mass media and the ever-changing technologies that shape our world. Including a diverse range of techniques and materials – from posters and paint to analogue and digital technology – the display raises questions around feminism, consumerism and the cult of celebrity.
- **Links to Tate web page.** The following links can be used to check the works are on display although the Tate web site is not always accurate so always check the gallery before the tour.

- Andy Warhol (1928-1987), *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962 (Room 1),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/warhol-marilyn-diptych-t03093>
- Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have to Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?*, 1989,  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/guerrilla-girls-do-women-have-to-be-naked-to-get-into-the-met-museum-p78793>
- Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913 (Room 2),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/boccioni-unique-forms-of-continuity-in-space-t01589>
- Gino Severini (1883-1966), *Suburban Train Arriving in Paris*, 1915 (Rooms 2),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/severini-suburban-train-arriving-in-paris-t01070>
- Max Beckmann (1884-1950), *Carnival*, 1920 (Room 2),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/beckmann-carnival-t03294>
- John Heartfield (1891–1968), *AIZ*, 1924-1933 (Room 3),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/heartfield-adolf-the-superman-swallows-gold-and-spouts-rubbish-x39284>
- Cindy Sherman (b. 1954), *Untitled #126*, 1983 (not on display),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/sherman-untitled-126-t07185>
- Cildo Meireles (b. 1948), *Babel*, 2001 (Room 6),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/meireles-babel-t14041>
- Nam June Paik (1932-2006), *Victrola*, 2005 (Room 10),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/paik-victrola-t14341>
- Peter Doig, *Ski Jacket*, 1994 (Room 11), <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/doig-ski-jacket-t06962>
- Roy Lichtenstein, *Whaam!*, 1963 (not on display),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lichtenstein-whaam-t00897>
- André Fougeron (1913-1998), *Atlantic Civilization*, 1953 (Room 12),  
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/fougeron-atlantic-civilisation-t07645>

Martin Creed, *Work No. 232: the whole world + the work = the whole world*, 2000

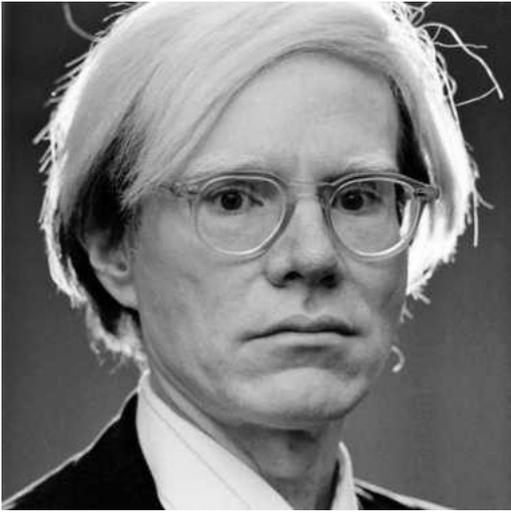


- This work was commissioned by the Tate from Martin Creed (b. 1968) to mark the opening of Tate Modern in 2000. It was based on a work he created in 1996 when he wrote the same words in ink on paper. Its full title is *Work No. 232: the whole world + the work = the whole world*. Since 1987 he has started his titles with a number implying a systemic archive but he misses out many numbers. This is always followed by a description in lower case, for example, *Work No. 88, a sheet of A4 paper crumpled into a ball* (1994) and *Work No. 227: the lights going on and off*, which won the Turner Prize in 2001.
- Creed has said he finds it difficult to choose one thing over another, for example, whether to leave the lights on or switch them off, so he involves both options. What does this work mean? It is both a positive statement about the inclusiveness of art and a negative statement of art's irrelevance so it is both and neither. Creed said, **“I find it a lot easier if it negates itself at the same time as pushing itself forward – so there’s an equal positive and negative which adds up to nothing, but at the same time is something too.”** It is a comment on the whole of art and I think it warns us not to assume the artist has some precise meaning they hid in the work that it is our task to uncover. Having said that, it is my task for the next 45 minutes to try to help you enjoy the works we shall see more fully.

Notes on Martin Creed

- Creed is an artist and musician who lives and works in London. He studied art at the Slade School of Art at University College London from 1986 to 1990. In recent years Creed has been exhibiting paintings in nearly every exhibition he has done. He has released twenty singles and albums.

Andy Warhol (1928-1987), *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962 (Room 1)



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

- This is *Marilyn Diptych* by Andy Warhol. A diptych is an altarpiece made in two parts and these two panels are like a religious altarpiece. In this case, we are being asked to worship the god of consumerism. On the left, there are 25 images of Marilyn Monroe in garish colours and on the right 25 in black and white. The repetition reminds us of identical consumer products endlessly manufactured and consumed. We are reminded of Andy Warhol's *Campbell Soup Cans* (see Visual Aids) and Warhol is telling us that movie stars are like commodities packaged for our consumption. The images are silkscreen prints produced from a still picture from the film *Niagara* that Marilyn Monroe made in 1953 (see Visual Aids). Warhol made this work a few weeks after she tragically committed suicide in August 1962. Her frequent bouts of depression combined with the pressure of performing as a star throws some of the blame onto us all.
- 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. By repeating the image Warhol reminds us that consumer goods, including film stars, involve endlessly repeating the same or similar images over and over again. Warhol has selected an image that looks like a mask suggesting that identity lies in surface appearance.
- Warhol began his career as a commercial designer in the advertising world so he was familiar with the conventions and techniques of mass marketing. These techniques were used to package and sell Marilyn Monroe so what we see is the packaged product of the movie star. This is not a rejection of mass marketing but a comment on it. Warhol said, '**Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art. Making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art.**'
- If we look more closely we see that although the images on the left initially look the same they are all slightly different. 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 of a star's life and the fading monochrome of her death creates a secular altar to consumerism and a reminder that we created a star called Marilyn Monroe but a person called Norma Jeane Mortenson died.
- Let us now look at how a group of women artists reacted against another expectation of our society, namely that women cannot be real artists.

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

- Tate caption: Marilyn Monroe died on 4 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'. His father emigrated from Slovakia before he was born and worked in the coal mines. As a child Warhol 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, aged 21, 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.
- Marilyn Monroe was born Norma Jeane Mortenson in 1926. She made three films in 1953, the Technicolour *Niagara*, the most overtly sexual of all her films, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, a satirical musical comedy and *How to Marry a Millionaire*. She made thirty films in her career and was married three times to James Dougherty, Joe DiMaggio and Arthur Miller. She died at the age of 36 on August 5, 1962 from an overdose of barbiturates at her home in Los Angeles. Although the death was ruled a probable suicide, several conspiracy theories have been proposed in the decades following her death. She had recently been fired by 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox.
- In 2004, in *The Guardian*, the painting was named the third most influential piece of modern art in a survey of 500 artists, critics, and others.

Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have to Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?*, 1989



Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?*, 1989

- This and the Warhol are both comments on the commodification of women in our society and both use the visual language of advertising but in different ways. In this case, it is the assumption that women are suitable as art objects but not as real artists.
- I have picked on one of about thirty posters produced by a group of anonymous American female artists. Their name 'Guerrilla' is a play on the word for a group that takes part in irregular fighting against a regular, much larger force and the ape. The women artists all wear gorilla heads to keep their identity secret and the gorilla is also the most masculine of animals.
- The image shown here is based on the famous painting by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) entitled *La Grande Odalisque* (1814, Louvre, see Visual Aids). The poster's sub-title says, '**less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art Sections are women, but 85% of the nudes are female**'. This refers to the Modern Art section of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Met has art going back to 2000 B.C. and it is in the Modern Art section that you would expect to see women artists better represented. It is not just the Met; the Guerrilla Girls have shown that most modern art galleries and exhibitions display predominantly male artists. The work is dated 1989 and you may be wondering if things have improved. Well, an exhibition they held at the Whitechapel Gallery that ended in March 2017 had the title "Guerrilla Girls: Is it even worse in Europe?" (see Visual Aids) The poster outside reads of the 383 European Museums asked about diversity only a quarter replied. I am pleased to say that the Tate did and 50% of the featured artists in Tate Modern are women.
- Since they were formed in 1984 the Guerrilla Girls have been working to expose sexual and racial discrimination in art. They call themselves '**the conscience of the art world**' and they use the visual language of advertising, especially fly-posting to get their message across quickly and effectively.
- The poster was originally designed to be a billboard commissioned by the Public Art Fund in New York, but it was rejected on grounds of not being clear enough. The Guerrilla Girls said, '**we then rented advertising space on NYC buses and ran it ourselves, until the bus company cancelled our lease, saying that the image ... was too suggestive and that the figure appeared to have more than a fan in her hand.**'
- The next work takes us back a hundred years to an Italian art movement that centred on machismo.

Background Noyes Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?*, 1989

- Guerrilla Girls are an anonymous group of feminist, female artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism within the art world. The group formed in New York City in 1985 with the mission of bringing gender and racial inequality in the fine arts into focus within the greater community. The members hid their identity by wearing masks and by adopting pseudonyms based on the names of famous female figures, such as Gertrude Stein and Frida Kahlo. They were formed in 1984 after a survey exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA, New York) included 169 artists of which fewer than 10% were women artists. Female artists played a major role in the 1970s but in the 80s their presence in galleries diminished.
- They appropriated fly-poster format to get their message across. They listed galleries that showed under 10% women and male artists who refused to boycott galleries that shows little work by women. They produced stickers for gallery windows and put flyers in books in a galleries bookstore. the Guerrilla Girls use wit and irony to point a critical finger at double standards prevalent in the art world and elsewhere.
- The Metropolitan Museum of Art (the 'Met') in New York was founded in 1870 and contains ancient Egyptian art, European Old Masters and African, Asian, Oceanic, Byzantine, Indian and Islamic Art.
- In 2015, only 7% of the works on display at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA) were by women.
- Maria Balshaw confirmed as new Tate director, succeeding Sir Nicholas Serota. Frances Morris was appointed director of Tate Modern in 2016. Fifty percent of the solo rooms are by women artists and 36% of the works on display. Solo rooms include works by lude Polish artist Magdalena Abakanowicz, South African sculptor Jane Alexander, American artist Louise Nevelson, French-American artist Louise Bourgeois and Indian artist Sheila Gowda.
- The Tate has a portfolio of thirty posters produced by the Guerrilla Girls which is number twelve in the edition of 50.

References

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla\\_Girls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla_Girls)
- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/guerrilla-girls-do-women-have-to-be-naked-to-get-into-the-met-museum-p78793/text-summary>
- <http://www.artnews.com/2015/05/26/taking-the-measure-of-sexism-facts-figures-and-fixes/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/the-womens-blog-with-jane-martinson/2013/may/24/women-art-great-artists-men>

Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913 (Room 2)



Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916), *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913

- This is Umberto Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* of 1913. It is clearly a person but distorted by speed. The ankles have what could be wings, like the Roman god Mercury [the Greek god Hermes], and the distortions of the body look like muscles suggesting power and energy.
- This is an example of an art movement called Futurism [founded in 1909 by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti]. It was an Italian art movement whose followers were enthusiastic about speed, power, new inventions and the modern world. They were worried that Italy was falling behind in the modern world and they wanted to break with the art of the past and praised the wonders of the new technological age. They loved fast cars, trains and mechanical devices that exhibited speed, power and progress.
- This is an example of a Futurist sculpture and we will see a painting next. The body strides forward and Boccioni said he was inspired by a footballer running to intercept a pass. The body is deformed by speed as it strides into the future and it foresees mechanised, robotic bodies as well as suggesting the 'superman' of the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche [published 30 years before]. The face is abstracted into a cross and the head is like a helmet suggesting a soldier of the future. This is appropriate as the Futurists also supported war and destruction. They held meetings calling for riots to upset the current social order and they supported the destruction of art galleries and museums and the complete and violent overthrow of the past.
- When the First World War started, Boccioni enlisted but in 1916 he was thrown from his horse and trampled and he died the next day aged only thirty-three. He was a leading artist in the Futurist movement and he produced many well-known works including this masterpiece in plaster in 1913. After his death, it was cast in bronze a number of times over the years. This version is one of the two cast in 1972 when it was purchased by the Tate.
- Let us look at one other Futurist artist.

Background Notes, Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916), *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913, bronze

- Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916) was an influential Italian painter and sculptor. He was one of the principal figures of the Futurism movement and painted many works of which the most famous is *La città sale* or *The City Rises*, 1910, a huge (2m by 3m) painting, which is considered his turning point into Futurism. *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* is considered his masterpiece. It was produced in 1912 and exhibited in 1913 in plaster and it was the fourth in a series of striding figures. The figure was originally inspired by the sight of a football player moving on to a passed ball. After his death, the plaster was hacked into pieces by workman but the pieces were saved by fellow Futurists and stuck together again. Two copies were cast in bronze in 1931, again in 1949 and again in 1972, of which one is this one. Another eight were cast from one of the 1949 bronzes in 1972. Boccioni was drafted into the army in 1916 and was thrown from his horse and trampled and he died the next day aged thirty-three.
- In Italy, in the early 1900s, a group of young writers and artists were frustrated by Italy failure to industrialize and join the modern world. They believed that the new machine age would bring about a new world order. The leader of this group, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, called the movement Futurism. Marinetti published the 'Futurists Manifesto' on the front page of *Le Figaro* in 1909. He criticized all existing tradition and called for the destruction of museums and libraries. He said the aim should be to embrace modernity and extol the beauty of speed, movement, and industrial development.
- The Futurists held meetings where they agitated the crowd believing that riot and destruction would end the status quo and bring about a stronger Italy. Their beliefs led them to support the coming war and Boccioni and many other Futurists enlisted. After the war, the Futurists' intense nationalism led to an alliance with Benito Mussolini and his National Fascist Party.
- Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) developed the idea of the Übermensch or Superman in his 1883 work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. The book tells the parable of the death of God and sets the goal for humanity of becoming Übermensch. Zarathustra was an ancient Iranian prophet whose teachings developed into Zoroastrianism.

