



Art Movements Referenced :

Artists from France: Paintings and Prints from the Art Museum Collection

OVERVIEW

Source: www.wikipedia.org/

The following movements are referenced:

Art Nouveau	Les Nabis
The Barbizon School	Modernism
Cubism	Modern Art
Dadaism	Pointillism
Les Fauves	Surrealism
Impressionism	Symbolism

ART NOUVEAU

Art Nouveau is an international movement and style of art, architecture and applied art—especially the decorative arts—that peaked in popularity at the turn of the 20th century (1890–1905). The name ‘**Art nouveau**’ is French for ‘new art’. It is also known as Jugendstil, German for ‘youth style’, named after the magazine *Jugend*, which promoted it, and in Italy, *Stile Liberty* from the department store in London, Liberty & Co., which popularized the style. A reaction to academic art of the 19th century, it is characterized by organic, especially floral and other plant-inspired motifs, as well as highly-stylized, flowing curvilinear forms. **Art Nouveau** is an approach to design according to which artists should work on everything from architecture to furniture, making art part of everyday life.

The movement was strongly influenced by Czech artist Alphonse Mucha, when Mucha produced a lithographed poster, which appeared on 1 January 1895 in the streets of Paris as an advertisement for the play *Gismonda* by Victorien Sardou, starring

Sarah Bernhardt. It was an overnight sensation, and announced the new artistic style and its creator to the citizens of Paris. Initially called the *Style Mucha*, (*Mucha Style*), this soon became known as **Art Nouveau**.

Art Nouveau’s fifteen-year peak was most strongly felt throughout Europe—from Glasgow to Moscow to Madrid — but its influence was global. Hence, it is known in various guises with frequent localized tendencies. In France, Hector Guimard’s metro entrances shaped the landscape of Paris and Emile Gallé was at the center of the school of thought in Nancy. Victor Horta had a decisive impact on architecture in Belgium. Magazines like *Jugend* helped spread the style in Germany, especially as a graphic artform, while the Vienna Secessionists influenced art and architecture throughout Austria-Hungary. **Art Nouveau** was also a movement of distinct individuals such as Gustav Klimt, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Alphonse Mucha, René Lalique, Antoni Gaudí and Louis Comfort Tiffany, each of whom interpreted it in their own individual manner.

Although **Art Nouveau** fell out of favor with the arrival of 20th-century modernist styles, it is seen today as an important bridge between the historicism of Neoclassicism and **Modernism**. Furthermore, **Art Nouveau** monuments are now recognized by UNESCO on their World Heritage List as significant contributions to cultural heritage. The historic center of Riga, Latvia, with “the finest collection of **Art Nouveau** buildings in Europe”, was inscribed on the list in 1997 in part because of the “quality and the quantity of its **Art Nouveau**/Jugendstil architecture”.

and four Brussels town houses by Victor Horta were included in 2000 as “works of human creative genius” that are “outstanding examples of **Art Nouveau** architecture brilliantly illustrating the transition from the 19th to the 20th century in art, thought, and society.”

THE BARBIZON SCHOOL

The Barbizon School (circa 1830–1870) of painters is named after the village of Barbizon near Fontainebleau Forest, France, where the artists gathered.

The Barbizon painters were part of a movement towards realism in art which arose in the context of the dominant Romantic Movement of the time.

In 1824 the Salon de Paris exhibited works of John Constable. His rural scenes influenced some of the younger artists of the time, moving them to abandon formalism and to draw inspiration directly from nature. Natural scenes became the subjects of their paintings rather than mere backdrops to dramatic events.

During the Revolutions of 1848 artists gathered at Barbizon to follow Constable’s ideas, making nature the subject of their paintings.

One of them, Jean-François Millet, extended the idea from landscape to figures — peasant figures, scenes of peasant life, and work in the fields. In *The Gleaners* (1857), Millet portrays three peasant women working at the harvest. There is no drama and no story told, merely three peasant women in a field. Gleaners are poor women gathering what’s left after the rich owners of the field finished harvesting. The owners and their laborers are seen in the back of the painting. Millet here shifted the focus, the subject matter, from the rich and prominent to those at the bottom of the social ladders. Millet also didn’t paint their faces to emphasize their anonymity and marginalized position. Their bowed bodies are representative of their every day hard work.

