Volume Title: Conceptual Revolutions in Twentieth-Century Art

Volume Author/Editor: David W. Galenson

Volume Publisher: Cambridge University Press

Volume ISBN: 978-0-521-11232-1

Volume URL: http://www.nber.org/books/gale08-1

Publication Date: October 2009

Title: The Greatest Artists of the Twentieth Century

Author: David W. Galenson

URL: http://www.nber.org/chapters/c5785

Chapter 2: The Greatest Artists of the Twentieth Century

Introduction

> The masters, truth to tell, are judged as much by their influence as by their works.
>
> Emile Zola, 1884[1]

Important artists are innovators: they are important because they change the way their successors work. The more widespread, and the more profound, the changes due to the work of any artist, the greater is the importance of that artist.

Recognizing the source of artistic importance points to a method of measuring it. Surveys of art history are narratives of the contributions of individual artists. These narratives describe and explain the changes that have occurred over time in artists' practices. It follows that the importance of an artist can be measured by the attention devoted to his work in these narratives. The most important artists, whose contributions fundamentally change the course of their discipline, cannot be omitted from any such narrative, and their innovations must be analyzed at length; less important artists can either be included or excluded, depending on the length of the specific narrative treatment and the tastes of the author, and if they are included their contributions can be treated more summarily. The judgments of different authors can of course differ. Surveying a large number of narratives can reduce the impact of idiosyncratic opinions, and serves to reveal the general consensus of expert opinion as to the relative importance of the artists considered.

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1. Pierre Courthion and Pierre Cailler, *Portrait of Manet* (New York: Roy Publishers, 1960), p. 160.

Today, well into the first decade of a new century, it is possible to survey a large collection of narratives of the art of the past century, and to see which artists emerge most prominently from these accounts. One result of this survey is a ranking of the greatest artists of the twentieth century.

The Ranking

> Lists seem trivial, but in fact they are crucial symptomatic indices of underlying struggles over taste, evaluation and the construction of a canon... [T]here is a complex genealogy of influence and indebtedness which is left for critics and historians to unearth.
>
> Peter Wollen, 2002[2]

The artists selected for this study are those whose major contributions were made entirely in the twentieth century and who were found to be the most important artists at particular times and places by a series of earlier surveys of art history textbooks. Specifically, 15 different artists were found to have an average of at least two illustrations per textbook in a series of nine previous studies of artistic importance.[3] These artists are listed in Table 1.

For the present study a new data set was created by recording all illustrations of the work

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2. Peter Wollen, *Paris Hollywood* (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 217, 222.

3. Five of these studies are included in David W. Galenson, *Artistic Capital* (Routledge, 2006); see Table 1.3, p. 7; Table 2.1, p. 25; Table 3.2, p. 48; Table 4.3, p. 68; and Table 7.5, p. 111. The other studies are Galenson, "One-Hit Wonders: Why Some of the Most Important Works of Modern Art Are Not by Important Artists," *Historical Methods*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (2005), Table 7, p. 107; Galenson, "Toward Abstraction: Ranking European Painters of the Early Twentieth Century," *Historical Methods*, forthcoming, Table 2; Galenson, "Who Are the Greatest Living Artists? The View from the Auction Market," NBER Working Paper 11644 (2005); and Galenson and Bruce A. Weinberg, "Age and the Quality of Work: The Case of Modern American Painters," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 108, No. 4 (2000), Table 4, p. 774.

of these 15 artists in 33 textbooks of art history.[4] All of these books surveyed the history of art in the twentieth century, and all were published in 1990 or later.

Table 2 ranks the 15 artists by using the total number of illustrations of each artist's work that appeared in the 33 textbooks. A number of important facts emerge from this ranking.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Table 2 is the dominant position of Picasso. Remarkably, the textbooks surveyed contain an average of 12 illustrations of his work, more than twice as many as the average for his rival and friend, Matisse. Table 2 clearly demonstrates that it would be difficult to overstate the importance of Picasso for twentieth-century art.

More generally, Table 2 also points to the privileged position given to artistic developments in France. The top five artists are all Europeans, and all spent some if not all of their careers in Paris. Pollock ranks sixth, making him the most important American artist of the century. He is joined in the top 10 by Warhol and Johns. Thus New York is given a prominent role, second to that of Paris.

Table 2 provides the basis for an overview of the specific roles of the most important artists of the twentieth century. The data set constructed for this study can be used to provide a more precise focus for that overview, by pointing to when each of the artists made his major contribution. Thus Table 3 shows the five-year period in each artist's career that accounts for the most textbook illustrations. Arranging these periods in chronological order provides a precise outline for a consideration of the sequence in which the greatest artistic innovators of the twentieth century made their most important discoveries.

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4. On the use of illustrations as a measure of importance, see e.g. Galenson, *Artistic Capital*, pp. 5-6.

Henri Matisse

> Painting isn't a question of sensibility; it's a matter of seizing the power, taking over from nature, not expecting her to supply you with information and good advice. That's why I like Matisse. Matisse is always able to make an intellectual choice about colors.
>
> Pablo Picasso[5]

Fauvism was the first important art movement of the twentieth century. Matisse was its prime inventor and its leader, and Table 3 shows that his greatest period began in 1905, when he and several friends, including André Derain and Maurice Vlaminck, first presented their new Fauve paintings to the public. As Matisse later summarized the movement, Fauvism built on the bright symbolist color of Gauguin and van Gogh: "Here are the ideas of that time: Construction by colored surfaces. Search for intensity of color, subject matter being unimportant. Reaction against the diffusion of local tone in light. Light is not suppressed, but is expressed by a harmony of intensely colored surfaces."[6]

The movement's name came from a facetious remark by the critic Louis Vauxcelles, who called the group "les fauves" – the wild beasts – for their reckless use of color.[7] The young painters were fully aware of the violence they had done to tradition. Derain worked with Matisse during the summer of 1905, and later recalled that explosive time: "Colors became sticks of

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5. Françoise Gilot and Carlton Lake. *Life with Picasso* (New York: Anchor Books, 1964), p. 272.

6. Jack Flam, *Matisse on Art*, revised ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 84.

7. Alfred Barr, Jr., *Matisse: His Art and His Public* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966), p. 56.

dynamite. They were primed to discharge light."[8] Yet although the work was iconoclastic, it was not undisciplined. Matisse planned his paintings meticulously. So for example in the spring of 1905 he exhibited a large figure painting that became a manifesto for the new style. His preparations for the work began with watercolor sketches of the bay of St. Tropez in the summer of 1904. Back in Paris, he devoted the fall and winter to making preparatory oil paintings, adding posed studies of nude figures, and producing a full-scale charcoal drawing of the whole composition. After his wife and daughter transferred this drawing to a large canvas using a traditional academic technique called pouncing, Matisse colored within the traced contours to produce the painting. The completed work was finally given a literary title of impeccable pedigree, *Luxe, calme, et volupté*, from one of the poems in Charles Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*.[9]

The conceptual nature of Fauvism was quickly recognized in Paris' advanced art world. In a review of the Salon des Indépendants in 1905, the painter and critic Maurice Denis, who had himself been a leader of the conceptual Nabi movement in the 1890s, declared that "*Luxe, calme, et volupté* is the diagram of a theory."[10] Later that year, the novelist and critic André Gide stressed the rationality of Matisse's work in a review of the Salon d'Automne:

> The canvases which he paints today seem to be the demonstrations of theorems. I stayed quite a while in this gallery. I listened to the visitors and when I heard them exclaim in front of a Matisse: "This is madness!" I felt like retorting: "No, Sir, quite the contrary. It is

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8. Hilary Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1998), p. 323.

9. Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse*, pp. 293-94.

10. Barr, *Matisse*, p. 61.

> the result of theories." Everything can be deduced, explained...
> Yes, this painting is reasonable, or rather it is itself reasoning.[11]

Nor was this recognition exclusive to critics. The young painter Raoul Dufy explained that he became a convert to Fauvism instantly upon seeing *Luxe, calme, et volupté*, as its conceptual basis allowed him to understand the movement's ideas simply by viewing that painting: "I understood all the new principles of painting, and impressionist realism lost its charm for me as I contemplated this miracle of the imagination introduced into design and color. I immediately understood the new pictorial mechanics."[12] Fauvism was in fact derived from thought rather than observation; Derain later reflected that "We painted with theories, ideas."[13]

In 1908, Matisse published an extended explanation of his artistic goals, "Notes of a Painter," which became one of the most influential statements ever made by a modern artist. He stressed that his art was not primarily concerned with observation, but rather with feelings: "What I am after, above all, is expression... I am unable to distinguish between the feeling I have about life and my way of translating it." He contrasted his goal with that of the Impressionists, who had sought to capture transitory perceptions: "I prefer, by insisting upon its essential character, to risk losing charm in order to obtain greater stability." For Matisse, the purpose of art transcended superficial appearances: "one can search for a truer, more essential character... By removing oneself from the literal *representation* of movement one attains greater beauty and

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11. Barr, *Matisse*, p. 63.