## References

- <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-1010/wwi-dada/art-great-war/a/umberto-boccioni-unique-forms-of-continuity-in-space>
- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/boccioni-unique-forms-of-continuity-in-space-t01589>

Gino Severini (1883-1966), *Suburban Train Arriving in Paris*, 1915



Gino Severini (1883-1966), *Suburban Train Arriving in Paris*, 1915

- The painting is by another Futurist artist Gino Severini two years later. It is all jagged lines and billowing smoke and is called *Suburban Train Arriving in Paris*. As I said just now, the Futurists were interested in modern technology and speed. Here we see a train represented as fractured, interpenetrating forms to express movement and energies. Like all the Italian Futurists, Severini was inspired by modern machinery and was enthusiastic about the idea of war. In June 1915, he stayed for some weeks just outside Paris where the sight of trains passing close by day and night laden with munitions, soldiers or wounded prompted the creation of this work.
- Severini has flattened the perspective and we see the houses from various angles and the train appears to emerge from the tracks surrounded by steam. He has incorporated elements of Cubism, a style that had been developed by Picasso and George Braque in Paris a few years previously.
- Severini was from a poor family and was expelled from the entire Italian school system when he was caught stealing exam papers. He was then helped to study art by a wealthy patron but his education stopped after two years when his patron announced, '**I absolutely do not understand your lack of order**'. Severini settled in Paris in 1906 and knew Umberto Boccioni who introduced him to other artists in Paris at the time such as Pablo Picasso, George Braque and the Italian artist Amedeo Modigliani.
- By the way, The work 'KNEIPP' relates to an advertisement for a popular malted drink and adds an air of normality to the fragmented, feverish scene. The Kneipp Malt Food Company produced a coffee substitute for health reasons, their slogan was a "**It will give the cheer without the poison**".
- This painting is unusual for Severini as he was not as fascinated by machines as other Futurists and he often chose to paint dancers to express his ideas of dynamism in art.
- Let us move on a few years to 1920 and a German artist called Max Beckmann.

## Background Notes Gino Severini (1883-1966), *Suburban Train Arriving in Paris*, 1915

- Severini met Boccioni in 1900 who introduced him to Giacomo Balla who taught him to paint in the pointillist style. In 1910 he signed the Futurist Manifesto and was an active member for the next five years. His first one man exhibition was in London in 1913. He became increasingly influenced by Cubism from 1913 onwards and in the 1920s designed frescoes and mosaics in Switzerland and Italy in a more traditional style. In the early 1940s he designed for the ballet and theatre and from the late 1940s adopted a semi-abstract Futurist style.
- This painting shows his synthesis of Futurist and Cubist styles.

## References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/severini-suburban-train-arriving-in-paris-t01070>

Max Beckmann (1884-1950), *Carnival*, 1920 (Room 2)



Max Beckmann (1884-1950), *Carnival*, 1920

- This is *Carnival* by Max Beckmann, a German artist who painted it in 1920.
- He served as a medical orderly during the First World War and the horrors he witnessed led to his mental breakdown. He was discharged in 1915 and was looked after by his friend, the painter Ugi Battenberg, and the figure on the right in this painting is his wife Fridel Battenberg holding a violin.
- The figure on the left is I. B. [Israel Ben] Neumann, an art dealer and friend who was one of the first to recognise Beckmann's significance and the first to exhibit his work. Neumann is holding a clapper or slap stick.
- The figure on the floor is Beckmann disguised as a clown in a monkey mask and wielding a trumpet with his bare feet. The musical instruments are because it is Carnival time, a period before the start of Lent. In Germany, the Carnival [or *Fastnacht*] was a time of fancy-dress parties, masked balls, celebration and street processions. 1920 was the year that dissent began in the form of strikes and riots, there were food shortages and the mark had started to decline. It was the first year that a paramilitary group [called Marine Brigade Erhardt] started to use the swastika as its emblem. The German authorities banned the Carnival that year as they feared riots and this could be why we see the celebration taking place indoors. Beckmann could be representing the madness beginning in German society and in general terms this image of carnival may be a metaphor for the world as a madhouse.
- The interior space is claustrophobic, chaotic and in danger of collapse which could also a comment on his society. It is a marked change from the open scenes he painted before the war and has been seen as representing his fear of the open, horrific landscapes he saw during the war. Beckmann said he wanted '**to protect myself from the infinity of space**'.
- Beckmann's work, with its grotesque and distorted figures, epitomised what the Nazis later called 'degenerate' art. In 1933, Beckmann was dismissed from his teaching post in Frankfurt and several of his works were included in the Nazi's 1937 Degenerate Art [or 'Entartete Kunst'] exhibition, prompting him to leave Germany for Amsterdam. After the war, he moved to the United States where he taught art. Although rejected by the Nazis [Today his large paintings regularly sell for over \$1 million and the record price was \$22.5 million in 2001.]
- Continuing with the theme of Germany and the conflict between artists and the Nazi Party let us move to the next room to see a heroic example.

## Background Notes on Max Beckmann (1884-1950), *Carnival*, 1920

- Max Beckmann (1884–1950) was a German painter, draftsman, printmaker, sculptor, and writer. Although he is classified as an Expressionist artist, he rejected both the term and the movement. He was born in Leipzig and his traumatic experiences in World War I changed his art from academically correct to distortions of figures, forms and space. In the 1920s, he was associated with the New Objectivity (Neue Sachlichkeit), an outgrowth of Expressionism that opposed its introverted emotionalism. He is known for the many self-portraits he painted throughout his life. He was well read in philosophy and literature and influenced by mysticism and theosophy. He enjoyed great success and was honoured by the Weimar Republic.
- Tate “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, epitomized 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.”
- Beckmann suffered from his harrowing experience as a hospital orderly during World War I and had a breakdown in 1915. After this his painting took on a harsh realism in which he created a complex and mysterious symbolism to express his tragic view of human nature. This was painted at the beginning of the ‘Weimar Republic’ (see below).
- Tate website, “The German title of 'Carnival' is 'Fastnacht' which refers to the climax of the Carnival season of fancy dress parties, masked balls and street processions with wild music and dancing, which take place in Catholic countries between mid-January and the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday (46 days before Easter, between 4 February and 10 March). Fastnacht thus traditionally symbolises the vanity and futility and transience of the world. The fact that this carnival scene is taking place indoors maybe related to the fact that in 1920 the Frankfurt police banned all public festivities on grounds of extravagance.
- Unlike several of his avant-garde contemporaries, Beckmann rejected non-representational painting; instead, he took up and advanced the tradition of figurative painting. He greatly admired not only Cézanne and Van Gogh, but also Blake, Rembrandt, and Rubens, as well as Northern European artists of the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, such as Bosch, Bruegel, and Matthias Grünewald. His style and method of composition are partially rooted in the imagery of medieval stained glass.
- 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.
- Beckmann’s fortunes changed with the rise to power of Adolf Hitler, whose dislike of Modern Art quickly led to its suppression by the state. In 1933, the Nazi government called Beckmann a "cultural Bolshevik" and dismissed him from his teaching position at the Art School in Frankfurt. In 1937 the government confiscated more than 500 of his works from German museums, putting several on display in the notorious Degenerate Art exhibition in Munich. The day after Hitler's radio speech about degenerate art in 1937, Beckmann left Germany with his second wife, Quappi, for The

Netherlands. For ten years, Beckmann lived in self-imposed exile in Amsterdam, failing in his desperate attempts to obtain a visa for the United States. In 1944, the Germans attempted to draft him into the army, although the sixty-year-old artist had suffered a heart attack. The works completed in his Amsterdam studio were even more powerful and intense than the ones of his master years in Frankfurt. They included several large triptychs, which stand as a summation of Beckmann's art. After the war, Beckmann moved to the United States. During the last three years of his life, he taught at the art schools of Washington University in St. Louis.

