

Abstraction or Abstract art

Art which does not seek to represent a recognisable visual reality.

Abstract Expressionism

An expressive form of Abstract painting mostly associated with New York artists of the 1940s and 50s, especially Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, Willem de Kooning and Franz Kline.

Colourfield painting

A form of Abstract art where colour is emphasised, often in broad washes across the surface of the painting, made in the 1950s by American artists including Rothko, Still and Barnett Newman and Kenneth Noland.

Conceptual art

Art that asks questions about the nature of art, which can take the form of unusual materials, readymade objects, statements, performances, happenings or videos. Conceptual art challenges existing ways of making and viewing art. *Fountain*, the upturned urinal of 1917 by Marcel Duchamp is probably the first instance of Conceptual art. More recent examples include the work of Lawrence Weiner, Carl Andre and Hans Haacke in the 1960s to that of Martin Creed today.

Constructivism

A Russian art movement led by Alexander Rodchenko and Vladimir Tatlin begun in 1915, which was inspired by modern 20th century machinery and architecture and often used industrial materials.

Cubism

A form of art pioneered by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque in Paris in 1907 which sought to depict an object from multiple

viewpoints. Analytic Cubism breaks forms down, while Synthetic Cubism assembles forms from multiple components.

Expressionism

A form of art which attempts to represent the psychological perspective of the artist, developed in several centres in Europe from the 1890s into the 20th century. Expressionism can refer to the Fauves ('wild beasts'), a grouping led by Henri Matisse and Andre Derain in Paris 1905-10, and German Expressionist groupings, such as Die Brücke (the Bridge) in Dresden (1905-), which included Hans Heckel and Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, and Der Blaue Reiter (the Blue Rider) in Munich, which included Franz Marc and Paul Klee, along with the Russian Abstract artist Vassily Kandinsky.

Figuration

A form of art which seeks to represent a recognisable visual reality.

Impressionism

A French art movement named by its critics after Claude Monet's *Impression: Sunrise* 1874. With Edouard Manet, Edgar Degas, Pierre Renoir, Camille Pissarro, Paul Cézanne and Berthe Morisot, Monet staged seven exhibitions in Paris from 1874 -1886. Their work focused on modern subjects painted swiftly, often on the spot, with an emphasis on colour and light effects.

Installation art

Art which expands from the canvas or sculpture into a form which can exist on the gallery floor, walls and/or ceiling or even beyond the gallery altogether. Installation art uses everyday materials and can be a simple construction or a multi-storey structure

that the viewer can physically enter. Possibly the earliest example of installation art is the German Kurt Schwitters's *Merzbau*, begun in 1919, followed by the Russian El Lissitzky's *Proun Room*, 1923.

Indo-Persian Miniature painting

Miniature painting became highly developed in India during the seventeenth century under the Mughal Emperor Akbar. Court painters developed '*tasvir*', the 'magical art' of depicting figures and the Emperor commissioned portraits. The Mughal tradition combined the styles of Persian book paintings, with their flattened forms and symbolic postures with so-called '*Farangi*' - French, European - elements: realistic features, individualised faces seen in Christian illuminated manuscripts brought to Akbar by the Jesuits.

Minimalism

Minimalist art followed Abstract Expressionism and was largely American based. The term refers to art in its most simplified form such as Robert Morris's cubes and wedges of the 1960s, which were designed to place the viewer in the gallery space by making him/her aware of his/her own body within it. So-called because it was 'empty of content', the focus of minimalist art was on the object and its materials, most notably with Frank Stella's shaped canvases or Carl Andre's bricks. Other artists associated with Minimalism are Donald Judd, Sol Le Witt and Eva Hesse.

Modernism

A term usually taken to refer to all the revolutionary

European and American art movements from 1850 -1950.

Neo-Impressionism

A development of Impressionism by the French artists Georges Seurat and Paul Signac in the 1880s and 90s, where Impressionism's blocks of complementary colours were refined to dot forms which gave the canvas a light-filled appearance. This form of art is sometimes called Pointillism.

Pop Art

A movement in the 1960s in Britain and America which explored the way in which the commercial world and mass culture shapes our perceptions and tastes. Artists such as Peter Blake, Edouardo Paolozzi and Richard Hamilton in Britain, and Claes Oldenberg, Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol in America all used and pastiched the visual language of Pop in their work.

Post-Impressionism

This term refers to the generation of artists in Paris who followed the Impressionists in the 1890s, especially Paul Cézanne, Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Gauguin. The name was given by the British art critic Roger Fry, who brought works by the artists to Britain in exhibitions in 1910 and 1912.

Romanticism

A way of seeing the world that emphasises the perceptions of the individual human being rather than the inherited traditions of classicism. Romanticism flourished in the late 18th century with artists such as William Blake and Henry Fuseli in Britain and Eugène Delacroix in France and Caspar David Friedrich in Germany in the 19th century.

Space is a place: from painting to performance

Artists in the 20th and 21st centuries have treated space in diverse ways. From painting to performance, artists have experimented with different ways of making. The devastation of the two world wars affected the lives of many triggering social and political changes. In turn this affected ways of seeing, with artists seeking to challenge the existing order in their art, whether through abstraction or new methods and technologies that took art off the walls and beyond the plinth and sometimes even out of the gallery, in performance and video.