12. Barr, *Matisse*, p. 61.

13. Marcel Giry, *Fauvism* (New York: Alpine Fine Arts, 1982), p. 250.

grandeur." Capturing the true character of an object or person required careful study before beginning the final work: "For me, all is in the conception. It is thus necessary to have a clear vision of the whole right from the beginning."[14]

In a remarkable series of interviews given throughout his career, Matisse expanded on the themes of his early statement. So for example in 1925 he told a critic "the secret of my art. It consists of a meditation on nature, on the expression of a dream which is always inspired by reality."[15] He explained in 1929 that there were two stages in the creation of his art, as his initial emotions had to be transformed into ideas in order to make them communicable: "The painter releases his emotion by painting; but not without his conception having passed through a certain analytic state."[16] Even more simply, in 1949 he declared that "for me, it is the sensation first, then the idea."[17]

Matisse's art influenced painters throughout the twentieth century. Thus for example in 1911 Wassily Kandinsky invited Matisse to contribute an essay to *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, which became the most important literary document of German expressionism.[18] Decades later, the Abstract Expressionist Mark Rothko spent hours studying Matisse's *The Red Studio of 1911* at the Museum of Modern Art, and after Matisse's death in 1954 Rothko paid tribute to that work

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14. Flam, *Matisse on Art*, pp. 37-40.

15. Flam, *Matisse on Art*, p. 80.

16. Flam, *Matisse on Art*, p. 85.

17. Flam, *Matisse on Art*, p. 185.

18. Flam, *Matisse on Art*, p. 2.

in his *Homage to Matisse*. Rothko explained that "When you looked at that painting, you became that color, you became totally saturated with it."[19]

Matisse's central contributions stemmed from his early realization "that one could work with expressive colors that are not necessarily descriptive colors."[20] The critic John Berger observed that "Matisse's achievement rests on his use – or in the context of contemporary Western art one could say his invention – of pure color... He repeatedly declared that color 'must serve expression.' What he wanted to express was 'the nearly religious feeling' he had towards sensuous life – towards the blessings of sunlight, flowers, women, fruit, sleep."[21] Similarly, an art historian remarked that Matisse "saw that if they were no longer subordinated to their mimetic function, the illusionistic devices of painting (the capacity of marks and colors on a flat surface to create a whole fictional world of space and form, light and shade) were free to be a source of the deepest visual and intellectual enjoyment."[22]

Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque

> Picasso is a special case who dominates this century from a great height.
>
> Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler[23]

> I have always said that Braque is my other half.

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19. James Breslin, *Mark Rothko* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 283.

20. Flam, *Matisse on Art*, p. 177.

21. John Berger, *Selected Essays* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), p. 35.

22. David Cottington, *Modern Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 46.

23. Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, *My Galleries and Painters* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2003), p. 152.

Pablo Picasso[24]

Cubism thoroughly transformed modern art. John Golding reflected that "Cubism was perhaps the most important and certainly the most complete and radical artistic revolution since the Renaissance. New forms of society, changing patronage, varying geographic conditions, all these things have gone to produce over the past five hundred years a succession of different schools, different styles, different pictorial idioms. But none of these has so altered the principles, so shaken the foundations of Western painting as did Cubism."[25] George Heard Hamilton explained that Cubism broke with the past because it "embodied for the first time in Western art the principle that a work of art, in conception as well as in appearance, in essence as well as in substance, need not be restricted to the phenomenal appearance of the object for which it stands."[26] John Berger made this same point by noting that with Cubism "the idea of art holding up a mirror to nature became a nostalgic one." Berger stressed that Cubism replaced perception with conception: "The metaphorical model of Cubism is the *diagram*: the diagram being a visible, symbolic representation of invisible processes, forces, structures."[27] Cubism was also the first movement of the modern era to find its subject matter predominantly in urban settings, often the everyday objects found in Parisian cafés, as Picasso remarked that "I want to

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24. Bernard Zurcher, *Georges Braque* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), p. 85.

25. John Golding, *Cubism*, revised edition (Boston: Boston Book and Art Shop, 1968), p. 15.

26. George Heard Hamilton, *Painting and Sculpture in Europe, 1880-1940* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 235.

27. John Berger, *Selected Essays* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), pp. 72, 84.

tell something by means of the most common objects."[28] The man-made, constructed subjects of Cubism paralleled the constructed artificiality of the system of symbols it used to portray them.

Cubism was primarily the result of a collaboration that stemmed from a visit Georges Braque made to Picasso's Montmartre studio late in 1907. On that occasion Braque was shocked by his first sight of Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, but he subsequently came to realize that "We were both headed in the same general direction," for both he and Picasso were pursuing the constructive, spatial implications of Cézanne's late work.[29] The collaboration developed gradually, but the two worked together closely from 1909 on – in Braque's words, "like two mountaineers roped together" – until Braque joined the French army in 1914.[30] In recalling that five-year period, Picasso also stressed the extraordinary degree of cooperation: "Almost every evening, either I went to Braque's studio or Braque came to mine. Each of us *had* to see what the other had done during the day. We criticized each other's work. A canvas wasn't finished unless both of us felt it was."[31] David Sylvester compared the relationship of Picasso and Braque in these formative years of Cubism to the later relationship of the jazz musicians Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker in the heyday of bebop: "It was a relationship in which two young artists who were at once men of genius and great virtuosi and who had totally contrasting temperaments were joined in the creation of a revolutionary style, inspiring each other, guiding each other

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28. Françoise Gilot and Carlton Lake, *Life with Picasso* (New York: Anchor Books, 1989), p. 74.

29. John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, Volume 2 (New York: Random House, 1996), p. 83.

30. Douglas Cooper, *The Cubist Epoch* (London: Phaidon Press, 1970), p. 42.

31. Gilot and Lake, *Life with Picasso*, p. 76.

through a journey in the dark, goading each other with their intense rivalry, loving each other, often disliking and distrusting each other."[32]

Picasso and Braque wanted to represent the tangible nature of objects without the use of linear perspective, which they regarded as mechanical and arbitrary. They replaced the restrictive single viewpoint of Renaissance perspective – which Braque ridiculed, saying "It is as if someone spent his life drawing profiles and believed that man was one-eyed" – with an approach that allowed them to represent their full knowledge of objects, effectively walking around their subject and presenting views of it from many different vantage points. They did this without the vivid colors used by the Impressionists, because they wanted to create solid and stable forms that represented underlying structures, rather than the momentary and changing reflections of light that dissolved the material world into flimsy and shimmering optical effects.[33] They did not replace traditional perspective and color with any single system, but over time devised a number of instruments to substitute for them.

The most striking early development was based on a logical extension of a technique developed by Cézanne. Late in his career, Cézanne often used several vantage points within a single painting. Although this produced occasional anomalies, most conspicuously in the form of inconsistencies in the shapes of table tops that supported still life compositions, Cézanne did this to give solidity to the apples, baskets, and bowls that he studied and painted with infinite care.[34]

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32. David Sylvester, *About Modern Art* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1977), p. 445.

33. Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, Vol. 2, pp. 103-05; Golding, *Cubism*, pp. 65, 185.

34. Erle Loran, *Cézanne's Composition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), p.

Picasso and Braque reasoned that if Cézanne could break the contours of objects by viewing them from two or three different positions, they could do the same using two or three dozen viewpoints. This gave rise to the faceting the Cubists used to portray each of a number of different elements of an object from a different point of view, with each of the associated planes lighted from a different direction, and to the consequent creation of spaces that could not exist in actuality.[35]

In this early phase, in their pursuit of the reality of objects the Cubists restricted their colors to a limited range of shades of gray and brown, in order to avoid both the shimmering Impressionist coloring that dissolved substance and the arbitrary brilliance of Fauve colors.[36] Their search for a realistic way to reintroduce a wider range of colors led Picasso to create the first collage in 1912, by attaching a piece of cloth to the canvas, and later the same year prompted Braque to make the first papier collé. The materials introduced into these new genres were often actual fragments of the real objects they were used to symbolize – cigarette wrappers, newspapers, playing cards – and in other cases were commercial imitations of real objects – for example, the piece of cloth printed to imitate chair caning that Picasso used to represent a chair. When the artists began to translate the effects of collage and papier collé into paint, the result was a new flattened construction of overlapping, superimposed planes that appeared to exist within a much shallower space than the earlier fragmented facets of objects. The new phase after

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76; Golding, *Cubism*, pp. 69-70; Meyer Schapiro, *Modern Art: 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: George Braziller, 1982), p. 27.

35. Hamilton, *Painting and Sculpture in Europe*, p. 238.

36. Hamilton, *Painting and Sculpture in Europe*, p. 246.

1912, in which compositions were constructed from larger, flattened elements, came to be known as Synthetic Cubism, in contrast to the earlier Analytic phase, in which objects were broken into smaller fragments, each of which was shaded to create an illusion of three-dimensionality.[37]

In 1921, Roger Fry described Picasso as "the painter who has had more influence on modern art than any other single man." Yet Fry also explained why he felt unable to place Picasso's achievement in perspective:

> When we attempt the impossible feat of estimating the value of a contemporary artist, we generally take as a measure the case of some similar artist in the past familiar to us, the full trajectory of whose career time has enabled us to trace. But where in the past are we to find the likeness to Pablo Picasso? ... For here is an artist who has given rise to more schools of art, who has determined the direction of more artists, than any other one can think of. An artist, too, who has changed the superficial appearance of pictures more radically than any other in the whole history of the world.[38]

The survey of art history textbooks clearly confirms what virtually all art scholars recognize, that the greatest period of Picasso's career was the time of his invention and development of Cubism during his late 20s and early 30s. Much of this period was spent in his remarkable collaboration with Braque, which ended when Braque went to fight in World War I. Picasso later told his friend and dealer, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, "On August 2, 1914, I took Braque and Derain to the Gare de'Avignon. I never saw them again." The statement wasn't literally true, for although Braque was severely wounded in the war, Picasso did see him again, many times, between 1917 and Braque's death in 1963. But as Kahnweiler explained, "by this he meant that it was never the

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37. Golding, *Cubism*, pp. 114-17.