- Israel Ben Neumann (1887-1961) championed progressive living artists, including Wassily Kandinsky, Max Beckmann, Paul Klee, and Georges Rouault. His wife, Elsa Schmidt, was a well-known artist who worked in mosaics. In addition to being an art dealer, Neumann was an art critic, author, lecturer, and publisher. He moved to New York in 1923 and opened a successful gallery.
- Today Beckmann's large paintings regularly sell for over \$1 million and the record price is \$22.5 million in 2001.

## References

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John Heartfield (1891–1968), AIZ, 1924-1933 (Room 3)



*Adolf, The Superman: Swallows Gold and Spouts Rubbish (Adolf, Der Uebermensch: Schluckt Gold und redet Blech), 1932*



*Goering: The Executioner of the Third Reich, AIZ, September 14, 1933*

## John Heartfield (1891–1968), *AIZ*, 1924-1933

- These are all photomontages by the artist John Heartfield who produced them for the magazine *AIZ* (*Arbeiters-Illustrierte Zeitung*, or *The Workers' Illustrated Newspaper*) an anti-Fascist, Communist newspaper produced between 1924 and 1933 in Berlin. These covers are produced by cutting out photographs and sticking them together and printing the resulting photo montage.
- As an example, this image is called '*Adolf, The Superman: Swallows Gold and Spouts Rubbish*' and it shows an X-ray of Adolf Hitler and we can see his vertebrae are made of gold coins. He wears the insignia of the Nazi party, a swastika over his heart. Hitler gave speeches that supported the working classes but Communists like Heartfield wanted to expose Hitler's hypocrisy as his real interest was in his personal wealth and power.
- In 1920 Hitler founded the National Socialist German Workers Party [Nationalsozialismus], or Nazi Party and he achieved full political power in 1933 when he became Chancellor. He was assisted by Hermann Goering who became the second-most powerful Nazi leader.
- In this second cover dated 1933, we see Goering presented as '*The Executioner of the Third Reich*'. In the background, we can see the fire in the Reichstag, the Parliament building. This was started by a young Dutch communist and the resulting purge of Communist politicians led to the Nazi Party coming to power. That year Goering founded the Gestapo which was part of the Schutzstaffel [literally 'Protection Squadron'] or SS. The same year the SS broke into Heartfield's room in Berlin and he escaped by jumping from his balcony and hiding in a rubbish bin. He walked to Prague in Czechoslovakia and became the fifth most wanted man by the Gestapo. John Heartfield was on the run from the SS when his portrait of Goering appeared on the cover *AIZ*. The montage is a history lesson as well as a masterpiece of political art.
- *AIZ* continued to be published in Prague until 1938 when Heartfield was forced to flee to England. Sadly, he was interned as an enemy alien and his health deteriorated. His brother was refused a British residency permit and left for America. After the war, Heartfield moved to East Berlin but was treated with suspicion because of his lengthy stay in England.
- You may be wondering about his name as it sounds English. He was born Helmut Herzfeld and he anglicised his name in 1916, in the middle of the First World War, to John Heartfield in protest against the anti-British fervour sweeping Germany. He was an artist and a pioneer in the use of art as a political weapon. He was born in Germany and his father was a socialist writer. He with his brother and two sisters were abandoned by his parents in a wood and were brought up by their uncle.
- The next work takes us back to the theme of the commodification of women.

## Background Notes John Heartfield, AIZ, 1924-1933

- John Heartfield's (born Helmut Herzfeld; 1891–1968) father was a Socialist poet who was convicted of blasphemy. To avoid jail, he fled with his wife and Helmut aged 9, Hertha aged 6, Wieland aged 3 and Charlotte aged 18 months. They all hid in an abandoned hut in the woods in Austria in 1896 and one day, so the story goes the four children woke to find their parents missing. It was four days before they were discovered and they were put into foster care and he grew up anxious, troubled and quick-tempered. He became an artist and a pioneer in the use of art as a political weapon.
- When he was 26 he founded a publishing house with his brother. In 1920 he started to create images by pasting photographs together, a form of art later known as photomontage. He studied art in Munich and later moved to Berlin. He became a member of Berlin Club Dada and in 1918 he joined the newly formed German Communist Party.
- He became a German Dadaist and disrupted public art meetings and ridiculed the participants as they branded all traditional art as trivial and bourgeois. In 1924 he met Bertolt Brecht and designed stage sets for him. He produced the first political photomontages and worked for a number of publications of which the best known is the weekly *Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung* (AIZ).
- In February 1933, the German Reichstag had been set on fire by a young Dutch communist called Marinus van der Lube. The Communist Party was outlawed and thousands of its leaders arrested and interned. As a result, many Communist parliamentary delegates lost their seats enabling the Nazi party to come to power.
- In 1934 he montaged four bloody axes tied together to form a swastika to mock the "Blood and Iron" motto of the Reich (AIZ, Prague, March 8, 1934).

## References

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Heartfield](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Heartfield)

Cindy Sherman (b. 1954), *Untitled #126*, 1983 (not on display)



*Untitled C*, 1975



Cindy Sherman (b. 1954), *Untitled #126*, 1983 (Room 4)

- This work is by Cindy Sherman who has spent her artistic life taking self-portraits that draw attention to the way that women are represented in the media. She uses herself as model and takes the photograph and she uses wigs, makeup, clothes and the scene to create a persona that mirrors or mocks a particular female stereotype. This is a photograph of Cindy Sherman wearing a fashionable costume and posed with one foot on a cane chair. Sherman never titles her work and this is called *Untitled #126*.
- It is one of four groups of fashion photographs produced between 1983 and 1984. This is from two 'fashion shoots' Sherman undertook, one for French *Vogue* and the other for an American retail entrepreneur [for a magazine called *Interview*]. She was supplied with top of the range clothes including international designers such as Jean-Paul Gaultier and her aim was to create the antithesis of the glamorous world of fashion.
- So here we see Sherman stylizing herself as a model who looks angry, exhausted, abused, grimy and even psychologically disturbed. In her notebook, she wrote: **'Attack clothes ... ugly person (face/body) vs. fashionable clothes'** and **'pseudo-fashion shots ... stupid looking model types.'** She said that she was **'trying to make fun of fashion. I'm disgusted with how people get themselves to look beautiful. I'm much more fascinated with the other side.'**
- Sherman typically uses herself to parody stereotypes of women in the media. She said, **'Obviously, I'm trying to make someone feel bad for having a certain expectation'**. When we look in fashion magazines we expect to find attractive women modelling the clothes. Sherman has used makeup and lighting to subvert this expectation. She has a mirror by the camera and thinks herself into the role she is playing which is often an abused, disturbed or violated woman.
- Although she always retains a critical stance and an element of irony her work reinforces the idea that our public identity lies in appearance rather than reality. All forms of media create an identity by crafting and manipulating the appearance of the selected person using costume, hair, makeup, accessories and posture as well as choosing the person's location and surroundings.
- The next work is in a dark and noisy room and so I will talk about it just outside the room.

