

*The Essential Encyclopaedic Guide to* **Modern Art**

AMY DEMPSEY

# STYLES, SCHOOLS AND MOVEMENTS



Impressionism + Arts and Crafts + Chicago School + Les Vingt + Neo-Impressionism + Decadent Movement + Art Nouveau + Modernisme  
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**

The work of Bratby and others also reflected the contemporary mood generated by the Cold War and the threat of the atomic bomb, capturing what the \*Neo-Romantic painter John Minton described in 1955 as the 'chic of contemporary *désespoir* [despair]'.

The work of the Kitchen Sink School painters was often exhibited alongside that of another group of British painters, later referred to as the School of London, which included Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud (see Existential Art), Frank Auerbach (b. 1931) and Leon Kossoff (b. 1926). The two latter artists were pupils of David Bomberg (see \*Vorticism), who taught at Borough Polytechnic in London. Like the Kitchen Sink School, they painted the grittier side of cityscapes, notably the sprawl of unfashionable areas of London. Their technique and approach, however, differ greatly from the Kitchen Sink School (their canvases are densely worked and expressionistic), but Kossoff's series of paintings on the Kilburn Underground station and the metropolitan district of Hackney in London, along with Auerbach's depictions of city building sites, nevertheless share themes with the work of the Kitchen Sink School.

The painters of the Kitchen Sink School, who were Britain's representatives at the Venice Biennale of 1956, enjoyed a brief vogue. By the end of the decade, the post-war mood had changed as a newly prosperous London began to swing.

#### Key Collections

Graves Art Gallery, Sheffield, England  
National Portrait Gallery, London  
Tate Gallery, London  
The Lowry, Salford Quays, Manchester, England

#### Key Books

E. Middleditch, *Edward Middleditch* (1987)  
L. S. Lowry, *L. S. Lowry* (Oxford, 1987)  
M. Leber and J. Sandling, *L. S. Lowry* (1994)  
L. Norbert, *Jack Smith* (2000)

## Neo-Dada

*Art, instead of being an object made by one person, is a process set in motion by a group of people. Art's socialized.*

JOHN CAGE, 1967

Never an organized movement, Neo-Dada was one of several labels (including New Realists, Factual artists, Polymaterialists and Common-Object artists) applied in the late 1950s and 1960s to a group of young experimental artists, many based in New York City, whose work attracted fierce controversy. At that time there existed a major tendency in art towards formal purity, as illustrated in the work of the \*Post-painterly Abstractionists. In deliberate opposition to this, the Neo-Dadaists set out to mix materials and media in a spirit of humour, wit and eccentricity. Neo-Dada is sometimes applied as a general term covering a number of new movements that came about during the 1950s and 1960s, such as \*Lettrism, \*Beat Art, \*Funk Art, \*Nouveau Réalisme and \*Situationist International.

For artists such as Robert Rauschenberg (b. 1925), Jasper Johns (b. 1930), Larry Rivers (1923–2002), John Chamberlain (b. 1927), Richard Stankiewicz (1922–83), Lee Bontecou (b. 1931), Jim Dine (b. 1935) and Claes Oldenburg (b. 1929), art was to be expansive and inclusive, appropriating non-art



**Rauschenberg in his Front Street studio, New York, 1958**

A student under John Cage at Black Mountain College in the early 1950s, Rauschenberg established himself as a protean, inventive figure, whose experiments with painting, objects, performance and sound opened the way for many of his contemporaries.





materials, embracing ordinary reality and celebrating popular culture. They rejected the alienation and individualism associated with the \*Abstract Expressionists in favour of a socializing art which laid emphasis on community and the environment. Collaboration was a feature of their work. The Neo-Dadaists worked on projects with poets, musicians and dancers, and engaged with other like-minded artists, such as the Nouveaux Réalistes. The result was a new aesthetic based on experimentation and cross-fertilization.

During this period there was a revival of interest in the \*Dada movement and in Marcel Duchamp's works, particularly in America. The Dada attitude of 'anything goes' was certainly embraced by the artists, who, like the original Dadaists, used unorthodox materials in protest against the traditions of high art. The collages of Pablo Picasso and of Kurt Schwitters, Duchamp's readymades and the efforts of the \*Surrealists to turn the 'marvellous' of everyday objects into a shared public language were all important sources of inspiration for them. The ideas of the new art were also in tune with new critical ideas. Jackson Pollock's work (see Abstract Expressionism) was reinterpreted by the artist Allan

Kaprow (see \*Performance Art) as pointing towards the world of everyday life, rather than towards pure abstraction.