The leaders of the **Barbizon School** were Jean-

Baptiste Camille Corot, Théodore Rousseau, Jean-François Millet and Charles-François Daubigny; other members included Jules Dupré, Constant Troyon, Charles Jacque, Narcisse Virgilio Diaz, Charles Olivier de Penne, Henri Harpignies, Gabriel Hippolyte LeBas (1812-1880), Albert Charpin, Félix Ziem, Anton Mauve, François-Louis Français and Alexandre DeFaux.

Both Rousseau (1867) and Millet (1875) died at Barbizon.

CUBISM

Cubism was a 20th century avant-garde art movement, pioneered by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, that revolutionized European painting and sculpture, and inspired related movements in music and literature. The first branch of **Cubism**, known as “Analytic **Cubism**”, was both radical and influential as a short but highly significant art movement between 1907 and 1911 in France. In its second phase, Synthetic **Cubism**, the movement spread and remained vital until around 1919, when the Surrealist movement gained popularity.

English art historian Douglas Cooper describes three phases of **Cubism** in his seminal book “The Cubist Epoch”. According to Cooper there was “Early **Cubism**”, (from 1906 to 1908) when the movement was initially developed in the studios of Picasso and Braque; the second phase being called “High **Cubism**”, (from 1909 to 1914) during which time Juan Gris emerged as an important exponent; and finally Cooper referred to “Late **Cubism**” (from 1914 to 1921) as the last phase of **Cubism** as a radical avant-garde movement.

In cubist artworks, objects are broken up, analyzed, and re-assembled in an abstracted form— instead of depicting objects from one viewpoint, the artist depicts the subject from a multitude of viewpoints to represent the subject in a greater context. Often the surfaces intersect at seemingly random angles, removing a coherent sense of depth.

The background and object planes interpenetrate one another to create the shallow ambiguous space, one of **Cubism's** distinct characteristics.

DADA

Dada or **Dadaism** is a cultural movement that began in Zürich, Switzerland, during World War I and peaked from 1916 to 1922. The movement primarily involved visual arts, literature—poetry, art manifestoes, art theory—theatre, and graphic design, and concentrated its anti-war politics through a rejection of the prevailing standards in art through anti-art cultural works.

Dada activities included public gatherings, demonstrations, and publication of art/literary journals; passionate coverage of art, politics, and culture were topics often discussed in a variety of media. The movement influenced later styles like the avant-garde and downtown music movements, and groups including **Surrealism**, Nouveau réalisme, pop art, Fluxus and punk rock.

Dada is the groundwork to abstract art and sound poetry, a starting point for performance art, a prelude to post**Modernism**, an influence on pop art, a celebration of antiart to be later embraced for anarcho-political uses in the 1960s and the movement that lay the foundation for **Surrealism**.

—Marc Lowenthal, translator's introduction to Francis Picabia's *I Am a Beautiful Monster: Poetry, Prose, And Provocation*

The French avant-garde kept abreast of **Dada** activities in Zürich with regular communications from Tristan Tzara (whose pseudonym means “sad in country,” a name chosen to protest the treatment of Jews in his native Romania), who exchanged letters, poems, and magazines with Guillaume Apollinaire, André Breton, Max Jacob, and other French writers, critics and artists.

Paris had arguably been the classical music capital of the world since the advent of musical **Impressionism** in the late 19th century. One of its

practitioners, Erik Satie, collaborated with Picasso and Cocteau in a mad, scandalous ballet called *Parade*. First performed by the Ballet Russes in 1917, it succeeded in creating a scandal but in a different way than Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps* had done almost 5 years earlier. This was a ballet that was clearly parodying itself, something traditional ballet patrons would obviously have serious issues with.

Dada in Paris surged in 1920 when many of the originators converged there. Inspired by Tzara, Paris **Dada** soon issued manifestos, organized demonstrations, staged performances and produced a number of journals (the final two editions of **Dada**, *Le Cannibale*, and *Littérature* featured **Dada** in several editions.)

The first introduction of **Dada** artwork to the Parisian public was at the Salon des Indépendants in 1921. Jean Crotti exhibited works associated with **Dada** including a work entitled, *Explicatif* bearing the word *Tabu*. In the same year Tzara staged his **Dadaist** play *The Gas Heart* to howls of derision from the audience. When it was re-staged in 1923 in a more professional production, the play provoked a theatre riot (initiated by André Breton) that heralded the split within the movement that was to produce **Surrealism**. Tzara's last attempt at a **Dadaist** drama was his “ironic tragedy” *Handkerchief of Clouds* in 1924.