## Background Notes Cindy Sherman (b. 1954), *Untitled #126*, 1983 (Room 4)

- Cindy Sherman is an American photographer who takes portraits of herself in various scenarios and with various costumes and face styles to parody stereotypes of women in the media. She has parodied female types used in old movies, television soaps and magazines. She rose to fame in the 1980s with a series of 'film stills' mimicking stars such as Sophia Loren and Marilyn Monroe. She explores the sensual as well as the horrific and old age. In the 1990s she caricatured characters through art history sometimes using grotesque costumes and makeup.
- *Untitled #126* belongs to a group of photographs relating to fashion photography produced between 1983 and 1994.

## References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/sherman-untitled-126-t07185/text-summary>

Cildo Meireles (b. 1948), *Babel*, 2001 (Room 6)



Cildo Meireles (b. 1948), *Babel*, 2001

- This is a tower of hundreds of radios, each just audible and tuned to stations of different languages. It was produced by a Brazilian artist called Cildo Meireles and it suggests the Tower of Babel in the Bible. In the Bible story, everyone spoke the same language until they built a tower to reach heaven. As punishment for their pride God destroyed the tower, scattered everyone across the Earth and created all the different languages so they could no longer communicate.
- Meireles' tower of radios suggests that the pursuit of a common world society is futile. He is a conceptual artist, installation artist and sculptor. He is noted especially for his installations, many of which express resistance to political oppression in Brazil.
- He was born in Rio de Janeiro and showed a keen interest in drawing from a young age. His father travelled round Brazil in the Indian Protection Service and Meireles visited many tribes. There are about 180 languages spoken in Brazil and the diversity of mutually incomprehensible languages must have influenced him. Other events had a strong influence on his artistic career. When he was seven or eight he saw a native Indian in the forest who had disappeared the following day leaving a small but perfectly formed hut which he described this as the 'the most decisive thing' for the path he followed in life.
- The radios have another significance, Meireles cites Orson Welles' 1938 radio broadcast War of the Worlds as one of the greatest works of art of the 20th century because it "**seamlessly dissolved the border between art and life, fiction and reality.**" Recreating the same total audience involvement was an important artistic goal of Meireles that is seen throughout his body of work. The newspaper headling "Radio Play Terrifies Nation" and others was fake news, no one filled the streets, no one jumped off buildings and few listened to the broadcast.
- In the late 1960s, Meireles discovered other Brazilian artists concerned with blurring the boundary between what is art and what is life, and responding to current political situations within their pieces. Meireles has stated that drawing was his main artistic medium until 1968, when he altogether abandoned expressionistic drawing in favour of designing things that he wanted to physically construct.
- It has been pointed out [by the author Paul Herkenoff] that the tower of radios has autobiographical meaning for Meireles, as radio was a common method of widespread communication in Brazil during the artist's youth.
- The work also relates to globalization. Meireles parallels the unity of humanity before the fall of the Tower of Babel with the present-day unity which has resulted from globalization despite numerous language barriers.
- The next work is four rooms from here and I have lost people in the past so please stay close. We will walk past the radios, then a room full of photographs and then a dark room showing a video and finally continue through a room with photographs and video displays to reach room 10 displaying the artist Nam June Paik.

## Background Notes Cildo Meireles (b. 1948), *Babel*, 2001

- Cildo Meireles (b. 1948, pronounced 'sildo mer-ellis') showed a keen interest in drawing from an early age and this was encouraged by his father. In the late 1960s, Meireles discovered the work of Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark, thereby introducing him to the Brazilian Neo-Concrete movement. He is now one of the leading Brazilian conceptual artists.
- Paul Herkenhoff points out that *Babel* has an autobiographical meaning for Meireles, as radio was a common method of widespread communication in Brazil during the artist's youth. The work also speaks to globalization. Meireles parallels the unity of humanity before the fall of the Tower of Babel with the present-day unity which has resulted from globalization despite numerous language barriers.
- The Tower of Babel is from Jewish mythology, Genesis 11:1-9. It explains the origin of different languages. Following the Great Flood everyone spoke the same language. They migrated east until they reached a land where they decided to build a tower tall enough to reach heaven. God regarded this as disrespectful and as punishment made them speak different languages and scattered them across the Earth.
- He had a team collecting and repairing secondhand radios and he then mounted each one on a steel column and tuned it to a different station to create a cacophony of sound. Old valve radios from the 1920s make up the lower layers and small mass-produced electronic radios are at the top. There are about 1,000 radios altogether. Meireles said, '**Radio allows you to dream ... when I was a kid I listened to a radio in a dark room ... so a radio is a kind of magic object**'. He is against any kind of a nationalism, he said, '**an artist should have no country**'. The noise produced by *Babel* is constant but the precise voices and music are always changing so no two experiences are ever the same. 'Radios are interesting because they are physically similar and at the same time each radio is unique.'
- Meireles has two other works on display, *Insertions into Ideological Circuits*, *Coca-Cola Project* and the *Banknote Project*. They explore the notion of circulation and exchange of goods, wealth and information as manifestations of the dominant ideology. For the *Coca-Cola Project* Meireles removed Coca-Cola bottles from normal circulation and modified them by adding critical political statements, such as 'Yankees Go Home', or instructions for turning the bottle into a Molotov cocktail, before returning them to the circuit of exchange.

## References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/meireles-babel-t14041>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cildo\\_Meireles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cildo_Meireles)

Nam June Paik (1932-2006), *Victrola*, 2005 (Room 10)



Nam June Paik (1932-2006), *Victrola*, 2005 (Room 10)

- This is an old phonograph or record player. It is called a Victrola, which is the name of the piece, and the device was first launched in 1906 to replace the old photographs with the gigantic horns. It was therefore, in its day, a state of the art device and a radical improvement in the technology. The Victrola continued to be sold until the 1920s and the name was used until the late 1960s.
- The artist is Nam June Paik a Korean American artist who is regarded as the founder of video art. He produced this work in 2005 and on the modern plasma screen above the Victrola we see an early performance [1980s] of Paik breaking a vinyl record. A small pile of broken vinyl records by a variety of artists is spread on the floor. The doors of the cabinet are open revealing a few brightly coloured abstract patterns and figurative shapes painted inside. The patterns also appear on the outside.
- Paik has always wanted to humanise technology and the video of Paik breaking the old vinyl records shows the relationship between old technology and the new and the changing relationship between the technology and human need. The Victrola was introduced in 1906 and became very popular with a range of models available. This is one of the more expensive models yet the graffiti shows it has been neglected and the plasma screen shows how rapidly technology changes. The broken records signify the end of one form of technology which in a few years has become useless.
- This transition also mirrors Paik's career. He was born in South Korea and was trained as a classical pianist. He graduated in Japan and moved to Germany where he orchestrated musical compositions between 1958 and 1963. During this period, he worked with many knowledgeable engineers and the latest electronic equipment and this inspired him to 'start a new life'. He put his library into storage and only read and practised electronics. His work started to make use of televisions and other electronic equipment and he is credited with being the first person to use the term 'electronic superhighway' [later 'information superhighway'].

