

The Essential Encyclopaedic Guide to **Modern Art**

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STYLES, SCHOOLS AND MOVEMENTS



Impressionism + Arts and Crafts + Chicago School + Les Vingt + Neo-Impressionism + Decadent Movement + Art Nouveau + Modernism
Symbolism + Post-Impressionism + Cloisonnism + Nabis + Synthetism + Salon de la Rose+Croix + Jugendstil + Vienna Secession + World of Art +
Fauvism + Expressionism + Die Brücke + Ashcan School + Deutscher Werkbund + Cubism + Futurism + Jack of Diamonds + Der Blaue Reiter +
Synchronism + Orphism + Rayonism + Suprematism + Constructivism + Pittura Metafisica + Vorticism + Hungarian Activism + School of
Amsterdam + Dada + Purism + De Stijl + Arbeitsrat für Kunst + Novembergruppe + Bauhaus + Precisionism + Art Deco + Ecole de Paris +
International Style + Novecento Italiano + Der Ring + Neue Sachlichkeit + Surrealism + Elementarism + Gruppo 7 + M.I.A.R. + Concrete Art +
Magic Realism + American Scene + Social Realism + Socialist Realism + Neo-Romanticism + Art Brut + Existential Art + Outsider Art + Organic
Abstraction + Art Informel + Abstract Expressionism + Lettrism + CoBrA + Beat Art + Kinetic Art + Kitchen Sink School + Neo-Dada + Combines +
New Brutalism + Funk Art + Nouveau Réalisme + Situationist International + Assemblage + Pop Art + Performance Art + GRAV + Fluxus + Op Art +
Post-painterly Abstraction + Minimalism + Conceptual Art + Body Art + Installation + Super-realism + Anti-Design + Supports-Surfaces + Video Art
+ Earth Art + Site Works + Arte Povera + Postmodernism + High-Tech + Neo-Expressionism + Neo-Pop + Transavanguardia + Sound Art + Internet Art

Thames & Hudson

Pop Art

Popular; Transient; Expendable; Low Cost; Mass Produced; Young; Witty; Sexy; Gimmicky; Glamorous; and Big Business.

RICHARD HAMILTON, 1957

The term Pop first appeared in print in an article by the English critic Lawrence Alloway (1926–90) in 1958, but the new interest in popular culture, and the attempt to make art out of it, was a feature of the Independent Group in London from the early 1950s. Meeting informally at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), Alloway, Alison and Peter Smithson (see *New Brutalism), Richard Hamilton (b. 1922), Eduardo Paolozzi (b. 1924) and others discussed the growing mass culture of movies, advertising, science fiction, consumerism, media and communications, product design and new technologies originating in America, but now spreading throughout the West. They were particularly fascinated by advertising and graphic and product design, and wanted to make art and architecture that had a similar popular appeal. As early as 1947 Paolozzi (always interested in *Dadaist and *Surrealist tactics) included the word Pop in his collage *I was a Rich Man's Plaything*, and his collages of the late 1940s and early 1950s are usually referred to as 'proto-pop'. His lecture and slide show, 'Bunk', given at the ICA in 1952, was innovative in presenting a range of images from mass culture for serious appreciation.

Three artists studying at the Royal College of Art in London (where both Paolozzi and Hamilton had short-term teaching contracts), Peter Blake (b. 1932), Joe Tilson (b. 1928) and Richard Smith (b. 1931), all produced early Pop Art, but Richard Hamilton's collage, *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* (1956) was the first work to achieve iconic status. Made from American magazine advertisements, it was produced for a group exhibition, 'This is Tomorrow', organized by the Independent Group in 1956 at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London. With celebrity body-builder Charles Atlas and a pin-up glamour girl as the new domestic couple, it seems to usher in a new era. A comic strip and a can of ham take the place of a painting and sculpture, and a portrait of John Ruskin (see *Arts and Crafts) hanging on the wall announces the 'American way of life' as the latest manifestation of art as a lived experience, which the Arts and Crafts movement had advocated.