LES FAUVES

Les Fauves (French for The Wild Beasts) were a short-lived and loose grouping of early 20th century **Modern Artists** whose works emphasized painterly qualities and strong colour over the representational or realistic values retained by **Impressionism**. While **Fauvism** as a style began around 1900 and continued beyond 1910, the movement as such lasted only three years, 1905–1907, and had three exhibitions. The leaders of the movement were Henri Matisse and André Derain.

Besides Matisse and Derain, other artists included Albert Marquet, Charles Camoin, Louis Valtat, the Belgian painter Henri Evenepoel, Maurice Marinot, Jean Puy, Maurice de Vlaminck, Alfred Maurer, Henri Manguin, Raoul Dufy, Othon Friesz, Georges Rouault, the Dutch painter Kees van Dongen, the Swiss painter Alice Bailly, and Georges Braque (subsequently Picasso's partner in **Cubism**).

The paintings of the Fauves were characterised by seemingly wild brush work and strident colours, while their subject matter had a high degree of simplification and abstraction. **Fauvism** can be classified as an extreme development of Van Gogh's Post-**Impressionism** fused with the **Pointillism** of Seurat and other Neo-Impressionist painters, in particular Paul Signac. Other key influences were Paul Cezanne and Paul Gauguin, whose employment of areas of saturated colour—notably in paintings from Tahiti—strongly influenced Derain's work at Collioure in 1905.

IMPRESSIONISM

Impressionism was a 19th-century art movement that began as a loose association of Paris-based artists whose independent exhibitions brought them to prominence in the 1870s and 1880s. The name of the movement is derived from the title of a Claude Monet work, *Impression, Sunrise* (*Impression, soleil levant*), which provoked the critic Louis Leroy to coin the term in a satiric review published in *Le Charivari*.

Characteristics of Impressionist paintings include visible brush strokes, open composition, emphasis on light in its changing qualities (often accentuating the effects of the passage of time), ordinary subject matter, the inclusion of movement as a crucial element of human perception and experience, and unusual visual angles. The emergence of **Impressionism** in the visual arts was soon followed by analogous movements in other media which became known as Impressionist music and

Impressionist literature.

Impressionism also describes art created in this style, but outside of the late 19th century time period.

Radicals in their time, early Impressionists broke the rules of academic painting. They began by giving colours, freely brushed, primacy over line, drawing inspiration from the work of painters such as Eugène Delacroix. They also took the act of painting out of the studio and into the modern world. Previously, still lifes and portraits as well as landscapes had usually been painted indoors. The Impressionists found that they could capture the momentary and transient effects of sunlight by painting en plein air. Painting realistic scenes of modern life, they emphasized vivid overall effects rather than details. They used short, “broken” brush strokes of pure and unmixed colour, not smoothly blended, as was customary, in order to achieve the effect of intense colour vibration.

Although the rise of **Impressionism** in France happened at a time when a number of other painters, including the Italian artists known as the *Macchiaioli*, and Winslow Homer in the United States, were also exploring plein-air painting, the Impressionists developed new techniques that were specific to the movement. Encompassing what its adherents argued was a different way of seeing, it was an art of immediacy and movement, of candid poses and compositions, of the play of light expressed in a bright and varied use of colour.

The public, at first hostile, gradually came to believe that the Impressionists had captured a fresh and original vision, even if it did not receive the approval of the art critics and establishment.

By re-creating the sensation in the eye that views the subject, rather than recreating the subject, and by creating a welter of techniques and forms, **Impressionism** became a precursor seminal to various movements in painting which would follow, including Neo-**Impressionism**, Post-**Impressionism**, **Fauvism**, and **Cubism**.

In an atmosphere of change as Emperor Napoleon III rebuilt Paris and waged war, the Académie des Beaux-Arts dominated the French art scene in the middle of the 19th century. The Académie was the upholder of traditional standards for French painting, both in content and style. Historical subjects, religious themes, and portraits were valued (landscape and still life were not), and the Académie preferred carefully finished images which mirrored reality when examined closely. Colour was somber and conservative, and the traces of brush strokes were suppressed, concealing the artist's personality, emotions, and working techniques.