## Background Notes Nam June Paik (1932-2006), *Victrola*, 2005 (Room 10)

- Nam June Paik (pronounced 'Nam June Paik') was a Korean American artist who is considered the founder of video art. He was born to a wealthy industrialist in South Korea and was brought up as a classical pianist. Paik and his family had to flee Korea during the Korean War. They first moved to Hong Kong and then Japan and he graduated from the University of Tokyo where he wrote a thesis on Arnold Schoenberg. He studied music in Germany and participated in the Neo-Dada art movement Fluxus which was inspired by John Cage. He worked with Karlheinz Stockhausen and Joseph Beuys. He came to prominence in 1963 with a video work that used magnets to distort the picture on multiple televisions. In 1964 he moved to New York and started to work with video, music and performance. In 1965, Sony released the first portable video and audio recorder that inspired Paik and led to his international fame. He is credited with first using the term 'electronic superhighway' which became the 'information superhighway'. From the 1970s he participated in numerous exhibitions around the world and his work is held by many galleries. Paik was a lifelong Buddhist who never smoked or drank alcoholic beverages, and never drove a car. In 1996, Paik had a stroke, which paralyzed his left side. He used a wheelchair the last decade of his life.
- Victrola, The Victor Talking Machine Company trademark for a brand of wind-up phonograph introduced in September 1906. It was the first to hide the horn inside a cabinet. This was done to improve the appearance and make it look like furniture rather than electrical equipment. These internal home machines were trademarked Victrola and were an instant hit. They sold well until the end of the 1920s and the tradename was used until the late 1960s.

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Peter Doig, *Ski Jacket*, 1994 (Room 11)



Peter Doig (b. 1959), *Ski Jacket*, 1994 (Room 11)

- This is *Ski Jacket* by Peter Doig, one of the most famous figurative artists working today. Like the first work we saw by Andy Warhol, it is a diptych but this one has unequal panels. He painted it from a photograph of people learning to ski on a Japanese mountain.
- Doig said, '**Ski Jacket ... is about the fumbling and awkwardness when learning to ski, how when you start skiing you slip all over the place, yet over a period of time you learn to cope and eventually manage to ski.**' Doig compared the way beginners learn to ski with the way artists learn to paint. At first, fumbling around and making mistakes and later it becomes natural and subconscious. We just do it. He was attracted by the sense of awkwardness conveyed by the photograph and he also wanted to convey the way you can feel warm when the weather is freezing and how the light is extreme and the way the scene is modified by the different coloured ski goggles we wear. He accentuated the colours in the painting to emphasize this unnatural way of seeing, '**to the extent that they appear seemingly psychedelic**' The cotton candy pink of the painting reflects the rose-tinted goggles worn by the skier.
- Doig has made several paintings of snow scenes inspired by Claude Monet. He has said: '**I often paint scenes with snow because snow somehow has this effect of drawing you inwards and is frequently used to suggest retrospection and nostalgia and make-believe**' He spent most of his childhood in Quebec where snow sports were common.
- Doig is a Scottish painter who grew up in Quebec before moving to London and attending the Chelsea School of Art. He now lives and works in Trinidad with his friend and fellow artist Chris Ofili. An art critic [Jonathan Jones] said about him, '**Amid all the nonsense, impostors, rhetorical bullshit and sheer trash that pass for art in the 21st century, Doig is a jewel of genuine imagination, sincere work and humble creativity.**' His work has become very expensive to buy, a recent work sold for over \$25 million and unusually he was sued [in 2013] for denying he painted a particular work of art. The court ruled it had painted by someone with a similar name and this reduced its value from \$10 million to virtually zero.

## Peter Doig (b. 1959), *Ski Jacket*, 1994 (Room 11)

- Peter Doig (b. 1959) is a Scottish painter and one of the most renowned living figurative painters. In 1962 his family moved to Trinidad for four years and then to Quebec in Canada where he grew up. He moved to London in 1979 to train at the Wimbledon School of Art and then Chelsea School of Art. He had had many major exhibitions and since 2000 has worked in Trinidad with his friend and fellow artist Chris Ofili. He also became professor at the Fine Arts Academy in Düsseldorf, Germany. In 2015, His magical landscape paintings have earned millions – last year, *Swamped*, a painting of a moonlit white canoe, sold at auction for nearly \$26m. Art critic Jonathan Jones said about him, **'Amid all the nonsense, impostors, rhetorical bullshit and sheer trash that pass for art in the 21st century, Doig is a jewel of genuine imagination, sincere work and humble creativity.'**
- An unusual lawsuit was brought against him in 2013 when he was sued for denying he produced a painting owned by Robert Fletcher. Doig had to prove he was elsewhere when it was claimed he painted the work in a correctional centre in 1976 when he was 16. In 2016, a Chicago court ruled he did not paint the picture, previously valued at \$10 million and that it was painted by Peter Doige, someone with a similar name.
- In 1993, Doig won the first prize at the John Moores exhibition with his painting *Blotter*. This brought public recognition, reinforced in 1994, when he was nominated for the Turner Prize. From 1995 to 2000, he was a trustee of the Tate Gallery.
- Doig is a truly international painter. He said, **'When I was growing up, I never felt that I belonged anywhere because we never lived in a house for more than three months. That's all I knew, and that's why I don't really belong anywhere.'**

## References

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Roy Lichtenstein, *Whaam!*, 1963 (not on display)



Roy Lichtenstein, *Whaam!*, 1963 (not on display)

- This is *Whaam!* By American Pop artist Roy Lichtenstein. He became a leading figure in the 1960s by using the comic strip convention to parody fine art.
- *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. '**Wars were being waged at the push of a button**'.

## Background Notes, Roy Lichtenstein, *Whaam!*, 1963 (not on display)

- Roy Fox Lichtenstein (1923–1997) was an American pop artist. During the 1960s, along with Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, and James Rosenquist among others, he became a leading figure in the new art movement. His work defined the premise of pop art through parody. Inspired by the comic strip, Lichtenstein produced precise compositions that documented while they parodied, often in a tongue-in-cheek manner. His work was influenced by popular advertising and the comic book style. He described pop art as "not 'American' painting but actually industrial painting".