Challenging the existing order includes international art practices that question the western-centred view of the world. Postcolonial art and theory uncovers histories that may be hidden from the dominant narratives - from the role of the East India Company in tea-planting in India; the Opium wars in China; or a violent tragedy in modern-day Pakistan. Contemporary artists are borrowing traditional techniques to look more closely - and critically - at multiple histories. Shahzia Sikander re-animates traditional Indo-Persian miniature painting, linking the colonised histories of China and India under the British East India Company in her giant drawing, accompanied by her animation. Imran Qureshi uses this technique combined with gestural handprints to convey his sorrow at a vigilante attack.

Wider ways of seeing also extends to how we view images of men and women - and who makes them. This gallery opens with a radically unidealised image of a female nude from 1910 but it also includes images of men painted by a contemporary female artist, Tala Madani whose early work only featured men. Has the modernist focus on the female body shifted in the 21st century?

Sir Howard Hodgkin, 1932-2017

Robyn Denny and Katherine Reid

Oil on panel, 1975

Howard Hodgkin described his paintings as 'representational pictures of emotional situations'. His wartime experience as an evacuee in America introduced him early on to Matisse and Fernand Leger at York's Museum of Modern Art. This double portrait represents Hodgkin's response to his sitters. The layers of surface patterns blur the depth of the image. The boldly graphic stripes can be traced to his youthful admiration for the tubular bodies of Leger.

Spencer Frederick Gore, 1878 -1914

Nude on a bed

Oil on canvas, about 1910

This deadpan naked figure was painted in Mornington Crescent. Spencer 'Freddy' Gore was influenced by Neo-Impressionism. The style isolated Impressionism's

blocks of colour into bright dots, sometimes known as Pointillism. Blues and pinks combine here to suggest a dust-filled light in the gloomy bedroom. Gore and Walter Sickert formed the Camden Town Group in 1911, painting modern scenes of working life.

Frank Auerbach, born 1931

The Chimney, Mornington Crescent

Oil on canvas, 1987-88

Frank Auerbach's studio is near Mornington Crescent and he has painted there since 1954, having left Nazi Germany aged eight and settled in London. His art seeks to reinforce the impressions of the eye (the 'stupid organ') with those of the other senses, especially touch. He never paints outdoors but sketches on the spot, returning afterwards to paint in his studio. The expressionist zigzags of architecture and sky are a kind of visual shorthand, based on his memory of place.

Prunella Clough, 1919-1999

Man by a Wall

Oil on canvas, 1958

'...one of a good many which I did during the fifties and early sixties which derived from what you can call "industrial" subject matter, ie any urban place. Perhaps you can say that it was one of the most substantial attempts to solve certain pictorial problems.'

Although she claimed never to have painted an abstract

painting Prunella Clough's industrial scenes - factories, gravel pits - appear almost as abstract mediations on form. Here the figure becomes part of the larger pattern of the wall. Friends describe how Clough photographed and collected detritus in London's North End Road which she would use in her painting.

Aubrey Williams, 1929–1990

Shostakovich Symphony no 13, Opus 113 for Bass

Oil on canvas, possibly 1981

When Aubrey Williams first heard the music of Shostakovich in his native British Guiana he said he could 'feel colour'. On moving to London in 1954 he brought a pre-Columbian visual language inspired from his work with the indigenous Warao people.

In the *Shostakovich Series*, Williams combined the skeletal forms taken from Warao mythology with the gestures of Abstract Expressionism. The *13th Symphony* marks the murder of Ukrainian Jews in the Second World War.

Richard Smith, 1931–2016

Salem

Oil on canvas, 1958

Salem combines the swagger of Abstract Expressionism with Pop Art's obsession with mass culture. Salem was a brand of menthol cigarette: the green haze and blue swooshes are intended to evoke the advert's rugged outdoor imagery. The artist was curious about the way that the advertising had hijacked rural imagery. He first travelled to America in 1959, where he met Ellsworth Kelly. The painted gestures of Salem are soaked into the canvas reminding us of the painting's status as an object.

Peter Lanyon, 1918–1964

High Moor

Oil on canvas, 1962

'I like to paint places where solids and fluid come together such as the meeting of sea and cliff, wind and rock.'

In 1959, Peter Lanyon took up gliding to 'get a more complete knowledge of the landscape'. He was taught by Ben Nicholson in St Ives but later met and befriended Mark Rothko. The Cubist forms of his early work gave way to the freer gestures and frenetic circling of *High Moor*, which place the viewer in the environment of wind and sea.

William Scott, 1913–1989

Black, Grey and Blue

Oil on canvas, 1960

'...there is another image, it's a private one, ambiguous, and perhaps can be sensed rather than seen.'

William Scott shifted between figuration and abstraction throughout his career. Although he felt closer to the traditions of Europe, he felt an affinity with the American Mark Rothko. The artists shared a sense of being outsiders and Rothko visited Scott in 1959.