The Académie held an annual, juried art show, the Salon de Paris, and artists whose work displayed in the show won prizes, garnered commissions, and enhanced their prestige. The standards of the juries reflected the values of the Académie, represented by the highly polished works of such artists as Jean-Léon Gérôme and Alexandre Cabanel. Some younger artists painted in a lighter and brighter manner than painters of the preceding generation, extending further the realism of Gustave Courbet and the **Barbizon School**. They were more interested in painting landscape and contemporary life than in recreating scenes from history. Each year, they submitted their art to the Salon, only to see the juries reject their best efforts in favour of trivial works by artists working in the approved style. A core group of young realists, Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Alfred Sisley, and Frédéric Bazille, who had studied under Charles Gleyre, became friends and often painted together. They soon were joined by Camille Pissarro, Paul Cézanne, and Armand Guillaumin.

In 1863, the jury rejected *The Luncheon on the Grass* (*Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*) by Édouard Manet primarily because it depicted a nude woman with two clothed men at a picnic. While nudes were

routinely accepted by the Salon when featured in historical and allegorical paintings, the jury condemned Manet for placing a realistic nude in a contemporary setting. The jury's sharply worded rejection of Manet's painting, as well as the unusually large number of rejected works that year, set off a firestorm among French artists. Manet was admired by Monet and his friends, and led the discussions at Café Guerbois where the group of artists frequently met.

After seeing the rejected works in 1863, Emperor Napoleon III decreed that the public be allowed to judge the work themselves, and the Salon des Refusés (Salon of the Refused) was organized. While many viewers came only to laugh, the Salon des Refusés drew attention to the existence of a new tendency in art and attracted more visitors than the regular Salon.

Artists' petitions requesting a new Salon des Refusés in 1867, and again in 1872, were denied. In the latter part of 1873, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, and Sisley organized the Société Anonyme Coopérative des Artistes Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs ("Cooperative and Anonymous Association of Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers") for the purpose of exhibiting their artworks independently. Members of the association, which soon included Cézanne, Berthe Morisot, and Edgar Degas, were expected to forswear participation in the Salon. The organizers invited a number of other progressive artists to join them in their inaugural exhibition, including the slightly older Eugène Boudin, whose example had first persuaded Monet to take up plein air painting years before. Another painter who greatly influenced Monet and his friends, Johan Jongkind, declined to participate, as did Manet. In total, thirty artists participated in their first exhibition, held in April 1874 at the studio of the photographer Nadar.

The critical response was mixed, with Monet and Cézanne bearing the harshest attacks.

Critic and humorist Louis Leroy wrote a scathing review in the *Le Charivari* newspaper in which, making wordplay with the title of Claude Monet's *Impression, Sunrise* (*Impression, soleil levant*), he gave the artists the name by which they would become known. Derisively titling his article *The Exhibition of the Impressionists*, Leroy declared that Monet's painting was at most, a sketch, and could hardly be termed a finished work.

He wrote, in the form of a dialog between viewers,

Impression — I was certain of it. I was just telling myself that, since I was impressed, there had to be some impression in it ... and what freedom, what ease of workmanship! Wallpaper in its embryonic state is more finished than that seascape.

The term "Impressionists" quickly gained favour with the public. It was also accepted by the artists themselves, even though they were a diverse group in style and temperament, unified primarily by their spirit of independence and rebellion. They exhibited together—albeit with shifting membership—eight times between 1874 and 1886.

Monet, Sisley, Morisot, and Pissarro may be considered the "purest" Impressionists, in their consistent pursuit of an art of spontaneity, sunlight, and colour. Degas rejected much of this, as he believed in the primacy of drawing over colour and belittled the practice of painting outdoors. Renoir turned against **Impressionism** for a time in the 1880s, and never entirely regained his commitment to its ideas. Édouard Manet, despite his role as a leader to the group, never abandoned his liberal use of black as a colour, and never participated in the Impressionist exhibitions. He continued to submit his works to the Salon, where his *Spanish Singer* had won a 2nd class medal in 1861, and he urged the others to do likewise, arguing that "the Salon is the real field of battle" where a reputation could be made.