Influential contemporaries included composer John Cage, inventor Buckminster Fuller and media theorist Marshall McLuhan. In an age of intense nationalism, McLuhan's concept of a 'global village' and Fuller's idea of 'Spaceship Earth', which presented the world as a single entity, seemed to many to provide a more hopeful way forward than that offered by the often fatalistic contemporary social critique and existential philosophy. Like much Neo-Dada work, Cage's mixed-media compositions and his collaborations with the dancer Merce Cunningham

Above: **Larry Rivers, *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, 1953** Rivers's target was well chosen. An outstanding example of nineteenth-century patriotism, Emanuel Leutze's 1851 painting of the same title had been familiar to generations of American schoolchildren by the time of Larry Rivers's political attack.

Opposite: **Jasper Johns, *Flag, Target with Plaster Casts*, 1955** Using 'things the mind already knows' (flags, targets, numbers) Johns created ambiguous and unsettling works, simultaneously abstract paintings and conventional signs. Ambiguity and socio-political engagement, both learned from Dada, were typical of the Neo-Dadaists.





promoted the use of accident and experiment, and celebrated the social environment.

Key Neo-Dada works include Rivers's *Washington Crossing the Delaware* (1953), Rauschenberg's *\*Combines* of 1954–64, Johns's *Map (Based on Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion Air Ocean World)*, 1967–71, as well as his flags, targets and numbers. Rivers's reworking of the well-known nineteenth-century history painting by Emanuel Leutze was greeted with scorn by the New York art world when first exhibited. With its Abstract Expressionist-like handling and all-over composition 'contaminated' by unfashionable history painting and figuration, Rivers was seen as irreverently taking on both past and present masters. In general, his works display a willingness to draw on widely different

sources, enabling comparisons with \*Postmodernist work.

Johns achieved instant fame with his first exhibition at the Leo Castelli Gallery in New York in 1958, when eighteen of the twenty works on show were sold by the time the exhibition closed. The real-life quality of his flags – a familiar object seen afresh – caused people to query its status: was it a flag or a painting? Likewise, Rauschenberg's innovations questioned and stretched the boundaries of art. Although creating very different works, Rauschenberg, Johns and Rivers are united by their transformation of Abstract Expressionist handling, their irreverence for tradition and their use of American iconography. The influence of these three artists on later art, such as \*Pop, \*Conceptual, \*Minimalist and Performance, is considerable.

The touchingly optimistic collaborative work by Larry Rivers and the Nouveau Réaliste Jean Tinguely, *Turning Friendship of America and France* (1961), is in many ways typical of the Neo-Dada project. Rotating like the earth, it presents the possibility and desirability of peaceful coexistence, and celebrates the use of commerce (symbolized by images of cigarette packages) in establishing cultural exchanges at all levels. Similarly, Johns's Fuller map provides a potent image of this new, interconnected art world and of the spirit of collaboration between art and technology.

For all their heterogeneity, the Neo-Dada artists have been deeply influential. Their visual vocabulary, techniques and, above all, their determination to be heard, were adopted by later artists in their protest against the Vietnam War, racism, sexism and government policies. The emphasis they laid on participation and performance was reflected in the activism that marked the politics and Performance Art of the late 1960s; their concept of belonging to a world community anticipated the sit-ins, anti-war protests, environmental protests, student protests and civil rights protests which followed later.

#### Key Collections

Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris  
Museum of Modern Art, New York  
Stedelijk Museum of Modern Art, Amsterdam,  
the Netherlands  
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

#### Key Books

L. Rivers with A. Weinstein, *What Did I Do?* (1992)  
K. Varmedoe, *Jasper Johns: A Retrospective* (exh. cat., New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1996)  
Robert Rauschenberg: *A Retrospective* (exh. cat., New York, Guggenheim Museum, 1997)  
A. J. Dempsey, *The Friendship of America and France*, Ph.D. (Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 1999)