38. Roger Fry, *A Roger Fry Reader* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 343.

same."[39]

Marcel Duchamp

> Duchamp was the great *saboteur*, the relentless enemy of painterly painting (read Picasso and Matisse), the asp in the basket of fruit.
>
> Robert Motherwell[40]

Marcel Duchamp's avowed goal was to correct what he considered a basic error of art in the modern era. He argued that before the mid-nineteenth century "paint was always a means to an end, whether the end was religious, social, decorative, or romantic. Now it's become an end in itself."[41] Modern art had forsaken the mind in favor of the eye: "Since Courbet, it's been believed that painting is addressed to the retina. That was everyone's error. The retinal shudder!"[42] From the beginning of his career, Duchamp wanted to change this orientation: "I was interested in ideas - not merely in visual products. I wanted to put painting once again at the service of the mind." [43]

As a young painter in Paris, Duchamp's point of departure was Cubism. He later explained that the basis of his early work had been "a desire to break up forms - to 'decompose'

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39. Kahnweiler, *My Galleries and Painters*, p. 46.

40. Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1987), p. 12.

41. Katharine Kuh, *The Artist's Voice* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), pp. 89-90.

42. Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 125.

43. Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson, eds., *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1989), p. 125.

them much along the lines the Cubists had done. But I wanted to go further – much further – in fact in quite another direction altogether." Under the influence of the early chronophotography of Etienne-Jules Marey and Eadward Muybridge, Duchamp painted his first major work, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2*, in 1912: "My aim was a static representation of movement – a static composition of indications of various positions taken by a form in movement – with no attempt to give cinema effects through painting."[44] *Nude Descending* immediately caused a scandal. When Duchamp submitted it to the 1912 Salon des Indépendants, it was perceived as a parody of Cubism, and rejected.[45] The rejection by his fellow painters confirmed Duchamp's scorn for orthodox art: "It helped liberate me completely from the past."[46] Duchamp realized that he was dissatisfied not only with the current state of painting, but with painting itself: "The whole trend of painting was something I didn't care to continue. After ten years of painting I was bored with it." In pursuit of a more highly conceptual art, "from 1912 on I decided to stop being a painter in the professional sense."[47]

In 1913 Duchamp posed the question, "Can one make works which are not works of 'art'?" Later that year he provided a novel answer, in the form of "a work of art without an artist

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44. Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, pp. 30, 34; Sanouillet and Peterson, *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 124.

45. Calvin Tomkins, *Duchamp* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1996), pp. 81-83.

46. Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 31.

47. Calvin Tomkins, *The Bride and the Bachelors* (New York: Viking Press, 1965), pp. 24-25.

to make it."[48] By fastening a bicycle wheel to a stool, Duchamp had made the first of what he would later name "readymades" – manufactured objects that he purchased, titled, signed and often inscribed with a short phrase or sentence. Duchamp stressed that the choice of readymades was "never dictated by aesthetic delectation," but rather was based on "a reaction of visual indifference with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste."[49] By presenting everyday objects such as a urinal, a bottle rack, or a snow shovel as works of art, Duchamp dramatically raised the question of what constituted art. Decades later, he explained that the readymade demonstrated that there could be no general definition of the essential nature of art: "the readymade can be seen as a sort of irony, because it says here it is, a thing that I call art, I didn't even make it myself. As we know art etymologically speaking means 'to make,' 'hand make,' and there instead of making, I take it readymade. So it was a form of denying the possibility of defining art." [50]

Duchamp's work pushed conceptual art to new extremes. Indeed, Joseph Masheck observed that Duchamp functioned differently than artists had in the past: "In a sense he was a mute critic and aesthetician whose works were plastic rather than verbal: although he is commonly thought of as a conceptual plastic artist, much of his work is really reflection

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48. Rudolf Kuenzli and Francis Naumann, eds., *Marcel Duchamp* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), p. 33.

49. Sanouillet and Peterson, *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 141.

50. Dawn Ades, Neil Cox, and David Hopkins, *Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1999), p. 151.

concretized."[51] Duchamp became a central influence on the Dada movement that began during World War I, and in 1934 André Breton, the founder and leading spirit of Surrealism, declared that Duchamp had been "at the very forefront of all the 'modern' movements which have succeeded each other during the last twenty-five years."[52] With the wholesale departure of Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, and many others from the traditional methods and materials of art from the mid-1950s on, Duchamp came to be considered by many as "the most influential artist of the second half of the twentieth century."[53] In a eulogy, Johns wrote that "Marcel Duchamp, one of this century's pioneer artists, moved his work through the retinal boundaries which had been established with Impressionism into a field where language, thought and vision act upon one another. There it changed form through a complex interplay of new mental and physical materials, heralding many of the technical, mental and visual details to be found in more recent art."[54] Duchamp's contribution was placed in a broader context by the Abstract Expressionist Robert Motherwell. A painter whose career extended into the era when Rauschenberg, Warhol, and other younger artists were breaking down traditional artistic barriers, Motherwell saw Duchamp as the source of one of the two basic forces that had created a fault line in the art of the twentieth century, as artists struggled over the issue of whether art would follow fixed conventions, and respect established genres, or whether it would break existing

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51. Joseph Masheck, ed., *Marcel Duchamp in Perspective* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2002), p. 4.

52. André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2002), p. 86.

53. Calvin Tomkins, *Off the Wall* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 125.

54. Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 109.

rules, and create new art forms. Thus in 1971 Motherwell reflected that "Picasso, as a painter, wanted boundaries. Duchamp, as an anti-painter, did not. From the standpoint of each, the other was involved in a *game*. Taking one side or the other is the history of art since 1914."[55]

Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, and Kazimir Malevich

> It might be fair to say that Malevich's abstraction sprang, Athena-like, ready formed from the brow of its creator; this distinguishes Malevich's approach very sharply from that of both Mondrian and Kandinsky, who had sensed and inched their way into abstraction over a period of many years.
>
> John Golding[56]

At the age of 30, Wassily Kandinsky gave up a career teaching law in Russia and moved to Munich to become a painter. He took with him a strong belief in the expressive power of color and design, which derived in part from the traditional folk art he had seen while doing ethnographic research in Russian peasant villages. Kandinsky's art developed slowly in Munich, because his interest in color rather than drawing did not conform to the prevailing academic orthodoxy. But he was excited by a trip to Paris in 1906, where he saw Matisse's exaggerated use of color in his early Fauve paintings. Kandinsky began to consider giving even greater emphasis to color over form: "Much encouraged, I asked myself... whether one might not simply reduce or 'distort' objects, but do away with them altogether."[57]

This initiated Kandinsky's progression toward abstraction. Yet by his own account this

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55. Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 12.

56. John Golding, *Paths to the Absolute* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 67.

57. Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 806.

occurred “slowly, as a result of endless experiments, doubts, hopes, and discoveries.”[58] He feared that a totally abstract art would degenerate into mere decoration, devoid of emotional or spiritual impact. He believed that non-representational art would remain meaningful only if it grew out of representation: if the artist began with objects, then veiled them by blurring or simplifying their forms, the viewer would sense their presence, and feel their impact, even if only subconsciously. Making abstract art therefore involved hiding things, for “concealment wields an enormous power in art.” Even greater possibilities were raided by mixing implicit and explicit forms, “the combination of the hidden and the revealed.”[59]

Kandinsky’s development of abstraction therefore involved a cautious advance, as objects gradually disappeared, and it was not until 1913 that he began to make paintings that contained no recognizable references to the phenomenal world. In that year, he acknowledged that it had taken “a very long time before I arrived at the correct answer to the question: What is to replace the object? I sometimes look back at the past and despair at how long this solution took me.”[60] Yet he understood that this slow progression was required by the need for gradual learning: “it is impossible to conjure up maturity to any particular time. And nothing is more damaging and more sinful than to seek one’s forms by force... Thus, I was obliged to wait patiently for the hour that would lead my hand to create abstract form.” [61]

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58. Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art*, p. 806.

59. Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art*, pp. 170-71.

60. Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art*, p. 370.

61. Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art*, p. 396.

The images Kandinsky created in these early abstract works were novel both for their use of autonomous color and for their creation of a new pictorial space. Brightly colored shapes float and overlap in a state of flux, without perspective or shading to create depth, in a space that suggests an indeterminate state of dreams.[62] Kandinsky explained to one collector that viewers had to learn to see these pictures "as a graphic representation of a *mood*."[63]

Piet Mondrian spent the first two decades of his career in his native Holland, but the turning point for his art occurred when he moved to Paris at the age of 40. There the impact of Cubism on his art was so decisive that his friend and biographer Michel Seuphor later declared that "We may say that it was in Paris, in 1912... that the life of the great painter began." [64] Under the influence of Cubism, Mondrian's earlier symbolist treatment of landscape evolved into progressively more simplified and fragmented forms, with increasing emphasis on horizontal and vertical lines. His subsequent development was driven by a desire to find the reality underlying the superficial appearance of objects: "The interior of things shows through the surface... It is this inner image that should be represented."[65]

Mondrian's belief in Theosophy led him to seek an ideal art, that would be universal and would help to create a new society by portraying a spiritual equilibrium, but it also gave him a firm conviction that progress toward this ideal could only occur gradually, "the slow and sure

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62. Hamilton, *Painting and Sculpture in Europe*, pp. 212-13.