Among the artists of the core group (minus Bazille, who had died in the Franco-Prussian War in 1870), defections occurred as Cézanne, followed

later by Renoir, Sisley, and Monet, abstained from the group exhibitions in order to submit their works to the Salon. Disagreements arose from issues such as Guillaumin's membership in the group, championed by Pissarro and Cézanne against opposition from Monet and Degas, who thought him unworthy. Degas invited Mary Cassatt to display her work in the 1879 exhibition, but he also caused dissention by insisting on the inclusion of Jean-François Raffaëlli, Ludovic Lepic, and other realists who did not represent Impressionist practices, leading Monet in 1880 to accuse the Impressionists of "opening doors to first-come daubers". The group divided over the invitation of Signac and Seurat to exhibit with them in 1886. Pissarro was the only artist to show at all eight Impressionist exhibitions.

The individual artists saw few financial rewards from the Impressionist exhibitions, but their art gradually won a degree of public acceptance. Their dealer, Durand-Ruel, played a major role in this as he kept their work before the public and arranged shows for them in London and New York. Although Sisley would die in poverty in 1899, Renoir had a great Salon success in 1879. Financial security came to Monet in the early 1880s and to Pissarro by the early 1890s. By this time the methods of Impressionist painting, in a diluted form, had become commonplace in Salon art.

IMPRESSIONIST TECHNIQUES INCLUDE:

- Short, thick strokes of paint are used to quickly capture the essence of the subject, rather than its details. The paint is often applied *impasto*.
- Colours are applied side-by-side with as little mixing as possible, creating a vibrant surface. The optical mixing of colours occurs in the eye of the viewer.
- Grays and dark tones are produced by mixing complementary colours.

In pure **Impressionism** the use of black paint is avoided.

- Wet paint is placed into wet paint without waiting for successive applications to dry, producing softer edges and an intermingling of colour.
- Painting in the evening to get *effets de soir* - the shadowy effects of the light in the evening or twilight.
- Impressionist paintings do not exploit the transparency of thin paint films (*glazes*) which earlier artists built up carefully to produce effects. The surface of an Impressionist painting is typically opaque.
- The play of natural light is emphasized. Close attention is paid to the reflection of colours from object to object.

In paintings made *en plein air* (outdoors), shadows are boldly painted with the blue of the sky as it is reflected onto surfaces, giving a sense of freshness and openness that was not captured in painting previously. (Blue shadows on snow inspired the technique.)

Painters throughout history had occasionally used these methods, but Impressionists were the first to use all of them together, and with such boldness. Earlier artists whose works display these techniques include Frans Hals, Diego Velázquez, Peter Paul Rubens, John Constable, and J. M. W. Turner.

French painters who prepared the way for **Impressionism** include the Romantic colourist Eugène Delacroix, the leader of the realists Gustave Courbet, and painters of the **Barbizon School** such as Théodore Rousseau. The Impressionists learned much from the work of Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot and Eugène Boudin, who painted from nature in a style that was close to **Impressionism**, and who befriended and advised the younger artists.

Impressionists took advantage of the mid-century introduction of premixed paints in lead tubes (resembling modern toothpaste tubes) which

allowed artists to work more spontaneously, both outdoors and indoors. Previously, painters made their own paints individually, by grinding and mixing dry pigment powders with linseed oil, which were then stored in animal bladders.

The rise of the impressionist movement can be seen in part as a reaction by artists to the newly established medium of photography. The taking of fixed or still images challenged painters by providing a new medium with which to capture reality. Initially photography's presence seemed to undermine the artist's depiction of nature and their ability to mirror reality. Both portrait and landscape paintings were deemed somewhat deficient and lacking in truth as photography "produced lifelike images much more efficiently and reliably".

In spite of this, photography actually inspired artists to pursue other means of artistic expression, and rather than competing with photography to emulate reality, artists focused "on the one thing they could inevitably do better than the photograph – by further developing into an art form its very subjectivity in the conception of the image, the very subjectivity that photography eliminated". The Impressionists sought to express their perceptions of nature, rather than create exacting reflections or mirror images of the world. This allowed artists to subjectively depict what they saw with their "tacit imperatives of taste and conscience". Photography encouraged painters to exploit aspects of the painting medium, like colour, which photography then lacked; "the Impressionists were the first to consciously offer a subjective alternative to the photograph".