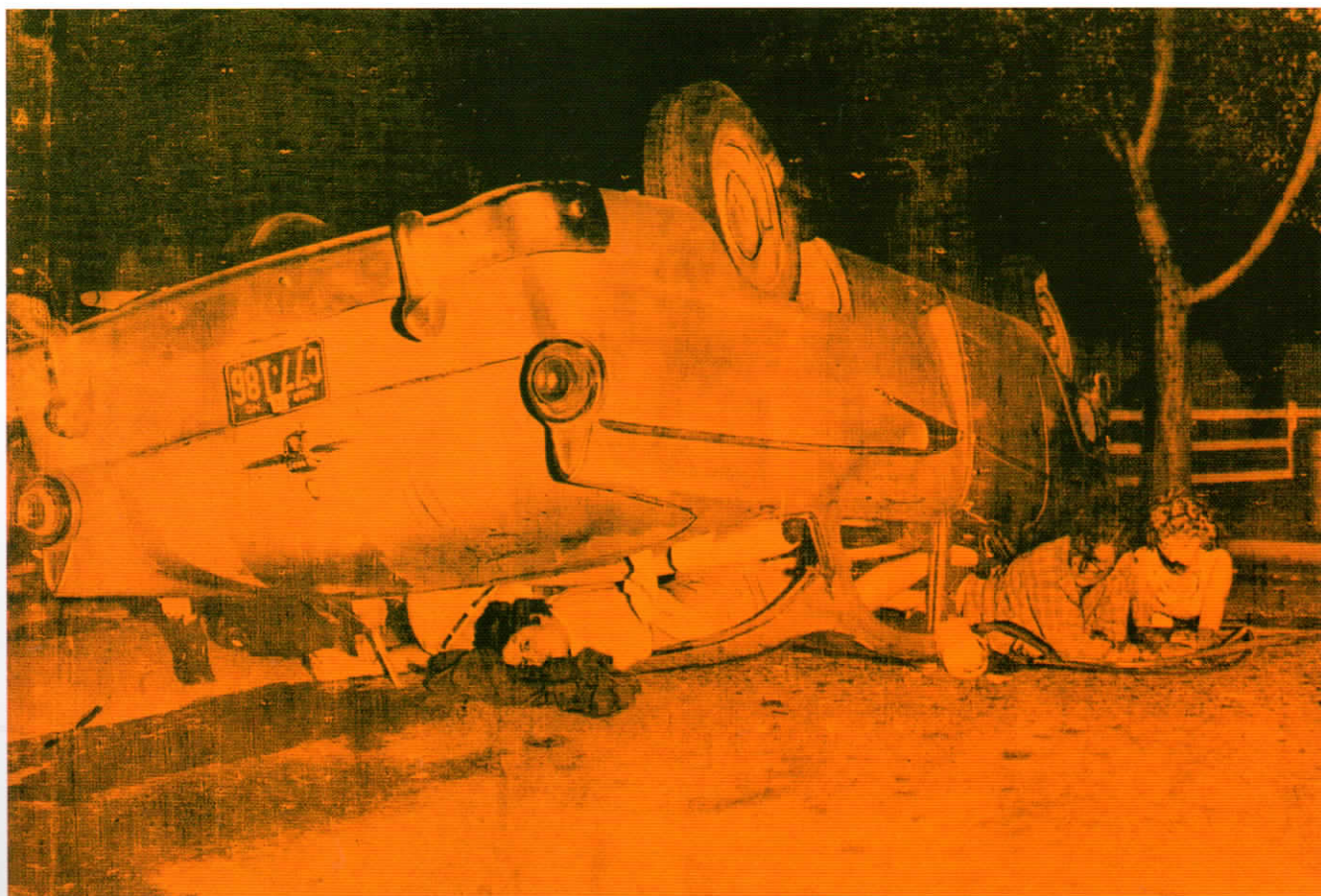
The next generation of students at the Royal College of Art – including US-born R. B. Kitaj (b. 1932), Patrick Caulfield (b. 1936), David Hockney (b. 1937) and Allen Jones (b. 1937) – also incorporated motifs from popular



culture into their collages and assemblages, and in the period 1959–62 achieved public notoriety, especially through the annual 'Young Contemporaries' exhibitions. Their work drew on ubiquitous urban imagery, such as graffiti and advertising, sometimes appearing in scuffed graphics reminiscent of Jean Dubuffet's *Art Brut (as in Hockney's drawings), sometimes in slick and glossy images which deliberately evoked fashion or pornographic magazines (such as Jones's paintings and, later, sculptures). Unlike most of the first-generation British Pop artists, whose work was firmly figurative, those of the second generation introduced abstract passages into their work, happy to use not only American-style consumerism as their subject but also techniques associated with the American abstract painters (see *Abstract Expressionism and *Post-painterly Abstraction).