63. Kandinsky, *Complete Writings on Art*, p. 403.

64. Michel Seuphor, *Piet Mondrian* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1956), p. 96.

65. Seuphor, *Piet Mondrian*, p. 117.

path of evolution."[66] The remaining decades of his career, and life, became a protracted quest for "universal beauty." In 1914 Mondrian stated his credo for a fellow artist: "I believe that it is possible by means of horizontal and vertical lines, constructed *consciously* not *calculatingly*, guided by a higher intuition and brought to harmony and rhythm ... to arrive at a work of art as strong as it is true ... And chance must be as far removed as *calculation*.[67] Carl Holty, a younger artist who Mondrian late in his life, testified that he worked visually and experimentally: "There was no program, no symbols, no 'geometry' or system of measure; only intuition determined the total rhythm of the relationships, by trial and error. The given space of the canvas, the given tension of its proportion, its size, were likewise experimentally determined and varied. Intuitive experience for Mondrian could only be direct, immediate, sensual."[68]

By 1913 Mondrian had begun to make paintings that made no recognizable visual reference to real objects, and that were consequently considered to be totally abstract. It appears, however, that until 1919 he continued to use the visual stimulus of specific surroundings as the point of departure for his paintings, and in some cases he referred to these sources in his titles.[69] After 1919 his paintings continued to evolve through variations in their component elements, as Mondrian experimented with regular and irregular grids of black lines, and with compositions

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66. Seuphor, *Piet Mondrian*, p. 117.

67. Carel Blotkamp, *Mondrian: The Art of Destruction* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995), p. 81.

68. Harry Cooper and Ron Spronk, *Mondrian: The Transatlantic Paintings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 18.

69. Blotkamp, *Mondrian*, pp. 66-127.

based on colored rectangles of varying sizes.

Mondrian's willingness to continue significant experimentation throughout his life produced a denouement that is rare if not unprecedented in the history of Western art. In 1943, working in New York after World War II had forced him to flee both Paris and London, he decided to eliminate the network of black lines that had been a central characteristic of his paintings virtually since his first encounter with Cubism.[70] One consequence of this was to give a new depth and dynamism to his very latest paintings of brightly colored bands and squares.[71] In particular *Broadway Boogie-Woogie*, executed at the age of 71, is reproduced in more textbooks than any other painting Mondrian made in a career of more than 50 years. Remarkably, therefore, Mondrian's commitment to experimentation to the very end of his life allowed the last painting he ever completed to be considered by art historians the most important he ever made.

Kazimir Malevich was first exposed to advanced art when he moved to Moscow from his native Ukraine in 1907. In Moscow he met and worked with a group of talented young Russian artists, and he saw paintings by leading French artists both in exhibitions and in the private collections of two wealthy Russian merchants who were a major collectors of Matisse, Picasso, Braque, and other important young artists in Paris. Malevich quickly assimilated the innovations of Cubism and Futurism, and in 1915 made a radical leap into a new form of abstract art that he named Suprematism.

Malevich's mature work was based not only on careful planning but on explicit

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70. Blotkamp, *Mondrian*, p. 240.

71. Schapiro, *Modern Art*, pp. 256-57.

calculation. John Milner observed that by 1913 “Malevich began to make the mathematical basis of his work a primary consideration,” working by constructing figures to fit predetermined geometric schemes.[72] Geometric calculations not only provided the basis for the forms of the paintings Malevich displayed at the landmark “0,10" exhibition in Petrograd in December 1915, at which he first presented his Suprematist compositions, but were also used to determine the arrangement of the paintings on the walls.[73]

Unlike Kandinsky and Malevich, Malevich did not develop abstract forms from observation of objects in the external world, but instead derived them from ideas. Malevich believed that the time had come for revolutionary changes in art, to parallel those that were occurring in technology and society. Rather than transforming real objects, or breaking them into component parts, Suprematism would create symbols directly from abstract elements, “the formation of signs instead of the repetition of nature.” These new signs would be ideas “flowing from our creative brain.”[74] The squares and other geometric shapes in Malevich’s Suprematist abstractions symbolize flight into the cosmos, but the space these figures float in is not the actual space we see by looking up at the sky: “Represented spaces, planes and lines exist only on the pictorial surface, but not in reality.”[75]

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72. John Milner, *Kazimir Malevich and the Art of Geometry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 60-63.

73. Milner, *Kazimir Malevich and the Art of Geometry*, pp. 124-25.

74. K. S. Malevich, *Essays on Art, 1915-1933*, Vol. 1 (London: Rapp and Whiting, 1968), pp. 92, 94.

75. Larissa Zhadora, *Malevich* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982), p. 53; Rainer Crone

Malevich's sudden plunge into abstraction contrasted dramatically with the gradual progressions into abstract art of Kandinsky and Mondrian. This was a clear consequence of his conceptual approach to art, compared to the experimental orientation of both Kandinsky and Malevich. Thus John Golding observed that in the years immediately following his creation of Suprematism, both Malevich's painting and his thought evolved "at the same dizzying and heady rate," as he drew on a range of intellectual sources that were "astonishingly and bafflingly disparate."[76]

Just as Malevich devised and developed his form of abstract art more rapidly than Kandinsky and Mondrian, so too his subsequent experience differed from theirs. Malevich made few paintings during the late 1910s and early 1920s, and when he returned to painting his work was figurative. John Golding examined Malevich's situation:

> Malevich is the true father of what we have come to call "minimal" and "conceptual" art. But he is also the prototype for countless subsequent abstract artists who having reached their goal – or at least a distillation of the ideas and sensations they were seeking to evoke – only find themselves in the tragic position of wondering how to go further, how to avoid the endless repetition of the climax of their achievement, a repetition that might ultimately only drain their art of much of its original impact or meaning. Mondrian knew how to renew himself by constantly kicking the visual ladder from under himself. Kandinsky's endlessly inquiring mind produced for him, throughout his career, a succession of alternative possibilities. Malevich had succumbed to the principle of destruction inherent in a Hegelian system of dialectics.[77]

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and David Moos, *Kazimir Malevich* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 158.

76. Golding, *Paths to the Absolute*, p. 74.

77. Golding, *Paths to the Absolute*, p. 78.

Golding's description of the three artists' differing trajectories can be explained simply: it is possible for conceptual innovators fully to express their ideas and thus reach their goals, but experimental innovators generally do not believe in definitive conclusions. The vague aesthetic goals of Kandinsky and Mondrian never allowed them to feel satisfied that they had reached a conclusion, but Malevich's demonstrations of his ideas appear to have left him with no further problems to solve, and therefore no need to continue making art.

Constantin Brancusi

> Since the Gothic, European sculpture had become overgrown with moss, weeds – all sorts of surface excrescences which completely concealed shape. It has been Brancusi's special mission to get rid of this overgrowth, and to make us more shape-conscious. To do this he has had to concentrate on very simple direct shapes.
>
> Henry Moore[78]

Constantin Brancusi arrived in Paris from his native Romania in 1904, and remained there for the rest of his life. Early in his career he worked briefly as an assistant to Auguste Rodin, but he soon left, explaining that "Nothing can grow in the shadow of the great trees."[79] Brancusi became a great sculptor by reacting against Rodin's style, but late in his career he wrote that "Without the discoveries of Rodin, my work would have been impossible." Rudolf Wittkower explained that Brancusi's art owed a great debt to the fragmentary partial figures

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78. Henry Moore, *Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 145.

79. Sidney Geist, *Brancusi* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1968), p. 2.

pioneered by Rodin: “The discovery that the part can stand for the whole was Rodin’s, and Brancusi along with scores of other sculptors accepted the premise.”[80]

Brancusi’s distinctive contribution was to bring abstraction to sculpture. He did this visually, for his forms always originated in nature. Unlike Rodin and most of his contemporaries, Brancusi did not have plaster models translated to marble by technicians, but instead worked directly in the stone. He furthermore did this without planning: “I don’t work from sketches, I take the chisel and hammer and go right ahead.”[81]

Brancusi’s experimental approach meant that for him the completion of an individual sculpture was not a resolution or conclusion, but only one step in the development of a theme. This process was typically gradual and protracted: he made a series of versions of *The Kiss* over an elapsed span of more than 35 years, and he made more than two dozen related *Birds* over the course of 30 years.[82] His forms generally became progressively simpler and more abstract over time, for his goal was to portray “not the external form but the essence of things.”[83] He stressed that his sculptures were not intellectual puzzles: “Don’t look for obscure formulas or for mystery.” [84] Brancusi considered simplicity not a goal but an incidental product of the search for

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80. Rudolf Wittkower, *Sculpture: Processes and Principles* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 253-55.

81. Sidney Geist, *Brancusi/The Kiss* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 99.

82. Sidney Geist, *Constantin Brancusi, 1876-1957: A Retrospective Exhibition* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1969), p. 21.

83. Hamilton, *Painting and Sculpture in Europe*, p. 462.

84. Geist, *Brancusi*, p. 151.

reality, and David Sylvester observed that it characterized his work: “Brancusi’s sculpture, at its most simple and refined, can be as pure as anything in Western art since Cycladic sculpture.”[85] The process by which he made his sculptures became a physical metaphor for his visual quest for the underlying essences of objects. Thus John Golding contrasted Brancusi’s method with that of Rodin: “Rodin had been essentially a modeller, with all that implies for the process of building things up additively, slapping and pressing clay into clay, twisting, bending, manipulating, gouging. Brancusi turned himself into the archetypal carver, slowly working inward, reducing and compressing, removing layer after layer until he had released his material’s hidden inner life; even his obsessive polishing of his bronzes can be seen as an extension of the carving process.”[86]

The trajectory of Brancusi’s career was typical of an extreme experimental artist. David Lewis observed that Brancusi’s work changed slowly and subtly over time: “It does not fall into clear phases like the work of most other artists, and as a result it is always difficult with Brancusi to say which sculptures belong to which year. Often a series of sculptures will span almost a lifetime and those at the end of the development will be distinguishable from those at the beginning in terms of only the slightest adjustments.”[87] Sidney Geist noted a consequence of this gradual evolution: “just as there are no unsuccessful Brancusis or grave lapses in quality, so are there no towering peaks whose achievement sets them apart from the rest.”[88] David Sylvester

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85. Sylvester, *About Modern Art*, p. 429.