Another major influence was Japanese art prints (Japonism), which had originally come into France as wrapping paper for imported goods. The art of these prints contributed significantly to the "snapshot" angles and unconventional compositions which would become characteristic of the movement.

LES NABIS

Les Nabis (pronounced nah bee) were a group of Post-Impressionist avant-garde artists who set the pace for fine arts and graphic arts in France in the 1890s. Initially a group of friends interested in contemporary art and literature, most of them studied at the private art school of Rodolphe Julian (Académie Julian) in Paris in the late 1880s. In 1890, they began to successfully participate in public exhibitions, while most of their artistic output remained in private hands or in the possession of the artists themselves. By 1896, the unity of the group had already begun to break: The *Hommage à Cézanne*, painted by Maurice Denis in 1900, recollects memories of a time already gone, before even the term Nabis had been revealed to the public. Meanwhile, most members of the group - Maurice Denis, Pierre Bonnard, Edouard Vuillard - could stand, artistically, on their own. Only Paul Sérusier had problems to overcome—though it was his *Talisman*, painted at the advice of Paul Gauguin, that had revealed to them the way to go.

Les Nabis artists worked in a variety of media, using oils on both canvas and cardboard, distemper on canvas and wall decoration, and also produced posters, prints, book illustration, textiles and furniture. Considered to be on the cutting edge of **Modern Art** during their early period, their subject matter was representational (though often symbolist in inspiration), but was design oriented along the lines of the Japanese prints they so admired, and **Art Nouveau**. Unlike those types however, the artists of this circle were highly influenced by the paintings of the impressionists, and thus while sharing the flatness, page layout and negative space of **Art Nouveau** and other decorative modes, much of Nabis art has a painterly, non-realistic look, with color palettes often reminding one of Cézanne and Gauguin. Bonnard's posters and lithographs are more firmly in the **Art Nouveau**, or Toulouse-Lautrec manner. After the turn of the

century, as **Modern Art** moved towards abstraction, expressionism, **Cubism**, etc, the Nabis were viewed as conservatives, and indeed were among the last group of artists to stick to the roots and artistic ambitions of the impressionists, pursuing these ends almost into the middle of the 20th century. In their later years, these painters also largely abandoned their earlier interests in decorative and applied arts.

MODERNISM

Modernism, in its broadest definition, is modern thought, character, or practice. More specifically, the term describes both a set of cultural tendencies and an array of associated cultural movements, originally arising from wide-scale and far-reaching changes to Western society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The term encompasses the activities and output of those who felt the “traditional” forms of art, architecture, literature, religious faith, social organization and daily life were becoming outdated in the new economic, social and political conditions of an emerging fully industrialized world.

Modernism rejected the lingering certainty of Enlightenment thinking, and also that of the existence of a compassionate, all-powerful Creator. This is not to say that all modernists or modernist movements rejected either religion or all aspects of Enlightenment thought, rather that **Modernism** can be viewed as a questioning of the axioms of the previous age.

A salient characteristic of **Modernism** is self-consciousness. This often led to experiments with form, and work that draws attention to the processes and materials used (and to the further tendency of abstraction). The poet Ezra Pound's paradigmatic injunction was to “Make it new!” However, the break from the past was not a clean break. Pound's phrase identified one modernist objective, even as T.S. Eliot emphasized the relation of the artist to tradition.

Eliot wrote:

“[W]e shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of [a poet’s] work, may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously.”

Literary scholar Peter Childs sums up the complexity:

“There were paradoxical if not opposed trends towards revolutionary and reactionary positions, fear of the new and delight at the disappearance of the old, nihilism and fanatical enthusiasm, creativity and despair.”

These oppositions are inherent to **Modernism**: it is in its broadest cultural sense the assessment of the past as different to the modern age, the recognition that the world was becoming more complex, and that the old “final authorities” (God, government, science, and reason) were subject to intense critical scrutiny.

Current interpretations of **Modernism** vary. Some divide 20th century reaction into **Modernism** and **postModernism**, whereas others see them as two aspects of the same movement.

Modern Art refers to artistic works produced during the period extending roughly from the 1860s to the 1970s, and denotes the style and philosophy of the art produced during that era. The term is usually associated with art in which the traditions of the past have been thrown aside in a spirit of experimentation. Modern Artists experimented with new ways of seeing and with fresh ideas about the nature of materials and functions of art. A tendency toward abstraction is characteristic of much **Modern Art**. More recent artistic production is often called Contemporary art or **PostModern Art**.