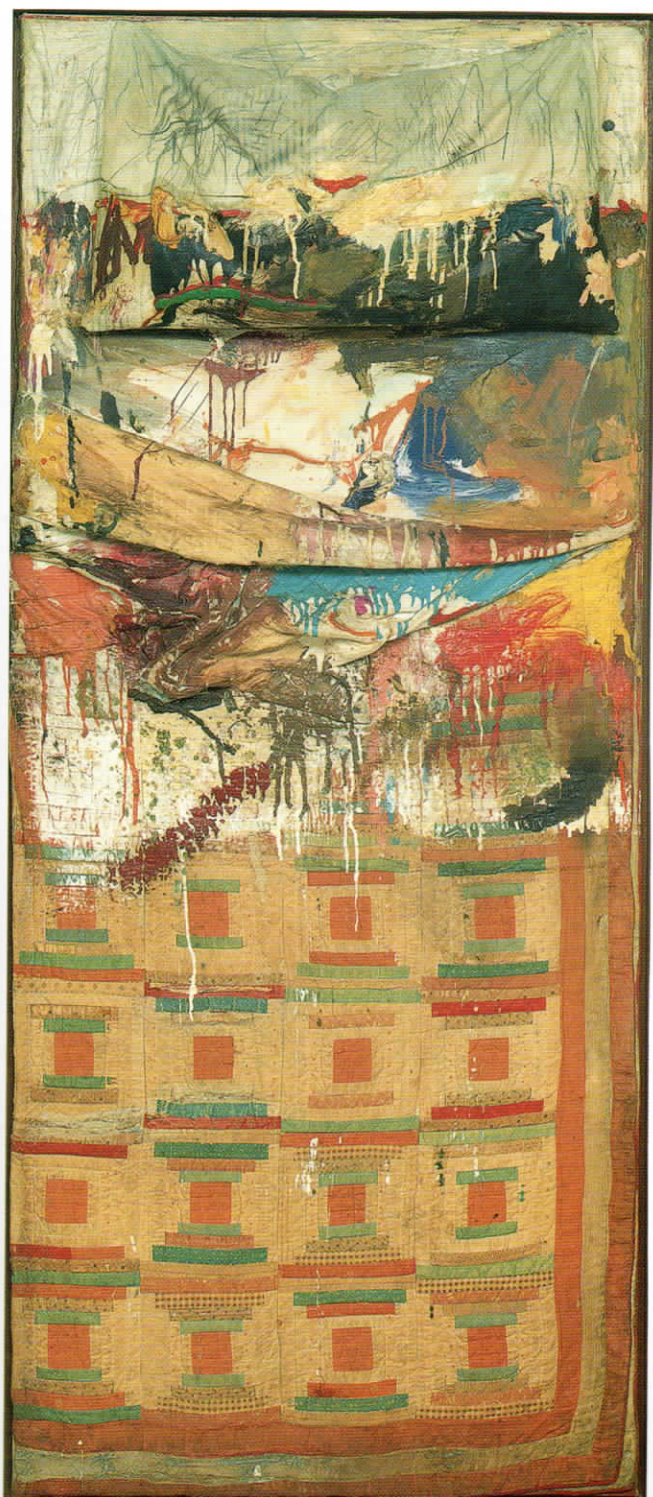
**Larry Rivers and Jean Tinguely, *Turning Friendship of America and France*, 1961** Part machine, part painting, the collaboration (a typical feature of Neo-Dadaist work) playfully acknowledges a community of artists across national borders, at a time when the preoccupation with borders was a disturbing feature of international politics.



# Combines

*Painting relates to both art and life. Neither can be made.  
(I try to act in the gap between the two.)*

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG, 1959



In the summer of 1954, the American artist Robert Rauschenberg (b. 1925) coined the term Combine to refer to his new works that had aspects of both painting and sculpture. Those intended to be mounted on a wall, such as *Bed* (1955), were termed Combine paintings, and free-standing works, such as *Monogram* (1955–59), 'Combines'. These two are perhaps Rauschenberg's most famous, or infamous, works for the reactions they provoked when exhibited.

In 1958, *Bed* was selected to be included in an exhibition of young American and Italian artists at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy. The officials of the Festival, however, refused to exhibit the combine painting and removed it to a storeroom. The following year, when *Monogram* was exhibited in New York, a wealthy collector offered to buy it for the Museum of Modern Art in New York, but the gallery refused the donation.

Rauschenberg describes the decision to paint on the quilt in *Bed* as one of necessity – he had run out of canvas. The combination of real objects, nail polish, toothpaste and \*Abstract Expressionist-like painting scandalized the New York art world at the time. While the art world debated the innovation of putting a bed on a wall, Rauschenberg thought it 'one of the friendliest pictures I've ever painted. My fear has always been that someone would want to crawl into it.' Others, however, found it distressing, feeling that it recalled the scene of a rape or murder. Regardless of reaction, the work does provide insight into Rauschenberg's inspirations – merging aspects of Kurt Schwitters's collages of everyday detritus and Marcel Duchamp's readymades (see \*Dada) and Abstract Expressionist brushwork into unique assemblages (see \*Assemblage).