86. Golding, *Visions of the Modern*, p. 190.

87. David Lewis, *Constantin Brancusi* (London: Alec Tiranti, 1957), p. 19.

88. Geist, *Constantin Brancusi*, p. 23.

recognized Brancusi as an archetypal experimental artist: “He was an extreme instance of the seeker, with his indefatigable exploration of a few themes, eschewing duplication to create variations involving the subtlest of differences.”[89] Brancusi himself described his technique in terms that left little doubt that it was equally a philosophy: “all these works are conceived directly in the material and made by me from beginning to end, and... the work is hard and long and goes on forever.”[90]

Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Mark Rothko

> Every so often, a painter has to destroy painting. Cézanne did it. Picasso did it with cubism. Then Pollock did it. He busted our idea of a picture all to hell. Then there could be *new* paintings again.
>
> Willem de Kooning[91]

> The phrase “abstract expressionist” is now seen to mean “paintings of the school of de Kooning” who stands out from them as Giotto stood out from his contemporary realists.
>
> Fairfield Porter, 1959[92]

> Rothko’s mixtures resulted in a series of glowing color structures that have no exact parallel in modern art.
>
> Robert Motherwell[93]

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89. Sylvester, *About Modern Art*, p. 431.

90. Geist, *Brancusi/The Kiss*, p. 99.

91. Rudi Blesh, *Modern Art USA* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), pp. 253-54.

92. Fairfield Porter, *Art In Its Own Terms* (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1979), p. 36.

93. Stephanie Terenzio, ed., *The Collected Writings of Robert Motherwell* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 198.

Pollock, de Kooning, and Rothko were the most prominent members of the Abstract Expressionists, a group of New York painters who came to be recognized as the most important advanced artists to emerge after World War II, and who in the process shifted the center of the art world from Europe to the United States. The critic Clement Greenberg, who was the first important advocate for the Abstract Expressionists, shocked many people by declaring early in 1948 that "the immediate future of Western art... depends on what is done in this country," and that "American abstract painting... has in the last several years shown here and there a capacity for fresh content that does not seem to be matched... in France."[94] Although French observers denied the claims of Greenberg and other American critics for decades, even French critics and historians have now generally conceded that the leading French counterparts of the Abstract Expressionists, such as Pierre Soulages, Jean Fautrier, and Nicholas de Staël, were not the most important innovators of their time.[95]

The Abstract Expressionists were unified not by a style but by an interest in drawing on the subconscious to produce images, and doing so by working directly on the canvas by trial and error, without plans or preconceptions. Pollock's signature drip method of applying paint, with its inevitable splashing and puddling that could not be completely controlled by the artist, became the most famous emblem of this search for the unknown image, reinforced by his often-

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94. Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism, Volume 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 193.

95. Galenson, *Artistic Capital*, Chapter 4.

quoted statement, "When I am *in* my painting, I'm not aware of what I'm doing."[96] De Kooning also worked without a specific goal: "I find sometimes a terrific picture... but I couldn't set out to do that, you know. I set out even keeping that in mind that this thing will be a flop in all probability and, you know, sometimes it turns out very good."[97] Rothko stressed the absence of preconceived outcomes more dramatically: "Pictures must be miraculous... The picture must be for [the artist]... a revelation, an unexpected and unprecedented resolution."[98]

Pollock made his most innovative paintings during 1947-50, when he used brushes, sticks, and syringes to drip and spatter paint onto unstretched canvases spread on the floor of the Long Island barn that he used as a studio. In addition to the novel method of applying paint, these works were innovative in a number of ways. They were larger than most earlier abstract paintings; Pollock believed that "the easel picture [is] a dying form, and the tendency of modern feeling is towards the wall picture or mural."[99] They had no specific focal point, but were instead all-over compositions, with equal emphasis over the whole picture surface; Pollock declared that "My paintings do not have a center."[100] They used line in a new way, not to mark the edges of planes, or to define shapes or figures, but as an autonomous element in the composition. Thus the sculptor Richard Serra later explained that "Pollock has rid himself of figuration, meaning lines

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96. B. lt. Friedman, *Jackson Pollock* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1995), p. 100.

97. David Sylvester, *Interviews with American Artists* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 57.

98. James Breslin, *Mark Rothko* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 240.

99. Pepe Karmel, ed., *Jackson Pollock* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1998), p. 17.

100. Karmel, *Jackson Pollock*, p. 78.

that enclose or contain or describe shapes."[101] These paintings were basically different from earlier works of art. Pollock embraced this fact, as he told an interviewer in 1950 that "My opinion is that new needs need new techniques."[102] Serra reflected that "Pollock made something never seen before that we now know of as a Pollock painting, an interlacing, tumbleweed creation that exists in a space unlike any other."[103]

De Kooning gradually developed a distinctive abstract style during the late 1940s, but his most celebrated series of works, which included his single most reproduced painting, were the large figurative *Women* that he executed during 1950-53.[104] His return to representation at a time when nearly all of his colleagues were committed to abstraction raised considerable controversy, but de Kooning ignored the criticism, and reflected that either option was arbitrary: "It's really absurd to make an image, like a human image, with paint today, when you think about it... But then all of a sudden it was even more absurd not to do it."[105] Unlike Pollock and many of the other Abstract Expressionists, who wanted to separate themselves from European approaches to create a distinctively American art, de Kooning had been formally trained in art in his native Holland, and felt no need to revolt against European traditions. For him, the female figure remained an important subject: "Flesh was the reason why oil painting was invented... [F]or the

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101. Michael Kimmelman, *Portraits* (New York: Modern Library, 1999), p. 52.

102. Karmel, *Jackson Pollock*, p. 20.

103. Kimmelman, *Portraits*, p. 54.

104. E. A. Carmean and Eliza Rathbone, *American Art at Mid-Century* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1978), p. 157.

105. Sylvester, *Interviews with American Artists*, p. 48.

Renaissance artist, flesh was the stuff people were made of."[106]

Rothko first arrived at his trademark image of stacked rectangles in 1949, and during the next two decades he made it the basis for hundreds of paintings, constantly experimenting by changing the size of the canvas, the sizes of the rectangles, and the colors of the forms. Rothko defended his repetition, declaring that "If a thing is worth doing once, it is worth doing over and over again – exploring it, probing it, demanding by this repetition that the public look at it."[107] By diluting his paint and applying it in thin washes, layer over layer, he achieved luminous color effects, and viewers of his paintings often have the impression of looking into deep films of color suspended in space.[108] Although Rothko became known as a colorist, he consistently maintained that color was merely an instrument toward his true goal of evoking moods, and dealing with tragic themes.[109] Thus in 1943, in a joint statement Rothko and his fellow Abstract Expressionist Adolph Gottlieb declared that "We assert that the subject is crucial and only that subject-matter is valid which is tragic and timeless."[110] In the 1950s Rothko continued to insist on the spiritual content of his abstract paintings, as he told the critic Selden Rodman: "I'm interested only in expressing basic human emotions – tragedy, ecstasy, doom, and so on... The people who weep before my pictures are having the same religious experience I had when I painted them. And if

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106. Thomas Hess, *Willem de Kooning* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1968), p. 142.

107. Breslin, *Mark Rothko*, p. 526.

108. Breslin, *Mark Rothko*, pp. 316-17.

109. De Kooning, *The Spirit of Abstract Expressionism*, p. 170.

110. Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, eds., *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, new edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 569.

you, as you say, are moved only by their color relationships, then you miss the point!"[111] Although art scholars have puzzled over Rothko's claims of treating specific ideas and themes, his unusual color effects appear to transcend merely decorative interpretations, and a typical conclusion is that of Alan Bowness: "Rothko's paintings are about the working of color in space, but they are, at a fundamental level, icons for contemplation and meditation."[112]

The Abstract Expressionists invented an aggressively experimental art, in which the finished painting often visibly recorded the process of its own creation. Both artists and critics could celebrate these new forms of abstract art as an "assertion of freedom" by the artist, whose devices – "the mark, the stroke, the brush, the drip" – were "all signs of the artist's active presence."[113] In part, the influence of the Abstract Expressionists was on younger experimental artists who felt liberated by this demonstration of how art could be made. So for example Richard Serra observed that in the drip paintings "Pollock allowed the form to emerge out of the materials and out of the process. For me, as a student, this idea of allowing the form to emerge out of the process was incredibly important."[114] Similarly, the painter Susan Rothenberg acknowledged that "de Kooning was always important to me because of his whole struggle to produce a painting, then becoming unsettled by it, doing something else to it, until finally it was

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111. Selden Rodman, *Conversations with Artists* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1961), pp. 93-94.

112. Bowness, *Modern European Art*, p. 147.

113. Barnett Newman, *Selected Writings and Interviews* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 251; Schapiro, *Modern Art*, p. 218.