The notion of **Modern Art** is closely related to **Modernism**.

Naturalism in art refers to the depiction of realistic objects in a natural setting. The Realism movement of the 19th century advocated naturalism in reaction to the stylized and idealized depictions of subjects

in Romanticism, but many painters have adopted a similar approach over the centuries. One example of Naturalism is the artwork of American artist William Bliss Baker, whose landscape paintings are considered some of the best examples of the naturalist movement. Another example is the French Albert Charpin, from the **Barbizon School**, with his paintings of sheep in their natural settings. An important part of the naturalist movement was its Darwinian perspective of life and its view of the futility of man up against the forces of nature.

Naturalism began in the early Renaissance, and developed itself further throughout the Renaissance, such as with the Florentine School.

Naturalism is a type of art that pays attention to very accurate and precise details, and portrays things as they are.

POINTILLISM

Pointillism is a style of painting in which small distinct dots of colour create the impression of a wide selection of other colors and blending. Aside from color “mixing” phenomena, there is the simpler graphic phenomenon of depicted imagery emerging from disparate points. Historically, **Pointillism** has been a figurative mode of executing a painting, as opposed to an abstract modality of expression.

The technique relies on the perceptive ability of the eye and mind of the viewer to mix the color spots into a fuller range of tones and is related closely to Divisionism, a more technical variant of the method. It is a style with few serious practitioners and is notably seen in the works of Seurat, Signac and Cross. The term **Pointillism** was first coined by art critics in the late 1880s to ridicule the works of these artists and is now used without its earlier mocking connotation.

The practice of **Pointillism** is in sharp contrast to the more common methods of blending pigments on a palette or using the many commercially available premixed colors.

Pointillism is analogous to the four-color CMYK printing process used by some color printers and large presses, Cyan (blue), Magenta (red), Yellow and Key (black). Televisions and computer monitors use a pointillist technique to represent images but with Red, Green, and Blue (RGB) colors.

SURREALISM

Surrealism is a cultural movement that began in the early 1920s, and is best known for the visual artworks and writings of the group members.

Surrealist works feature the element of surprise, unexpected juxtapositions and non sequitur; however, many Surrealist artists and writers regard their work as an expression of the philosophical movement first and foremost, with the works being an artifact. Leader André Breton was explicit in his assertion that **Surrealism** was above all a revolutionary movement.

Surrealism developed out of the **Dada** activities of World War I and the most important center of the movement was Paris. From the 1920s on, the movement spread around the globe, eventually affecting the visual arts, literature, film, and music of many countries and languages, as well as political thought and practice, philosophy and social theory.

World War I scattered the writers and artists who had been based in Paris, and while away from Paris many involved themselves in the **Dada** movement, believing that excessive rational thought and bourgeois values had brought the terrifying conflict upon the world. The **Dadaists** protested with anti-rational anti-art gatherings, performances, writing and art works. After the war when they returned to Paris the **Dada** activities continued.

During the war **Surrealism's** soon-to-be leader André Breton, who had trained in medicine and psychiatry, served in a neurological hospital where he used the psychoanalytic methods of Sigmund Freud with soldiers who were shell-shocked. He also met the young writer Jacques Vaché and

felt that he was the spiritual son of writer and pataphysician Alfred Jarry, and he came to admire the young writer's anti-social attitude and disdain for established artistic tradition. Later Breton wrote, "In literature, I am successively taken with Rimbaud, with Jarry, with Apollinaire, with Nouveau, with Lautréamont, but it is Jacques Vaché to whom I owe the most."

Back in Paris, Breton joined in the **Dada** activities and also started the literary journal *Littérature* along with Louis Aragon and Philippe Soupault. They began experimenting with automatic writing—spontaneously writing without censoring their thoughts—and published the "automatic" writings, as well as accounts of dreams, in *Littérature*. Breton and Soupault delved deeper into automatism and wrote *The Magnetic Fields* (*Les Champs Magnétiques*) in 1919. They continued the automatic writing, gathering more artists and writers into the group, and coming to believe that automatism was a better tactic for societal change than the **Dada** attack on prevailing values.