In the late 1950s and 1960s Rauschenberg and other artists of his generation, such as Jasper Johns and Larry Rivers, were often described as \*Neo-Dada for their affinities with Dada and their Dadaist irreverence for tradition. These artists were searching for a way to assimilate and move beyond the powerful influence of the Abstract Expressionists. While retaining aspects of expressionist brushwork, they

## Robert Rauschenberg, *Bed*, 1955

Rauschenberg described his decision to paint on the quilt as one of necessity – he had run out of canvas and could not afford to buy any more at the time. The pillow, he said, was added for structural reasons – to balance the composition.



incorporated images from everyday life, from the media and common references, to create works which would have a profound influence on future art practices, such as \*Pop Art.

Although dismissed by many critics as a 'prankster', Rauschenberg's popularity grew rapidly with both artists and the public, and he became the subject of a number of museum retrospectives in the early 1960s, notably at the Jewish Museum, New York, in 1963 and at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, in 1964. In the same year, a London critic described him as 'the most important American artist since Jackson Pollock', and he was awarded the International Grand Prize for painting at the Venice Biennale. After 1964, Rauschenberg moved away from Combines to experiment with silkscreens, technology, dance and Performance. He is considered by many to be one of the most inventive and influential artists of the second half of the twentieth century.

#### Key Collections

Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden  
Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
Museum of Modern Art, New York  
Stedelijk Museum of Modern Art, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

#### Key Books

C. Tomkins, *Off the Wall: Robert Rauschenberg and the Art World of Our Time* (1980)  
M. L. Kotz, *Rauschenberg: Art and Life* (1990)  
*Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective* (exh. cat., Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1997)  
S. Hunter, *Robert Rauschenberg* (1999)

## New Brutalism

*Brutalism tries to face up to a mass-produced society, and drag a rough poetry out of the confused and powerful forces which are at work.*

ALISON AND PETER SMITHSON, 1957

New Brutalism was the name given in the 1950s to an architectural reform movement initiated by the British husband-and-wife team of architects, Alison (1928–93) and Peter (1923–2003) Smithson. The term appeared in print for the first time in an article in the December 1953 issue of *The Architectural Review*, and it was chosen to allude to Le Corbusier's use of rough concrete (*béton brut*) in buildings such as the Unité d'Habitation, Marseilles (1947–52), and to the raw expression of materials of Jean Dubuffet's \*Art Brut. The Smithsons adopted the term to describe their own work, in which they rejected the sleekness and sterility of late \*International Style modernism as well as the nostalgic gentility of British post-war architecture promoted by the Welfare State. Their aim was to provide powerful and clear industrial design for the housing and schools desperately needed in Britain after the war, by engaging more directly with the real needs of people living and working in them.

The Smithsons selectively reclaimed the values of modernist pioneers, such as Louis Sullivan's holistic vision of 'functionalism' (see \*Chicago School) and the social aspirations of Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (see International Style). But they also worked with an awareness of the emerging mass culture that was to inform \*Pop Art and design. New Brutalism was an attempt to make

functional, forceful buildings that were integrated into their surroundings and endowed with the seductive powerful clarity of modern industrial design and advertising.

The Smithsons' Hunstanton Secondary Modern School, Norfolk (1949–54), with its exposed materials and services and austere design is considered the first example of New Brutalism; in the USA the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven (1951–53) by Louis I. Kahn (1901–74) and Douglas Orr is considered one of the most important examples of the style. Both buildings express the ethic of New Brutalism – the 'honesty' of its use of industrial materials and its \*Existential ethos, a sort of anti-aesthetic. The Smithsons admired the work of Mies and his ruthless commitment to the expression of the structure of a building.

Le Corbusier was an even more influential figure for many architects, and in particular for those who came to prominence during the 1950s, such as William Howell (1922–74), the Smithsons, James Stirling (1926–92) and Denys Lasdun (1914–2001) in Britain; Aldo van Eyck (1918–99) and Jacob Bakema (1914–81) in the Netherlands; Kenzo Tange (b. 1913) in Japan; and Kahn and Paul Rudolph (1918–97) in the USA. Le Corbusier's expressionistic take on International Style functionalism, his attention to site, context and use of vernacular forms and building