114. Kimmelman, *Portraits*, p. 54.

OK by him."[115] Yet the Abstract Expressionists' influence was more general than this: they had a profound effect even on many later conceptual artists who had little interest in their ideas or methods, for they succeeded once and for all in ridding the American art world of its sense of inferiority. For generations, American painting had been a provincial and largely derivative art, and a sojourn in Paris had been a standard part of the education of an aspiring American painter. The Abstract Expressionists decisively broke with this pattern, and attitude. In 1944, Pollock told an interviewer that he felt no need to go to Europe, because "I don't see why the problems of modern painting can't be solved as well here as elsewhere."[116] Because of what he and his contemporaries accomplished over the course of the next two decades, for the remainder of the twentieth century no American artist would have to worry about that issue.

Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg

> The painting of a target by Jasper Johns was an atomic bomb in my training. I knew that I had seen something truly profound.
>
> Ed Ruscha[117]

> Rauschenberg invented more than any artist since Picasso.
>
> Jasper Johns[118]

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115. Kimmelman, *Portraits*, p. 115.

116. Karmel, *Jackson Pollock*, p. 15.

117. Ed Ruscha, *Leave Any Information at the Signal* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002), p. 11.

118. Calvin Tomkins, "Everything in Sight: Robert Rauschenberg's New Life," *New Yorker*

Johns and Rauschenberg became partners in designing department store window displays in New York in 1954, and lived together during most of the next seven years. This became the key formative period for the art of both, in which they made the innovations that would inspire much of the advanced art of the 1960s and beyond.

Arriving in the art world at a time when Abstract Expressionism was the dominant paradigm, Johns and Rauschenberg reacted against what they considered the exaggerated emotional and philosophical claims of the older painters for their art. Rauschenberg later recalled that "The kind of talk you heard then in the art world was so hard to take. It was all about suffering and self-expression and the State of Things. I just wasn't interested in that, and I certainly didn't have any interest in trying to improve the world through painting."[119] Similarly, Johns explained that "I'm neither a teacher nor an author of manifestos. I don't think along the same lines as the Abstract Expressionists, who took those sorts of things all too seriously."[120] Instead of self-expression, the two young artists wanted to find new ways to use art to reflect everyday life. Rauschenberg famously declared that "Painting relates to both art and life. Neither can be made. (I try to act in that gap between the two.)"[121] Johns echoed the same idea: "I'm interested in things which suggest the world rather suggest the personality. I'm interested in

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(May 23, 2005), p. 75.

119. Calvin Tomkins, *The Bride and the Bachelors* (New York: Viking Press, 1965), p. 210.

120. Jasper Johns, *Writings, Sketchbook Notes, Interviews* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1996), p. 136.

121. Harrison and Wood, *Art in Theory*, p. 736.

things which suggest things which are, rather than in judgments."[122]

The brash and iconoclastic Rauschenberg made a number of symbolic attacks on Abstract Expressionism. In 1953, he literally erased an Abstract Expressionist work. After obtaining a drawing from Willem de Kooning for the purpose, Rauschenberg carefully rubbed out the image, then framed the smudged sheet and hand-lettered a label, "Erased de Kooning Drawing, Robert Rauschenberg."[123] In 1957 Rauschenberg mocked the supposed spontaneity and uniqueness of the Abstract Expressionists' work by making two collage paintings, *Factum I* and *Factum II*, that appeared identical, even to the drips and splashes around several large brush strokes. Most damaging, however, was Rauschenberg's innovation of a new form of art. In 1954 he began to attach real things to his canvases, in order to make his paintings independent objects rather than illusionistic representations of them: "I don't want a picture to look like something it isn't. I want it to look like something it is. And I think a picture is more like the real world when it's made out of the real world."[124] Rauschenberg named these three-dimensional works "combines," and they became so influential for successive generations of younger artists, many of whom were eager to break away from the traditional two-dimensional picture plane and the sanctity of traditional art materials, that the critic Arthur Danto observed in 1997 that "the artistic mainstream today is very largely Rauschenbergian."[125]

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122. Johns, *Writings, Sketchbook Notes, Interviews*, p. 113.

123. Calvin Tomkins, *Off the Wall* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980), pp. 96-97.

124. Tomkins, *Off the Wall*, p. 87.

125. Arthur Danto, *The Madonna of the Future* (Berkeley: University of California Press,

In January 1958, the dealer Leo Castelli presented an exhibition of paintings Jasper Johns had produced during the previous three years. The show electrified the art world: one of the paintings, *Target with Four Faces*, was reproduced on the cover of a leading art magazine, and Alfred Barr, the director of collections of the Museum of Modern Art, bought *Target with Four Faces* and two other paintings for the museum, and persuaded the architect Philip Johnson to buy a fourth painting, *Flag*, as a future gift to the museum. The show included the early paintings that have become Johns' most celebrated works. Although they were painted with visible brushstrokes that were derived from Abstract Expressionism, the motifs were presented directly, and neutrally, without any illusion of depth: as Arthur Danto observed, each painting was "at once a representation and the object of representation," a flag that was simply a flag, or a target that was simply a target.[126] Johns later explained that he chose these subjects because "They seemed to me preformed, conventional, depersonalized, factual, exterior elements."[127] Danto remarked that these paintings invalidated the aesthetic of Abstract Expressionism, not only by returning to figuration, but by doing it in such a literal way: "*Flag* reconnected art with reality. It showed how it is possible for something to be at once an artwork and a real thing."[128] Nor was it lost on younger painters that Johns' preformed and exterior images, like the real objects in Rauschenberg's combines, had a very different origin than the spontaneous images of the Abstract Expressionism. Thus Ed Ruscha recognized that "the work of Johns and Rauschenberg

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2000), p. 273.

126. Danto, *Madonna of the Future*, p. 236.

127. Johns, *Writings, Sketchbook Notes, Interviews*, p. 113.

128. Danto, *Madonna of the Future*, p. 236.

marked a departure in the sense that their work was premeditated, and Abstract Expressionism was not." He recalled that this had had a liberating effect on him, at a time when his art school teachers had insisted on "things that were gestural rather than cerebral." With the example of Johns, "I began to move towards things that had more of a premeditation." This allowed Ruscha to produce the paintings that made him one of the leading American painters of the 1960s: "All of my art has been premeditated; having a notion of the end and not the means to the end."[129]

Johns' targets and flags had a remarkably large and varied impact on younger artists. As a senior in college, Frank Stella saw Johns' 1958 exhibition, and was struck by "the idea of stripes... the idea of repetition."[130] This soon led to Stella's Black paintings, in which parallel stripes of black paint filled large canvases. These were exhibited in 1960, at Castelli's gallery, and subsequently became Stella's most important works. Their simplicity and symmetry in turn prompted Carl Andre and Donald Judd to make the simple, symmetrical sculptures that initiated Minimalism, one of the major art movements of the 1960s.[131] Johns' paintings of targets and flags thus led to the abstraction of Minimalism, but they also led to the figuration of Pop art, for their direct images helped inspire Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtensein to paint straightforward images of photographs and comic strips.[132] Looking back at Johns' early work four decades later,

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129. Ruscha, *Leave Any Information at the Signal*, pp. 117-18.

130. William Rubin, *Frank Stella* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970), p. 12.

131. Galenson, *Artistic Capital*, pp. 54, 129; Gregory Battock, ed., *Minimal Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 119, 262, 309.

132. Steven Madoff, ed., *Pop Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 96, 189-90, 208, 294, 309.

Danto reflected that "it signaled the end of an era," by undermining Abstract Expressionism, while at the same time it "opened up the present in which we all exist artistically."[133]

Rauschenberg's use of found objects, and Johns' deadpan portrayal of two-dimensional motifs, powerfully revived Duchamp's earlier efforts to eliminate the traditional barriers between art and everyday life. And like Duchamp, their highly conceptual approaches to art raised the possibility of irony that had been altogether absent from the spiritual quests of the Abstract Expressionists. The work of Johns and Rauschenberg opened the door to a series of movements that have made art that has differed radically in form and appearance, but have consistently been characterized by the use of common images and objects and by the real or ostensible rejection of the vision of the artist as a privileged maker of hallowed objects. Thus for example the critic John Coplans declared that "It is impossible … to discuss the origins and development of Pop Art – and especially the use of banal imagery so central to the style – without first remarking the influence of Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg."[134]

Andy Warhol and Claes Oldenburg

Andy Warhol's influence on the art world cannot be overstated.

William Burroughs[135]

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133. Danto, *Madonna of the Future*, p. 236.

134. John Coplans, *Provocations* (London: London Projects, 1996), p. 94.

135. Kynaston McShine, ed., *Andy Warhol: A Retrospective* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989), p. 427.

> I think Oldenburg's work is profound... There are few artists as good as Oldenburg.
>
> Donald Judd[136]

Warhol and Oldenburg were two of the leading Pop artists, a movement which sprang into prominence in 1962. The subject matter of Pop art varied among artists, as did their specific methods, but a shared characteristic was the mechanical, impersonal appearance of their works. Their images were predetermined, for they were usually replications of existing advertisements, comic strips, news photographs, or other commercial images. Pop artists aggressively attacked the distinction between advanced art and commercial art, and they did this by making original works that pretended to be copies of the commercial originals.

Warhol's most important works were those that introduced Pop art to the American public, and the New York art world, in 1962. Early in the year he began to make paintings with stencils, and in June his first solo show, in Los Angeles, exhibited 32 paintings of Campbell's soup cans he had made using this process. In July Warhol began to make paintings using silkscreen printing, which allowed him to replicate photographic images taken from magazines or newspapers, and to work much more quickly.[137] Marilyn Monroe's suicide in August prompted Warhol immediately to make a series of portraits from a publicity photograph of the actress, and these were displayed, along with paintings of Campbell's soup cans and of Coca-

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136. Madoff, *Pop Art*, p. 225.