In addition to Breton, Aragon and Soupault the original Surrealists included Paul Éluard, Benjamin Péret, René Crevel, Robert Desnos, Jacques Baron, Max Morise, Marcel Noll, Pierre Naville, Roger Vitrac, Simone Breton, Gala Éluard, Max Ernst, Salvador Dalí, Man Ray, Hans Arp, Georges Malkine, Michel Leiris, Georges Limbour, Antonin Artaud, Raymond Queneau, André Masson, Joan Miró, Marcel Duchamp, Jacques Prévert and Yves Tanguy.

As they developed their philosophy they felt that while **Dada** rejected categories and labels, **Surrealism** would advocate the idea that ordinary and depictive expressions are vital and important, but that the sense of their arrangement must be open to the full range of imagination according to the Hegelian Dialectic. They also looked to the Marxist dialectic and the work of such theorists as Walter Benjamin and Herbert Marcuse.

Freud's work with free association, dream analysis and the hidden unconscious was of the utmost importance to the Surrealists in developing methods to liberate imagination. However, they embraced idiosyncrasy, while rejecting the idea of an underlying madness or darkness of the mind. (Later the idiosyncratic Salvador Dalí explained it as: "There is only one difference between a madman and me. I am not mad.")

The group aimed to revolutionize human experience, including its personal, cultural, social, and political aspects, by freeing people from what they saw as false rationality, and restrictive customs and structures. Breton proclaimed, the true aim of **Surrealism** is "long live the social revolution, and it alone!" To this goal, at various times surrealists aligned with communism and anarchism.

In 1924 they declared their intents and philosophy with the issuance of the first Surrealist Manifesto. That same year they established the Bureau of Surrealist Research, and began publishing the journal *La Révolution surréaliste*.

SYMBOLISM

Symbolism was a late nineteenth-century art movement of French and Belgian origin in poetry and other arts. In literature, the movement had its roots in *Les Fleurs du mal* (The Flowers of Evil, 1857) by Charles Baudelaire. The works of Edgar Allan Poe, which Baudelaire greatly admired and translated into French, were a significant influence and the source of many stock tropes and images. The aesthetic was developed by Stéphane Mallarmé and Paul Verlaine during the 1860s and '70s. In the 1880s, the aesthetic was articulated through a series of manifestoes and attracted a generation of writers. The label "symbolist" itself comes from the critic Jean Moréas, who coined it in order to distinguish the symbolists from the related decadent movement in literature and art.

Distinct from, but related to, the movement

in literature, **Symbolism** in art represents an outgrowth of the darker, gothic side of Romanticism; but where Romanticism was impetuous and rebellious, symbolist art was static and hieratic.

In painting, **Symbolism** was a continuation of some mystical tendencies in the Romantic tradition, which included such artists as Caspar David Friedrich, Fernand Khnopff and John Henry Fuseli and it was even more closely aligned with the self-consciously dark and private decadent movement.

There were several rather dissimilar groups of symbolist painters and visual artists, which included Gustave Moreau, Gustav Klimt, Mikalojus Konstantinas Èiurlionis, Odilon Redon, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Henri Fantin-Latour, Edvard Munch, Félicien Rops, and Jan Toorop. **Symbolism** in painting had an even larger geographical reach than **Symbolism** in poetry, reaching Mikhail Vrubel, Nicholas Roerich, Victor Borisov-Musatov, Martiros Saryan, Mikhail Nesterov, Leon Bakst in Russia, as well as Frida Kahlo in Mexico, Elihu Vedder, Remedios Varo, Morris Graves, David Chetlahe Paladin, and Elle Nicolai in the United States. Auguste Rodin is sometimes considered a symbolist in sculpture.

The symbolist painters mined mythology and dream imagery for a visual language of the soul, seeking evocative paintings that brought to mind a static world of silence. The symbols used in **Symbolism** are not the familiar emblems of mainstream iconography but intensely personal, private, obscure and ambiguous references. More a philosophy than an actual style of art, **Symbolism** in painting influenced the contemporary **Art Nouveau** movement and **Les Nabis**. In their exploration of dreamlike subjects, symbolist painters are found across centuries and cultures, as they are still today; Bernard Delvaille has described René Magritte's **Surrealism** as "**Symbolism plus Freud**".