## References

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roy\\_Lichtenstein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roy_Lichtenstein)

André Fougeron (1913-1998), *Atlantic Civilization*, 1953 (Room 12)



André Fougeron (1913-1998), *Atlantic Civilization*, 1953

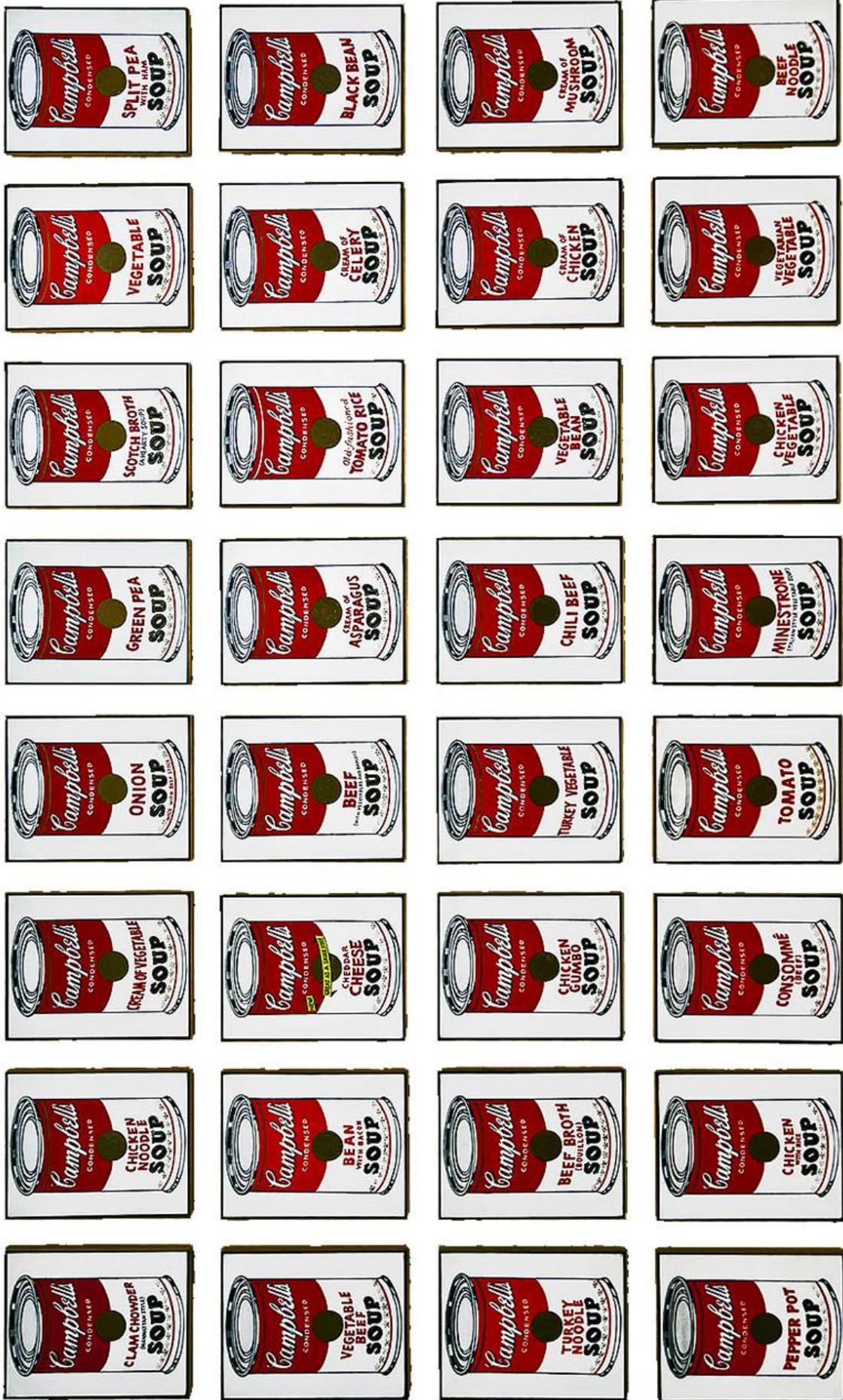
- This is *Atlantic Civilization* by the French artist André Fougeron. It is caricaturing the Americanization of Europe in the post-war period. He is deliberately using a simplified style to mimic the comic-book culture he is criticizing. It is a work of Communist Party propaganda that is criticizing corruption, capitalism, colonialism and class. The posters on the building refer to the French colonial wars in Indo-China and the returning coffins with the women mourner is shown below an Asian Woman with a dead child. An image taken from Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*. The child shoe-shine and the Algerian immigrants sheltering under corrugated iron refers to the subjugation of black Africa. The breakdown of family life is indicated by the old couple abandoned on the bench, the mother and child living in a tent and the circle of children engulfed by industrial pollution. That this is all based on class is shown by the two middle-class children in the camouflaged air-raid shelter and the shoe-shine boy in a vest next to a pet dog in a smart coat.
- The root cause of this corruption according to Fougeron is American capitalism and militarism. At the centre, is a huge American car flanked by a G.I. with his feet up on a French café table reading a soft-porn magazine and a fat businessman. The second soldier shooting across the car makes it clear that American culture is being labelled as fascist as the soldier is wearing a German soldier's helmet with the 'SS' of the Nazi storm-troopers on the side. On a pedestal is an electric chair used by the Americans to execute Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, in June 1953, on charges of 'conspiracy with the aim of espionage'. As they were accused of passing nuclear secrets to the USSR out of conscience rather than financial gain, they exemplified - according to the political left - a principled peace movement.
- The principles of Socialist Realism ensured that all these references were made clear to his audience. The corruption of France through engagement with America was shown, according to the political left, by the opening of NATO headquarters in Paris the year before (1952). The membership of West Germany was actively being debated (they were admitted in 1954) as divided Germany stood for the Cold War divisions that the Communist Party opposed.
- The painting was criticized by both left and right when it was exhibited. The left thought the themes were valid but the caricature was too 'hasty, coarse, contemptuous' and crude. The real reason might have been that Picasso was championing a more personal modernism and was a better-known artist whose support the Communist Party embraced and Fougeron was the loser in the struggles within the party.

## Background Notes, André Fougeron, *Atlantic Civilization*, 1953

- André Fougeron (1913-1998) was born to a working-class family and was trained as a metallurgist at a Renault factory. Like many left-wing intellectual Fougeron welcomed the 'Maison de la Culture' which was founded after the riots of February 1934 and whose aim was to make art accessible to the people. His work at this time was influenced by Andre Masson, German expressionism and Picasso. He joined the Communist Party and during the war printed clandestine journals criticizing Hitler and the concentration camps.
- After the war Fougeron became the official Communist Party artist. In 1953, he exhibited *Transatlantic Civilization*, a massive canvas exhibited only once at the Salon d'Automne which marked both his apotheosis and downfall. The Communist Party realized that Picasso and Leger were its keys to intellectual acceptance and Fougeron tumbled from grace. The painting is dominated by an electric chair used to execute the Soviet spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. A dialogue between left and right, male and female, good and evil, joy and despair, new life and death revolves around a blue American car. Fougeron specifically tries to connect American capitalism and the Nazi occupation of France. In the background, the American NATO building in Paris is plastered with recruitment posters for the Korean war; French mothers mourn their dead babies, children play in polluted fields, pensioners sit on a bench after being evicted while an American soldier lounges reading a salacious magazine.