Meanwhile, in America itself, the *Neo-Dada, *Funk, *Beat and *Performance artists were shocking the art world

Richard Hamilton, *Just What Is It That Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?* 1956 This small, densely filled collage became an icon of Pop. Comic strips, TV, advertising, billboards and brand names – together with the absurdly idealized couple – all challenge the viewer to become critically detached.



in the 1950s with works which included articles of mass culture, such as Ray Johnson's (1927–95) celebrity collages of James Dean, Shirley Temple and Elvis. The Neo-Dada works of Jasper Johns, Larry Rivers and Robert Rauschenberg were particularly important to a group of artists who emerged in New York in a number of solo exhibitions in 1961 and 1962, including Billy Al Bengston (b. 1934); Jim Dine (b. 1935); Robert Indiana (b. 1928); Alex Katz (b. 1927); Roy Lichtenstein (1923–97); Marisol (b. 1930); Claes Oldenburg (b. 1929); James Rosenquist (b. 1933); George Segal (1924–2000); Andy Warhol (1928–87) and Tom Wesselmann (b. 1931). In the early 1960s the public saw for the first time work that has since become internationally famous: Warhol's silk screens of Marilyn Monroe, Lichtenstein's comic-strip oils, Oldenburg's huge vinyl burgers and ice-cream cones and Wesselmann's nudes set in domestic settings which incorporate real shower curtains, telephones and bathroom cabinets. A large international exhibition was mounted at the Sidney Janis Gallery in New

York (31 October–1 December 1962), under the heading 'New Realists'. Works by British, French, Italian, Swedish and American artists were grouped around the themes of the 'daily object', 'mass media', and 'repetition' or 'accumulation' of mass-produced objects. It was a defining moment. Sidney Janis was the leading dealer in blue-chip European moderns and Abstract Expressionists, and his exhibition consecrated the work as the next art historical movement to be discussed and collected.

Critical coverage was both for and against the new art. Some critics were so affronted by the acceptance of 'low culture' and commercial art techniques that they dismissed Pop as non-art or anti-art. Max Kozloff was one such critic, denouncing the Pop artists in 1962 as 'new vulgarians', 'gum-chewers' and 'delinquents'. Others took it to be a new type of *American Scene painting or *Social Realism. Many critics found the work difficult to discuss at all, finding the apparent lack of social commentary or political critique unnerving. For Kozloff, however, reconsidering in 1973, it

Opposite: **David Hockney, *I'm in the Mood for Love*, 1961**

Hockney became a leading Pop artist soon after winning the Gold Medal at the Royal College of Art, London, in 1961. He brought a sense of American vitality and pleasure to the London art scene after visiting the USA, where he settled.

Above: **Andy Warhol, *Orange Disaster*, 1963** Warhol's Disaster paintings allude to sensationalism and voyeurism; their newsprint quality and coloured tints put a coolly ironic distance between the viewer and the subject. The combined effect is to draw attention to our moral indifference in the face of daily disaster.

was just this combination of 'highly flagrant themes of crimes, sex, food, and violence' without any 'political *partis pris*' that gave the work its 'insurrectionary value'. This detachment, above all, linked it with other art forms of the period, such as the French Nouveau Roman (New Novel), Nouvelle Vague (New Wave) cinema, *Minimalism and Post-painterly Abstraction.

At this stage the work was still called by many names, including New Realism, Factual art, Common-Object Painting and Neo-Dada. But critics were uncomfortable with the term 'realist', which had political and moral connotations (e.g. Socialist Realism and Social Realism), and fell back on the British term Pop Art. Alloway, now a curator at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, helped popularize the term in the USA, and its use became more specific, employed as a fine art term rather than to refer to popular culture and the mass media.

Los Angeles was a particularly receptive site for the new art, with its less entrenched artistic traditions and young, wealthy population eager to collect contemporary art. Just prior to the New York 'New Realist' exhibition, the Pasadena Art Museum put on a show titled 'The New Painting of Common Objects' (25 September–19 October, 1962), featuring the work of Dine, Lichtenstein, Warhol and Californian artists Robert Dowd, Joe Goode (b. 1937),

Phillip Hefferton, Edward Ruscha (b. 1937) and Wayne Thiebaud (b. 1920). Also in 1962 the Dwan Gallery showed Neo-Dada and Pop artists in an exhibition entitled 'My Country 'Tis of Thee', and Warhol was given his first major exhibition at the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles, where thirty-two of his Campbell's Soup paintings were displayed. Pop subjects (comic strips, consumer products, celebrity icons, advertising or pornography) and Pop themes (the elevation of 'low' art, Americana, suburbia, the myths and realities of the American dream) were as quickly identified and established on the West coast as on the East.