137. Gary Garrels, ed., *The Work of Andy Warhol* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1989), pp. 86-88.

Cola bottles, at Warhol's first solo New York show in November.[138]

John Coplans noted that Warhol's paintings of 1962 introduced two important formal innovations: "First, the actual as against the simulated use of an anonymous and mechanical technique, and second, the use of serial forms."[139] Both were highly conceptual devices, as was his practice of painting from photographs. In 1964, the aging doyen of twentieth-century conceptual art, Marcel Duchamp, endorsed Warhol's use of seriality: "If you take a Campbell soup can and repeat it fifty times, you are not interested in the retinal image. What interests you is the concept that wants to put fifty Campbell soup cans on a canvas."[140] Warhol himself left no doubt that his interest was not in creating spontaneous or unique images, as he famously explained in a 1963 interview that "The reason I'm painting this way is that I want to be a machine."[141] Indeed, he freely admitted that he did not enjoy the process of painting – "Paintings are too hard" – and that he would be pleased not to be involved at all: "I think somebody should be able to do all my paintings for me."[142] Not surprisingly, he professed surprise that artists were held in particular esteem: "Why do people think artists are special? It's

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138. Victor Bockris, *Warhol* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1997), pp. 151-55.

139. John Coplans, *Andy Warhol* (New York: New York Graphic Society, 1978), p. 49.

140. Tomkins, *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 415.

141. Kenneth Goldsmith, ed., *I'll Be Your Mirror: The Selected Andy Warhol Interviews* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 2004), p. 18.

142. Bockris, *Warhol*, p. 163; Goldsmith, *I'll Be Your Mirror*, p. 17.

just another job."[143]

Warhol's innovations had an immediate impact on younger artists. The painter Chuck Close recalled seeing an exhibition of Warhol's work in 1964, the year Close graduated from art school: "I felt wonderful, momentary outrage, yet I was totally won over by seeing something like that in an art gallery and seeing the limits and definitions of what art could be, having to be elastic enough to incorporate it." Close, who subsequently developed his own distinctive method of painting from photographs, reflected that "We don't think of Warhol as a figurative painter essentially but that's a role that he offered, and the fact that he was working from photographs was important."[144] Mechanical reproduction, photography, and seriality have all played a central role in painting since the early 1960s, and Warhol's influence has been present in virtually all cases in which they appear.

Oldenburg's early career was marked by work in a variety of forms, including painting and wire constructions covered with cardboard and papier-maché. Under the influence of Allan Kaprow's early happenings, Oldenburg began to stage his own happenings in New York in the early 1960s. He made plaster reliefs based on common objects to serve as props: "I take the materials from the surroundings in the Lower East Side and transform them and give them back."[145] Oldenburg's interest in transforming common objects into art led him to make his first

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143. Andy Warhol, *THE Philosophy of Andy Warhol* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1975), p. 178.

144. Robert Storr, *Chuck Close* (New York: Museum of of Modern Art, 1998), pp. 87-89.

145. Marla Prather, *Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 1995), p. 2.

soft sculptures in 1962, oversized replicas of cakes, hamburgers, and ice cream cones that he made from canvas and stuffed with foam rubber.

In a manifesto written in 1961, Oldenburg declared that "I am for an art... that does something other than sit on its ass in a museum." He also declared his support for an art "that embroils itself with the everyday crap," "that is comic, if necessary," and "that takes its form from the lines of life itself." His art would be made from the common objects and experiences of everyday life, including "things lost or thrown away." He opposed the glorification of the artist: "I am for an artist who vanishes, turning up in a white cap painting signs or hallways."[146]

Oldenburg's art extended sculpture, with novel images and materials. He furthermore did this with a gentle sense of irony and humor, making small things large and often monumental, and hard things soft. He acknowledged his ironic motivation in a 1965 interview, in explaining why he had made the soft sculptures: "I think it's an intention to prove that sculpture is not limited... Take a very general notion of sculpture, and if a thing is one thing why shouldn't it be its opposite?"[147] In recognition of the wide range of Oldenburg's activities, the critic Harold Rosenberg called him "the most inventive American artist of the post-Abstract Expressionist generation." Rosenberg found the unity of Oldenburg's art in his approach to all his creations: "Oldenburg has the offside mind and deadpan of the comedian-visionary." [148] Oldenburg himself pointed to a different source for this unity: "Everything I do is completely original – I made it up

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146. Madoff, *Pop Art*, pp. 213-15.

147. Sylvester, *Interviews with American Artists*, p. 214.

148. Harold Rosenberg, *The De-definition of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), pp. 118-20.

when I was a little kid."[149]

The conceptual content of Oldenburg's sculpture stemmed not only from the irony of enlarging and softening the objects he selected, but also from the selection of those objects, and the particular images of them he portrayed. Oldenburg explained that he not only worked with common, everyday, man-made objects, but that he worked with typical examples of their forms: "I suppose when you invent something like an ice cream cone or a machine, it goes through several states until it begins to look the way people want it to look... And after this has settled for a while you get a traditional form, and I would really prefer to work with a traditional typical form." Doing this meant that Oldenburg often had to create an ideal mental image of the object: "I work a great deal from the picture of the object that I assume people are carrying around in their minds."[150] The sculptor Donald Judd emphasized the information contained in Oldenburg's works: "The preferences of a person or millions are unavoidably incorporated in the things made."[151]

Young Geniuses and Old Masters

> At the age of ten, twenty, a hundred, very young, a little older, and very old, an artist is always an artist.
>
> Isn't he better at some times, some moments, than at others? Never impeccable, since he is a living, human being?
>
> Paul Gauguin, 1903[152]

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149. Prather, *Claes Oldenburg*, p. 1.

150. Sylvester, *Interviews with American Artists*, pp. 206-07.

151. Madoff, *Pop Art*, p. 225.

152. Paul Gauguin, *The Writings of a Savage* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1996), p. 267.

The data set constructed for this paper can be used to examine the creative life cycles of the artists considered by this study. Table 3 shows that the nine artists categorized as conceptual innovators all had their best five-year periods during their 20s and 30s, whereas five of the six experimental artists had their best five-year periods during their 40s and 50s. Even more narrowly, Table 4 presents the ages of the 15 artists in the single year from which their work received the most illustrations. The ages of the nine conceptual artists in their single best years range from 25 for Johns to 37 for Malevich, all below the comparable ages for the six experimental artists, which range from 38 for Pollock to 71 for Mondrian. The median age of 33 for the conceptual artists in their best indidivual years is fully 16 years below the median age of 49 for the experimental artists.

Table 5 presents the percentage distributions of all of each artist's illustrations over their whole careers. The differences between the conceptual and experimental artists are again clear. For eight of the nine conceptual artists – all except Matisse – more than half of their total illustrations represent work they did before the age of 40; for five of the nine, more than 80% of their illustrations are of work done before that age. In contrast, for five of the six experimental artists – all except Pollock – less than one third of their total illustrations are of work they did before 40, and for four of them this share is less than 20%.

More narrowly still, Table 6 lists the single work by each artist that was most frequently illustrated. The ages of the conceptual artists when they made these works range from 26 for both Braque and Picasso to 40 for Malevich, while the ages of the experimentalists range from 38 to Pollock for 71 for Mondrian. The median age of the conceptual artists, of 31, is fully 18

years lower than the median age of 49 of the experimentalists. Whereas eight of the ten conceptual works in the table were executed by their makers before the age of 35, and none were made after 45, all of the experimental works were made after the age of 35, and five of the six were made after 45.

Conceptual innovators tend to make their greatest contributions early in their careers, when they are least constrained by fixed habits of thought, and not yet accustomed to following the existing conventions of their disciplines. In contrast, experimental innovators generally improve with age, with the deepening of their understanding of their craft and their increasing knowledge of the subjects they are trying to represent. The greatest artists of the twentieth century clearly follow these contrasting life cycles. The conceptual painters Braque, Johns, and Picasso made their greatest contributions in their 20s, while their conceptual peers Duchamp, Malevich, Matisse, Oldenburg, Rauschenberg, and Warhol made their major contributions in their 30s. Of the experimentalists, Pollock made his greatest contribution in his late 30s, while Brancusi, Kandinsky, de Kooning, and Mondrian made theirs in their 40s, and Rothko did his greatest work in his 50s. The art of the twentieth century was thus created by both young geniuses and old masters.

Conclusion

> The modern artist is committed to the idea of endless invention and growth.
>
> Meyer Schapiro, 1950[153]

153. Meyer Schapiro, *Worldview in Painting – Art and Society* (New York: George Braziller, 1999), p. 142.

The twentieth century was a time of fundamental change in advanced art, as artists embraced radically new methods and materials. This chapter used scholarly narratives of modern art to identify the most important innovators of the past century. Picasso dominates these narratives, but other artists also made key contributions in Europe early in the century, and in New York later, as the center of advanced art changed continents.

The greatest artistic innovators of the century made their discoveries in very different ways. Some, including Picasso, Matisse, and Duchamp, made sudden breakthroughs based on the formulation of new ideas. Others, including Mondrian, Kandinsky, and Pollock, made more gradual progress dictated by visual criteria. As in earlier centuries, the tension between conceptual and experimental innovation played a major role in the transformation of fine art.