## Visual Aids

- Andy Warhol, *Campbell's Soup Cans*, 1962
- Marilyn Monroe, publicity still from *Niagara* (1953)
- Jean Ingres, *La Grande Odalisque*, 1814
- Guerrilla Girls: *Is it even worse in Europe?* 1 October 2016 – 5 March 2017, Whitechapel Gallery



Andy Warhol, *Campbell's Soup Cans*, 1962



Marilyn Monroe publicity still from *Niagara* (1953)



Jean Ingres, *La Grande Odalisque*,  
1814

LIBRARY

**THE GUERRILLA GIRLS ASKED  
383 EUROPEAN MUSEUMS  
ABOUT DIVERSITY**

**ONLY 1/4 RESPONDED**

*Come inside and see why*

by Guerrilla Girls

**ALDGATE EAST STATION**



## Summary of 'Media Networks' (15:00-15:45)

**Martin Creed, *Work No. 232: the whole world + the work = the whole world*, 2000.**

Commissioned by Tate for opening. *Work No. 227: the lights going on and off* was Turner Prize winner in 2001. It is a positive statement about the inclusiveness of art and a negative statement of art's irrelevance. Creed said he finds it difficult to choose one thing over another. **"I find it a lot easier if it negates itself at the same time as pushing itself forward – so there's an equal positive and negative which adds up to nothing, but at the same time is something too."**

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

**(Room 1).** Originally 'Warhola'. Most famous pop artist. **'Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art. Making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art'**. 25 silk screen prints on each side. The image of Marilyn Monroe (born Norma Jean Mortenson) is based on a photograph from *Niagara* (1953). **'I love Los Angeles. I love Hollywood. They're so beautiful. Everything's plastic, but I love plastic. I want to be plastic'**.

**Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into the Met. Museum?*, 1989.** Formed 1984 **'the conscience of the art world'**. Originally a billboard for the New York Public Art Fund but it was rejected for not being clear (?). **'We then rented advertising space on NYC buses and ran it ourselves, until the bus company cancelled our lease, saying that the image ... was too suggestive and that the figure appeared to have more than a fan in her hand.'** The Whitechapel Gallery (March 2017) had the title "Guerrilla Girls: Is it even worse in Europe?" In Tate Modern 50% of featured artists are women.

**Umberto Boccioni (1882-1916), *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913.** Friedrich Nietzsche

and the 'superman' was one inspiration for this work. Futurists supported riots, destroying galleries and war. Boccioni volunteered for the war and was trampled by his horse aged 33. Was plaster, two cast in bronze in each of the years 1931, 1949 and 1972.

**Gino Severini (1883-1966), *Suburban Train***

***Arriving in Paris*, 1915.** He settled in Paris in 1906 and met Pablo Picasso, George Braque and Amedeo Modigliani and in June 1915 he stayed for some weeks just outside Paris where the sight of trains passing close by day and night laden with munitions, soldiers or wounded prompted the creation of this work. The work 'KNEIPP' relates to an advertisement for a popular malted drink, **"It will give the cheer without the poison"**. Influenced by Cubism and Futurism. Poor family, expelled stealing exam papers. Patron stopped funding him saying, **'I absolutely do not understand your lack of order'**.

**Max Beckmann (1884-1950), *Carnival*, 1920.**

Beckmann was a medical orderly during WWI and the horrors he witnessed led to his breakdown. He was discharged in 1915 and looked after by the painter Ugi Battenberg. The figure on the right is Fridel Battenberg, the wife of his friend. On the left is I. B. Neumann, an art dealer and friend of Beckmann. Carnival, or Fastnacht, festivities were banned in public in 1920. The chaotic enclosed space may be **'to protect myself from the infinity of space'**. Degenerate art, dismissed from teaching in 1933, Degenerate art show 1937 prompted him to leave Germany.

**John Heartfield (1891-1968), *AIZ*, 1924-1933.**

*Arbeiters-Illustrierte Zeitung*. Born Helmut Herzfeld but anglicized his name in protest about the anti-British fervour. In 1920, Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) founded the National Socialist German Workers Party, or Nazi Party and he achieved full political power in 1933 when he became Chancellor. We see **'Adolf, The Superman: Swallows Gold and Spouts Rubbish'**. He was assisted by Hermann Göring (1893-1946) who became the second-most powerful Nazi leader. In this second cover, we see Goering presented as **'The Executioner of the Third Reich'**. In 1933, Göring founded the Gestapo which was part of the Schutzstaffel [literally 'Protection Squadron'] or SS. Left in forest by his parents.

**Cildo Meireles (b. 1948), *Babel*, 2001.** Leading Brazilian conceptual artist. Genesis, Tower of Babel, God spreads the people across the world and gives each group a different language as punishment. His father travelled Brazil studying indigenous tribes. 1,000 radios gathered by assistants and repaired. There are over 180 languages in Brazil. Meireles admired Orson Wells' *War of the Worlds* as it **'seamlessly dissolved the border between art and life, fiction and reality'** ("Radio Play Terrifies Nation" was fake news, no people filled the streets, no one jumped off buildings and few listened to the broadcast). Meireles said, **'Radio allows you to dream ... when I was a kid I listened to a radio in a dark room ... so a radio is a kind of magic object'**. He is against any kind of a nationalism, he said, **'an artist should have no country'**.

**Nam June Paik (1932-2006), *Victrola*, 2005 (Room 10).** Victrola is a device launched in 1906 to replace the old phonographs with the gigantic horns. It was therefore, in its day, a state of the art device and a radical improvement in the technology. The Victrola continued to be sold until the 1920s and the name was used until the late 1960s. Nam June Paik was a Korean American artist who is considered the founder of video art. He was born to a wealthy industrialist in South Korea and was brought up as a classical pianist. Paik moved to Hong Kong and then Japan and he graduated from the University of Tokyo where he wrote a thesis on Arnold Schoenberg. He studied music in Germany and participated in the Neo-Dada art movement Fluxus which was inspired by John Cage. He worked with Karlheinz Stockhausen and Joseph Beuys. He was the first to use the term **'electronic superhighway'**, later **'information superhighway'**.

**Peter Doig (b. 1959), *Ski Jacket*, 1994 (Room 11).** Doig is a Scottish painter and one of the most renowned living figurative painters. In 1962 he moved to Trinidad with his family and he has lived there since 2002. He moved to London in 1979 to train at the Wimbledon School of Art and then Chelsea School of Art. , **'Ski Jacket ... is about the fumbling and awkwardness when learning to ski, how when you start skiing you slip all over the place, yet over a period of time you learn to cope and eventually manage to ski.'** Inspired by Claude Monet, he said **'I often paint scenes with snow because snow somehow has this effect of drawing you inwards and is frequently used to suggest retrospection and nostalgia and make-believe'**. Art critic Jonathan Jones said about him, **'Amid all the nonsense, impostors, rhetorical bullshit and sheer trash that pass for art in the 21st century, Doig is a jewel of genuine imagination, sincere work and humble creativity.'** A recent work sold for \$25m. He was sued for denying a painting was his thus reducing its value from \$10m to virtually zero.

**André Fougeron (1913-1998), *Atlantic Civilization*, 1953 (Room 3).** After the war Fougeron became the official Communist Party artist. In 1953, he exhibited this work at the Salon d'Automne which marked both his high point and downfall. The Communist Party realized that Pablo Picasso was its keys to intellectual acceptance and Fougeron tumbled from grace. The painting is dominated by an electric chair used to execute the Soviet spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. A dialogue between left and right, male and female, good and evil, joy and despair, new life and death revolves around a blue American car. Fougeron specifically tries to connect American capitalism and the Nazi occupation of France. In the background, the American NATO building in Paris is plastered with recruitment posters for the Korean war; French mothers mourn their dead babies, children play in polluted fields, pensioners sit on a bench after being evicted while an American soldier lounges reading a salacious magazine.