Pop Art spread throughout the rest of the USA and Europe via numerous gallery and museum exhibitions. Other artists of the period who made Pop-related work included the French artists Martial Raysse (b. 1936), Jacques Monory (b. 1934) and Alain Jacquet (b. 1939); Italian Valerio Adami (b. 1935) and Swede Öyvind Fahlström (1928–76). By 1965, the meaning of the term had expanded again to include all aspects of urban popular culture. Two meanings of Pop survived: the limited meaning for the fine arts and the broader, cultural definition covering pop music, pop fiction, pop culture, etc.

As Pop Art had been inspired by commercial design and popular culture, so it fed back into commercial design, advertising, product, fashion and interior design. Two of the





most famous Pop graphics were designed by Milton Glaser (b. 1929) of Push Pin Studio, founded in New York in 1954: the Indianesque 'I Love New York' sticker with a heart, and his Dylan poster of 1967. The Dylan poster also shows the impact of a renewal of interest in *Art Nouveau and *Art Deco during the 1960s, which fused with youth drug culture and music and Pop Art into psychedelia. Pop-inspired furniture was made by designers such as the Dane Verner Panton (1926–98) and the Italian design team of Jonathan De Pas (1932–91), Donato d'Urbino (b. 1935) and Paolo Lomazzi (b. 1936), known for their inflatable 'Blow' chair of 1967 and their 'Joe Sofa' of 1971, a gigantic baseball mitt. The 'Joe Sofa', named after Joe DiMaggio, seems to take the desire of the father of organic design, Charles Eames (who wanted his chair to be as comfortable as a baseball mitt, see *Organic

Above: **Roy Lichtenstein, *Mr Bellamy*, 1961** Lichtenstein painted comic-strip frames, imitating their cheap printing techniques by hand. The banality of the image, blown up onto canvas, takes on a sense of allegory and monumentality. It is both a parody and a question: what sort of pictures do we take seriously and why?

Opposite: **Jonathan De Pas, Donato d'Urbino and Paolo Lomazzi, '*Joe Sofa*', 1971** Charles Eames said he wanted his chair to be as comfortable as a baseball mitt. The 'Joe Sofa' – named after Joe DiMaggio – makes his wish come true. Pop artists turned household names, objects and brands into art – and vice versa.

Abstraction), to its logical conclusion, with a nod to the soft sculptures of Oldenburg.

With hindsight, Pop art and design seem part of the larger reaction to the long-term dominance of the post-war modernist styles. They rejected the high seriousness, angst and elitism associated with the international style of abstraction (see Abstract Expressionism and *Art Informel) and the anonymity and coldness of the architecture and design of the *International Style. It also arose during a time of economic prosperity and an expanding international art market.

During the early 1960s, the relationship of the avant-garde to its public was changing, as was the role of the critic, particularly in the USA. Traditionally the avant-garde had spurned the bourgeoisie; now the *Nouveaux Réalistes, Neo-Dadaists and Pop artists embraced the middle classes and their interest in all that was new and modern. Though this caused problems to some critics, the dealers and collectors were quick to take to the new art. Gallerists such as Leo Castelli, Richard Bellamy, Virginia Dwan and Martha Jackson made their move without waiting for critics to legitimize the new art, depriving the critic of the role of cultural 'gatekeeper'. The artist's role changed too, enlivened by associations of glamour and celebrity. As Larry Rivers explained in 1963, 'For the first time in this country, the artist is "on stage." He isn't just fooling around in a cellar with something that maybe no one will see. Now he is there in the full glare of publicity.' The impact of this change is still felt today.

The popularity of Pop Art has waned little since its inception, though the attention of the art world was soon diverted to other movements, such as *Op Art, *Conceptual Art and *Super-realism – each of which owed something to Pop Art. The Pop Art phenomenon itself received new attention and interest during the 1980s (see *Neo-Pop).

Key Collections

Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
 Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco, California
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois
 Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, Arizona
 Sintra Museu de Arte Moderna, Sintra, Portugal
 Tate Gallery, London

Key Books

L. R. Lippard, *Pop Art* (1988)
 J. Katz, *Andy Warhol* (1993)
 J. James, *Pop Art* (1996)
 M. Livingstone, *David Hockney* (1996)
 M. Livingstone and J. Dine, *Jim Dine* (1998)
 L. Bolton, *Pop Art* (Lincolnwood, Ill., 2000)