

# Glossary

## **Abstract Art**

Style that does not imitate real life, but consists of forms, shape, and colour, independent of subject matter.

## **Abstract Expressionism**

Post World War II American art movement characterised by a desire for freedom of expression and the communication of strong emotions through the sensual quality of paint. Prominent artists include Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Franz Kline.

## **Action Painting**

Technique in which paint is applied with gestural movements, often by pouring or splashing. Its chief exponent was American painter Jackson Pollock.

## **Avant-garde**

Term used to describe any new, innovative, and radically different artistic approach.

## **Baroque**

Style of European architecture, painting, and sculpture, from 1600 to 1750, that peaked around 1630 to 1680 in Rome, and is typically dynamic and theatrical. Its chief exponents were Caravaggio and Rubens.

## **Bauhaus**

German school of art, design, and architecture founded in 1919 by Walter Gropius and closed by the Nazis in 1933. Artists such as Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee worked there, and its trademark streamlined designs became influential worldwide.

## **Chiaroscuro**

Italian for 'light-dark.' The dramatic effect created by balancing or strongly contrasting light and shade in a painting.

## **Classicism**

Term describing the use of the rules or styles of classical antiquity. Renaissance art incorporated many classical elements, and other eras, such as the eighteenth century, have used ancient Greece and Rome as inspiration. The term can also be used to mean formal and restrained.

## **Collage**

Style of picture-making in which materials (typically newspapers, magazines, photographs, etc.) are pasted together on a flat surface. The technique first gained prominence with the rise of Cubism in the early twentieth century, particularly in the work of Picasso and Braque.

## **Cubism**

Highly influential and revolutionary European art style initiated by Spanish artist Pablo Picasso and French artist Georges Braque, developed between 1907 and 1914. Cubists abandoned the idea of a fixed viewpoint, resulting in the object portrayed appearing fragmented. It gave rise to a succession of other movements, including Constructivism, Futurism and Vorticism.

## **Dada**

Art movement started in 1916 in Switzerland by writer Hugo Ball as a reaction to the horror of World War I. It aimed to overturn past traditional values in art, and was notable for its introduction of 'readymade' objects as art, and its rejection of the notion of craftsmanship. Core artists included Duchamp, Hans Richter, Picabia, Arp, and Schwitters.

## **Expressionism**

Term used to describe a twentieth century style that distorts colour, space, scale and form for emotional effect and is notable for its intense subject

matter. Adopted particularly in Germany by artists such as Kandinsky, Nolde, Beckmann and Macke.

## **Fresco**

A painting that is applied to wet plaster – as distinct from a mural, which is painted onto a dry surface.

## **Gothic**

European style of art and architecture from the 1300s to the 1600s. Work produced during the period is characterized by an elegant, dark, sombre style, and by a greater naturalism than the earlier Romanesque period.

## **Graffiti art**

Style inspired by spray-painted graffiti – particularly that which became prevalent in the 1980s in New York. Its most famous practitioners include Basquiat and Banksy.

## **Hi-hat**

Pair of facing horizontal cymbals, pedal-operated by the left foot and played closed, half-closed, or open, with a drum stick (right hand).

## **Impressionism**

Revolutionary approach to painting landscape and scenes of everyday life pioneered in France by Monet and others from the early 1860s, and which was later adopted internationally. Often created outdoors (*en plein air*) and notable for the use of light and colour as well as loose brushwork. The first group exhibition held in 1874 was dismissed by critics, particularly Monet's painting, 'Impression, Sunrise', which gave the movement its name. Chief artists include Pissarro, Renoir, Degas and Manet.

## **Jew's harp**

Small iron frame with metal vibrating strip, played with one end in the mouth while twanging the vibrating strip and shaping the mouth to change the harmonics.

## **Loop, tape-loop**

A tape edited back onto itself in a circle and played endlessly, creating a looping signal.

## **Madchester**

A term given to the late 1980s / early 1990s Manchester music scene, in which The Stone Roses were unhappily categorised.

## **Minimalism**

Style of abstract art – characterized by a spare, uncluttered approach and deliberate lack of emotive expression or conventional composition – that arose in the mid-twentieth century and flourished mainly until the 1970s. Practitioners include Yves Klein, Lucio Fontana, Ellsworth Kelly and Kenneth Noland.

## **Modernism**

A broad term used to describe Western artistic, literary, architectural, musical and political movements in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Applied to that which is typified by constant innovation, formal experimentation and rejection of the old, and works in which the adoption of the new is seen as being more appropriate to the modern age.

## **Naturalism**

A term used to describe art in which the artist attempts to portray objects and people as observed rather than in a conceptual or contrived manner.

## **Neo-Classicism**

Prominent late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century movement in European art and architecture, motivated by the impulse to revive the style of ancient Greek and Roman art and architecture. In modern art, the term has

also been applied to a similar revival of interest in classical style during the 1920s and 30s.

## **Pop art**

Term coined by British critic Lawrence Alloway for an Anglo-American art movement that lasted from the 1950s to the 1970s. It is notable for its use of imagery taken from popular cultural forms such as advertising, comics and mass-produced packaging. Practitioners include American artists Warhol, Lichtenstein and Johns, and British artists Hockney and Blake.

## **Post-Impressionism**

Term used to describe various works of art and artistic movements influenced by, or a reaction against, Impressionism. Coined by British art critic and painter Roger Fry, who organised a Post-Impressionists show in London in 1910. Painters include Cezanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh.

## **Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood**

British society of artists founded in London in 1848 that championed the work of artists active prior to Renaissance master Raphael. Members included William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Their work is characterised by its realistic style, attention to detail, and engagement with social problems and religious and literary themes.

## **Realism**

Mid-nineteenth century art movement characterized by subject matter depicting peasant and working-class life, as exemplified by the work of French artist, Gustave Courbet. Also a term for a style of painting that appears photographic in its representational accuracy, irrespective of subject matter.

## **Regionalism**

American art movement of the 1930s and 1940s that sought to establish an independent American art, and typically depicted scenes from the American Midwest.

## **Renaissance**

French for 'rebirth'. Used to describe the revival of art in Italy from 1300 under the influence of the rediscovery of classical art and culture. The Renaissance reached its peak – the High Renaissance – from 1500 to 1530 with the work of Michelangelo, Leonardo and Raphael.

## **Romanticism**

Artistic movement of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Broadly characterized by an emphasis on the experience of the individual; instinct over rationality.

## **Situationism**

Political and artistic ideas advocated by a radical group formed in 1957 and influenced by Marxism and the early European artistic avant-garde.

## **Social Realism**

Art of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that protested against adverse social conditions and the hardships of everyday life, employing a broadly representational technique.

## **Surrealism**

Movement in art and literature launched in Paris in 1924 by French poet André Breton, with the publication of his 'Manifesto of Surrealism.' The movement was characterised by a fascination with the bizarre, the illogical, and the dreamlike, and, like Dada – an obvious precursor – sought to shock the viewer. Integral artists include Dalí, Ernst, Magritte and Miró. Its trademark emphasis on chance, and gestures informed by impulse rather than conscious thought, was highly influential for subsequent artistic movements, such as Abstract Expressionism.

## **Symbolism**

Term first used in 1886 by French critic Jean Moréas to describe the poetry of Stéphane Mallarmé, and Paul Verlaine. Applied to art, it describes the use of

mythological, religious and literary subject matter, and art that features emotional and psychological content. Predominant artists include Redon and Gauguin.

## **YBA**

Abbreviation of Young British Artists. Used to describe a group of avant-garde British artists, including Davenport, Whiteread, Lucas, and Hirst, prominent in the 1990s.