Roger Hilton, 1911–1975

June 1960

Oil on canvas, 1960

Roger Hilton studied at the Slade and in Paris, where he had absorbed the technique of *Tachisme* (stain), a French variant on Abstract Expressionism. He found his own visual language, which combined the control of Mondrian with the freedom of Expressionism, seen in *June 1960*, with its interplay of loose line with form; the muted grey and beige with the slick of orange.

Tala Madani, born 1981

Manual Grid

Oil on canvas, 2011

Tala Madani moved to America from Iran when she was 13 and has said that her difficulty learning English attracted her to art. The way Madani combines the language of Abstraction with the figurative is not dissimilar to Roger Hilton's quest to 'reinvent figuration'. Her work is populated only by men, who seem to be caricatures but perhaps they are reflections of our own anxieties in the post-9/11 world. *Manual Grid* shows these men trapped in a Modernist grid, the black discs of paint doubling as holes.

Ai Weiwei, Born 1957

A Ton of Tea

Compressed Pur Eh tea, 2007

Ai Weiwei was born into a life at odds with the Chinese government, spending his childhood in the countryside where his father, the poet Ai Qing was sent for 're-education' during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).

After art school in Beijing in the 1980s, Ai placed himself in exile in New York, immersing himself in the post-war American art that would help him to marry art theory with political content in his own work.

A Ton of Tea brings Ai's interests together in a post-Minimal and richly scented giant cube of tea. The apparent simplicity of form and material makes reference to post-war art and globalisation, through the humble substance of tea, China's oldest export while subverting the clean edges of Minimalism.

Imran Qureshi

This Leprous Brightness

Watercolour and bodycolour on paper.

'I can't stop myself making these works. These were very disturbing for me.'

Imran Qureshi brings a contemporary approach to the traditional Pakistani practice of Indo-Persian miniature painting and with Shahzia Sikander has helped to revive the form, often as a commentary on real-life situations. In *This Leprous Brightness* bloody handprints and opaque drips of red paint cover nine sheets. Closer examination reveals a delicate tracery of flower blossoms emerging from the sticky crimson smears.

The work is Qureshi's response to a tragedy that took place in Pakistan in summer 2010. Two teenaged brothers, Hafiz Mughees and Muneejb Sajjad, were beaten and murdered in the Punjab city of Sialkot in an act of vigilanteism. Qureshi uses his own handprints in these miniatures and traces the traditional motif of blossoms from them to memorialise the brothers.

Shahzia Sikander

The Last Post

Video animation, 10 minutes, 2010

Encapsulated Confrontation

Watercolour, bodycolour, pencil and ink on paper, 2011

'My interest really was to bring the personal into this space.'

Shazia Sikander became interested in Indo-Persian miniature painting while studying. She says 'The choice itself was an act of defiance. At that time there was no interest in the Miniature Painting department - in fact it was viewed with suspicion....'

Sikander has taken the form to new levels, with animations and monumentally-scaled drawings. *Encapsulated Confrontation* is a monumental 'miniature' drawing complemented by *The Last Post* video, which animates motifs in the drawing to consider the relationship between the East India Company and how the planting of tea by the British in India was used as a leverage in the Opium Wars waged by the British in China. Sikander worked with musician Du Yun to create the video.

Barbara Hepworth 1903 –1975

Winged Figure I

Bronze, wire and isopon

Barbara Hepworth was one of the first British artists to make Abstract art. Through her contact with Jean Arp and Constantin Brancusi, she linked Modernism in Europe with the UK.

Hepworth was instrumental in reviving the art of carving but in the 1950s she began to cast in bronze and other metals. She wanted her sculptures to reflect the materials she used. *Winged Figure* predates the futuristic sculpture she designed for John Lewis's on Oxford Street, London in a combination of modern forms and materials. Holes are a feature of Hepworth's sculpture, while the threaded strings radiate outwards and create tension.

Victor Pasmore, 1908–1998

Red Abstract No 5

Oil on plywood, 1960

'...the picture had to be an object in its own right, not a representation of another object.'

The protruding frame of *Red Abstract no. 5* is an integral part of the artwork. Using plywood was an attempt to create an impersonal finish. The simplicity and flatness of the

large bold Indian red shield-like form contrasts with the handmade quality of Pasmore's constructions.

Richard Long, born 1945

England 1968

Black and white photograph, 1968

Since his art foundation course Long had been experimenting with ephemeral forms of sculpture and gentle interventions in the landscape. The most instantaneous was to trace a path by rolling a snowball across the snow-covered Bristol Downs.

For *England* Long picked daisies in a field, marking out the cross of the English flag. Today more than ever Long's reversible marks on the landscape have pointed resonance as we recognise the climate emergency cause by humanity.

David Nash, born 1945

Wafer Throne

Beech, 1989

David Nash's art is firmly rooted in the land. The wood he uses for his gallery sculpture is always from trees that were felled for conservation. He uses chainsaws to carve rough forms which are left unvarnished to reveal the changing texture of the timber over time. The monumentality of *Wafer Throne* is betrayed by the delicate slices of the form of the throne.

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