The process of change continued to dominate fine art in the final decades of the twentieth century, and in fact accelerated over time. The enormous demand for innovation was a key element in making conceptual approaches to art the dominant feature of the art world in the late twentieth century. The extremely rapid pace of change created by a succession of conceptual movements in fact may account for the absence from this study of any artist who came to prominence after the early 1960s. As will be seen later in this study, there is no doubt that Robert Smithson, Bruce Nauman, Cindy Sherman, Jeff Koons, Damien Hirst and other artists who worked in the late twentieth century have made important contributions that have changed the practices of their peers. Yet the rapidity of change in this era has limited the extent of their influence relative to that of their predecessors. A central reason for this is the nature of the conceptual changes that have occurred in art over the course of the twentieth century, for many

of them have served to create new genres that have become independent specialties for many artists. The resulting fragmentation of art in the new era of pluralism restricts the proportion of the art world's territory that any single innovation can reach. Until some future innovator reverses this process by creating an art form that restores greater unity to the visual arts, the great painters of the early and mid-twentieth century may be the last in a line of giants each of whom, since the Renaissance, has for a time dominated the entire world of advanced art.

Table 1: Greatest Artists of the Twentieth Century

Artist	Date of birth	Date of death	Country of birth
Brancusi, Constantin	1876	1957	Romania
Braque, Georges	1882	1963	France
Duchamp, Marcel	1887	1968	France
Johns, Jasper	1930	--	US
Kandinsky, Wassily	1866	1944	Russia
de Kooning, Willem	1904	1997	Netherlands
Malevich, Kazimir	1878	1935	Russia
Matisse, Henri	1869	1954	France
Mondrian, Piet	1872	1944	Netherlands
Oldenburg, Claes	1929	--	Sweden
Picasso, Pablo	1881	1973	Spain
Pollock, Jackson	1912	1956	US
Rauschenberg, Robert	1925	--	US
Rothko, Mark	1903	1970	Russia
Warhol, Andy	1928	1987	US

Source: see text.

Table 2: Ranking of Artists by Total Illustrations

Artist	N	Mean illustrations per book
1. Picasso	395	12.0
2. Matisse	183	5.5
3. Duchamp	122	3.7
4. Mondrian	114	3.5
5. Braque	101	3.1
6. Pollock	96	2.9
7. Malevich	93	2.8
8. Warhol	85	2.6
9. Kandinsky	84	2.5
10. Johns	75	2.3
11. Brancusi	71	2.2
12. Rauschenberg	62	1.9
13. Oldenburg	58	1.8
14. de Kooning	52	1.6
15. Rothko	52	1.6

Source: This and subsequent tables are based on the data set constructed for this study. See the text and appendix for the method used and sources.

Table 3: Best Five-Year Period in Each Artist's Career, by Total Illustrations

Artist	Years	Ages
Brancusi	1924-28	48-52
Braque	1907-11	25-29
Duchamp	1910-14	23-27
Johns	1955-59	25-29
Kandinsky	1910-14	44-48
de Kooning	1949-53	45-49
Malevich	1913-17	35-39
Matisse	1905-09	36-40
Mondrian	1912-16	40-44
Oldenburg	1960-64	31-35
Picasso	1906-10	25-29
Pollock	1947-51	35-39
Rauschenberg	1957-61	32-36
Rothko	1956-60	53-57
Warhol	1962-66	34-38

Table 4: Best Single Year in Each Artist's Career, by Total Illustrations

Artist	Year	Age
Conceptual		
Johns	1955	25
Picasso	1907	26
Braque	1911	29
Duchamp	1917	30
Oldenburg	1962	33
Rauschenberg	1959	34
Warhol	1962	34
Matisse	1905	36
Malevich	1915	37
Experimental		
Pollock	1950	38
De Kooning	1950	46
Kandinsky	1913	47
Brancusi	1925, 1928*	49, 52
Rothko	1957	54
Mondrian	1943	71

*two years tied for most illustrations.

Table 5: Percentage Distributions of Illustrations Over Artists' Careers

Age:	20-9	30-9	40-9	50-9	60-9	70-9	80-9	90-9	Total
Conceptual									
Braque	58	28	6	3	5	0	0	-	100
Duchamp	39	48	2	4	2	5	0	-	100
Johns	60	27	7	5	1	0	-	-	100
Malevich	1	68	21	10	-	-	-	-	100
Matisse	1	44	26	7	6	4	12	-	100
Oldenburg	0	67	26	5	2	0	-	-	100
Picasso	35	25	17	14	4	2	2	1	100
Rauschenberg	10	84	3	0	3	0	0	-	100
Warhol	0	88	5	7	-	-	-	-	100
Experimental									
Brancusi	0	31	32	23	14	0	0	-	100
Kandinsky	0	1	70	20	4	5	-	-	100
De Kooning	0	2	73	13	6	6	0	0	100
Mondrian	0	11	47	20	5	17	-	-	100
Pollock	8	76	16	-	-	-	-	-	100
Rothko	0	6	17	62	15	-	-	-	100

Table 6: Single Most Important Work by Each Artist, by Total Illustrations

Artist, title	Year	Age	Location
Conceptual			
Braque, *Houses at L'Estaque**	1908	26	Bern
Braque, *The Portuguese**	1911	29	Basel
Duchamp, *Fountain*	1917	30	unknown
Johns, *Three Flags*	1958	28	New York
Malevich, *Suprematist Composition: White on White*	1918	40	New York
Matisse, *Joy of Life*	1906	37	Merion
Oldenburg, *The Store*	1961	32	multiple
Picasso, *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*	1907	26	New York
Rauschenberg, *Monogram*	19598	34	Stockholm
Warhol, *Marilyn Monroe Diptych*	1962	34	London
Experimental			
Brancusi, *Bird in Space*	1928	52	New York
Kandinsky, *Der Blaue Reiter*	1912	46	multiple
De Kooning. *Excavation*	1950	46	Chicago
Mondrian, *Broadway Boogie-Woogie*	1943	71	New York
Pollock, *Autumn Rhythm*	1950	38	New York
Rothko, *Red, White and Brown*	1957	54	Basel

* two paintings tied for most illustrations.

Appendix: The 33 books surveyed for this chapter are listed here, ordered by date of publication.

1. Varnedoe, Kirk. 1990. *A Fine Disregard: What Makes Modern Art Modern*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

2. Hughes, Robert. 1991. *The Shock of the New*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

3. Tamplin, Ronald, ed. 1991. *The Arts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

4. Yenawine, Philip. 1991. *How to Look at Modern Art*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

5. Sprocatti, Sandro. 1992. *A Guide to Art*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

6. Strickland, Carol, and Boswell, John. 1992. *The Annotated Mona Lisa*. Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel.

7. Series of three books treated as one:

   Harrison, Charles; Frascina, Francis; and Perry, Gill. 1993. *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

   Fer, Briony; Batchelor, David; and Wood, Paul. 1993. *Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

   Wood, Paul; Frascina, Francis; Harris, Jonathan; and Harrison, Charles. 1993. *Modernism in Dispute*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

8. Adams, Laurie. 1994. *A History of Western Art*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

9. Stangos, Nikos, ed. 1994. *Concepts of Modern Art*, third ed. London: Thames and Hudson.

10. Fleming, William. 1995. *Arts and Ideas*, ninth ed. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace.

11. Stokstad, Marilyn. 1995. *Art History*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

12. Dawtrey, Liz; Jackson, Toby; Masterson, Mary; Meecham, Pam; and Wood, Paul. 1996. *Investigating Modern Art*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

13. Lucie-Smith, Edward. 1997. *Visual Arts in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

14. Wilkins, David; Schultz, Bernard; and Linduff, Katheryn. 1997. *Art Past, Art Present*, third ed. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

15. Freeman, Julian. 1998. *Art*. New York: Watson-Guptill.

16. Gebhardt, Volker. 1998. *The History of Art*. New York: Barron's.

17. Gilbert, Rita. 1998. *Living With Art*, fifth ed. Boston: McGraw Hill.

18. Blistène, Bernard. 1999. *A History of 20th-Century Art*. Paris: Flammarion.

19. Bocola, Sandro. 1999. *The Art of Modernism*. Munich: Prestel.

20. Britt, David, ed. 1999. *Modern Art*. New York: Thames and Hudson.

21. Lucie-Smith, Edward. 1999. *Lives of the Great 20th-Century Artists*. London: Thames and Hudson.

22. Kemp, Martin. 2000. *The Oxford History of Western Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

23. Parmesani, Loredana. 2000. *Art of the Twentieth Century*. Milan: Skira.

24. Bell, Cory. 2001. *Modern Art*. New York: Watson-Guptill.

25. Janson, H. W., and Janson, Anthony. 2001. *History of Art*, sixth ed. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

26. Richter, Klaus. 2001. *Art*. Munich: Prestel-Verlag.

27. Dempsey, Amy. 2002. *Art in the Modern Era*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

28. Honour, Hugh, and Fleming, John. 2002. *The Visual Arts*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.

29. Arnason, H. H. 2004. *History of Modern Art*, fifth ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

30. Foster, Hal; Krauss, Rosalind; Bois, Yve-Alain; and Buchloh, Benjamin. 2004. *Art Since 1900*. New York: Thames and Hudson.

31. Hunter, Sam; Jacobus, John; and Wheeler, Daniel. 2004. *Modern Art*, third ed. New York: Vendome Press.

32. Cumming, Robert. 2005. *Art*. New York: DK Publishing.

33. Walther, Ingo, ed. 2005. *Art of the 20th Century*, 2 vols. Cologne: Taschen.