

# Modern Art (Other Trends to 1960s) and Modern Craft

## Key Ideas

- In the first half of the 20th century, some artists, though associated with various art movements at times, continue to work in an independent style.
- WWII had a devastating global impact. The massive loss of human life “resulted in a pervasive sense of despair, disillusionment, and skepticism” about the future of humanity. (Kleiner, *Art through the Ages*, 746)
- Art, Design, and Craft (Fine Arts, Applied Arts, and Decorative Arts) are all part of the continuum of creativity. Through various processes, artists and designers create objects of visual culture, reflecting the context of their time.

## Terms

- Mingei: Japanese folk craft, basically “hand-crafted art of ordinary people.” This movement started in Japan in the 1920s and 1930s, formed by work by Japanese writer Yanagi Sōetsu (authored *The Unknown Craftsman*) and potters Shōji Hamada, and Kawai Kanjirō. It later moved into Western culture, through the work of Bernard Leach and his students (including Warren MacKenzie).
- Postwar expressionism: European art following WWII, with artists reacting to the global devastation and often conveying despair and disillusionment in their works.
- Contemporary craft: Objects conceived and made by individual artists in traditional craft-based mediums (ceramics, wood, glass, furniture, fiber).

## Modern Art (Independents and Postwar), to 1960s

- Aristide Maillol, *Eve with Apple*, c. 1902, 94.30.4
- Marc Chagall, *The Poet with the Birds*, 1911, 61.36.7 (Inset, *The Poet Reclining*, 1915)
- Balthus (Balthasar Klossowski de Rola), *The Living Room*, 1941–1943, 66.66
- Pablo Picasso, *Baboon and Young*, 1951, 55.45 (Bronze)
- Pablo Picasso, *Après la Pique*, 1959, (Color linocut) 2002.113
- Pablo Picasso, *Vase*, 1950, Maker: Madoura Pottery, Vallauris, France, 80.54.4
- Henry Moore, *Warrior with Shield*, 1953–1954, 54.22
- Marino Marini, *Horse and Rider*, 1950, 83.83
- Francis Bacon, *Study for Portrait VI*, 1953, 58.35
- Alberto Giacometti, *Diego*, 1962, 2000.109
- Alexander Calder, *Ahab*, 1953, 83.77

## Modern and Contemporary Craft

- Ai Weiwei, *Marble Chair*, 2008, 2010.24
- Warren MacKenzie, *Platter*, c. 1990, 2007.99.77
- George Nakashima, *Conoid chair*, c. 1960, 2013.83.2
- Harry Bertoia, *Brooch* (3 brooches), c. 1950, 2010.28.1-3
- Alexander Calder, *Tie clasp and cufflinks*, c. 1960, 76.45.1-3
- Peter Voulkos, *Sevillanas*, 1959, 2002.261
- Dale Chihuly, *Sunburst*, 1999, 99.132
- Tony Cragg, *Pulse*, 2003, 2014.18
- Tony Berlant, *Mountain Journey*, 2005, 91.81a-m
- Dan Dailey, *Men Flying Kites*, 1975, 2012.112.8a,b
- Ernst Gamperl, *Bowl*, 1997, 2012.81
- Kay Sekimachi, *Paper Bowl*, 1987, 91.136.8 and (right) *Untitled*, 1997, 2013.80.3
- Klaus Moje, *7-1990 #31*, 1990, 2012.112.23
- David Sengel, *Family Portrait*, 2000, 2014.107.10a-d
- Irv Tepper, *Two Deconstructed Cups*, 2005, 2015.27.2
- Honda Shōryū, *Prominence*, 2012, 2015.114.4
- Suzuki Osamu, *Afternoon Beach*, 1987, 2015.112.1
- Fukami Sueharu, *Windy Seascape II*, 2005, 2013.30.55a,b
- Kishi Eiko, *No. 12*, 1991, 2015.111.30
- Sowah Kwei, *Fantasy coffin*, 1993, 2010.72
- Magdalene Odundo, *Reduced Black Piece*, 1990, 97.5 and *Vessel*, 1985, 2014.12.1

### Quotes:

Pablo Picasso once declared, “God is really an artist, like me...I am God.”

<https://newsflash.dx.artsmia.org/2016/03/are-narcissists-better-artists/>

Marino Marini: “My equestrian statues express the torment caused by the events of this century... . My wish is to reveal the final moment of the dissolution of a myth, the myth of the heroic individual, the humanists’ ‘man of virtue.’” <http://www.walkerart.org/collections/artworks/cavaliere-horseman>

Henry Moore: Sculpture is an art of the open air... I would rather have a piece of my sculpture put in a landscape, almost any landscape, than in, or on, the most beautiful building I know.”

<http://www.theartstory.org/artist-moore-henry.htm>

Peter Voulkos: “I am not a conceptual artist. I can’t just sit there and think of an idea. Most of it comes out of my hands . . . I have always used whatever comes to hand, or into my head, that makes sense in my own work, that I can get some energy from.”

<http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artist/?id=5183>

## **Resources:**

Short film on Giacometti, 1967:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRsejf8xdC0>

Here is an interview by David Sylvester (the subject of our portrait by Bacon) with Francis Bacon:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoFMH\\_D6xLk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoFMH_D6xLk)

Excellent group of essays on Henry Moore, *Henry Moore: Sculptural Process and Public Identity*, from the Tate: <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/henry-moore/alice-correia-biography-r1171900>

This publication includes key ideas and key names of artists connected to American studio craft. It also includes some links to examples of craft through the last two centuries: *Makers: A History of American Studio Craft*: <http://www.americanstudiocrafthistory.org/>

Check out this fabulous PBS series, *Craft in America*: <http://www.craftinamerica.org/series/>  
And specifically, for an episode close to home:

<http://www.craftinamerica.org/shorts/midwest-potters-segment/>

Brief video about Peter Voulkos's work:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7E\\_qAMZGk0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7E_qAMZGk0)

and <http://blogs.getty.edu/pacificstandardtime/explore-the-era/archives/v24/>

The video of Warren MacKenzie working at the Leach Pottery:

<https://youtu.be/K1-BSosgw6E>

Interview with George Nakashima: <http://www.nakashimawoodworker.com/philosophy/9>

Article on Tony Cragg: [http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/02/arts/art-in-review-tony-cragg.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/02/arts/art-in-review-tony-cragg.html?_r=0)

The WPA Federal Art Project in Minnesota: <http://www.mnhs.org/exhibits/wpa/v53i05p184-195.pdf>