

Survey of Western Art 2: Renaissance to Postmodern

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This curriculum guide consists of a thorough overview of later western art (approximately 1300 through 2000 CE, completing the “[Survey of Western Art 1: Prehistoric to Gothic](#)”), presenting the cultural heritage of Europe and the New World with an emphasis on seminal works, including architecture, paintings and sculptures, manuscripts, prints, drawings and decorative arts, in addition to photography and installations. Students will hone visual and descriptive skills as they enhance their recognition of schools and styles, and, conversely, their awareness of breaks within the western tradition. Readings will be selected from survey texts as well as scholarly articles.



Joseph Beuys, Green Violin and Telephone S—R (Sender—Receiver), 1974. Image and original data provided by Yale University. ©2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

Section 1: Italian Renaissance

The dawn of the Italian Renaissance breaks in early fifteenth-century Florence with the works of Masaccio, Ghiberti, Donatello, and Fra Angelico, alongside the architecture of Brunelleschi. Further innovators include Piero and Mantegna painting in other courts and capitals, while the movement progresses with Botticelli and Ghirlandaio in Florence and Bellini in Venice.

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Section 2: Northern Renaissance

The complexity of the Northern Renaissance is presented in all its glorious detail beginning with the Limbourg illuminations and the resplendent oils of van Eyck, Rogier, van der Goes, and Memling in conjunction with sculpture, textiles – the Unicorn Tapestry – and architecture. German (Schongauer and Pacher) and French (Fouquet) masters are also included alongside Juan de Flandes, the Flemish artist who worked at the court of Isabel of Castile and León.

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Section 3: 16th Century, Italy

The Italian High Renaissance centers on the brilliant triumvirate of Leonardo, Raphael, and Michelangelo in Rome (and Florence), alongside the architectural achievements of Bramante and Romano. In Venice, the period is represented by Giorgione, Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto, and Palladio, and in Parma, Correggio completes the canon. The century culminates with

the innovations of Mannerism seen in the arresting paintings of Pontormo, Parmigianino, and Bronzino, and the dynamic sculptures of Cellini and Giambologna.

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Section 4: 16th Century, Northern

The brilliant and diverse Dürer and his countrymen Grünewald and Cranach lead the High Renaissance in Germany, while Bosch and the Bruegel Dynasty proffer a Flemish vision – crystal clear yet increasingly subverted. In France the decorous portraiture of Clouet belies the fantasy of the School of Fontainebleau. The Mannerists dominate the end of the century, notably Goltzius and the sculptor de Vries in the Netherlands and the inimitable El Greco in Spain. Prints, drawings, and architectural views complement this selection of iconic altarpieces, panel paintings, and canvases.

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Section 5: 17th Century, Europe

The splendid profusion of Baroque Europe is illustrated in this selection, which ranges from the inception of the period in Italy, and follows it through Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, and Great Britain. The Rome of Caravaggio, the Carracci, Bernini, and Borromini is examined, and the bold and striking Spanish are epitomized by Velazquez. In the north, Rubens, and van Dyck dominate the Flemish scene, while the Dutch Caravaggist Terbrugghen brings tenebrism to the Netherlands. Their golden age dawns with Rembrandt and Vermeer, while it is Versailles and the painters Le Brun, Poussin, and Lorrain that highlight France during the era.

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Section 6: 18th Century, Europe

The diversity of the arts during the Age of Reason is underscored by the early flourish of the Rococo juxtaposed with the later dawning of the academy and Neoclassicism. The Rococo is epitomized by Tiepolo, Watteau, Boucher, and Fragonard, while the English painters – Reynolds and Gainsborough through Wright and Blake – ran the gamut of styles. In France, the period crests with the Pantheon, Chardin, Greuze, and Vigée-Lebrun, and culminates with David and Houdon.

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Section 7: 19th Century, Europe

From its neoclassical beginnings with Ingres, the century offers up some of the most striking developments in the western tradition in art and architecture: from the birth of photography under Daguerre and others; to the Realism of Courbet, Millet, Daumier, and the sculptor Rodin; the Impressionism of Monet, Renoir, Degas, and Manet, and the Post-Impressionism of van Gogh and Gauguin; through to the Pre-Raphaelites in England, and the

dawning of the twentieth century with Munch, Klimt, and Art Nouveau.

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Section 8: 18th-19th Century, the New World

The narrative of colonial art in the Americas begins with Spanish-influenced Mexican painters like Cabrera, and includes the *casta* tradition. Examples of Peruvian painting are also presented, notably from Cuzco and Lima. American art is traced from the British-infused beginnings of Smibert and Copley, through Bierstadt and the masters of the Hudson Valley School, to the distinctive works of Ryder, Homer, and Eakins. The masterworks of Whistler and Sargent complete the selection that also includes sculpture and architectural views.

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Section 9: Modernism in the West

The transatlantic scope of Modernism and its many fractious movements is presented in this group, which encompasses two global wars that engaged and ensnared artists. Beginning with Matisse and the Fauves, the selection includes Kandinsky, the Cubists and the Futurists, the Russian Suprematist Malevich, the Dadaists, and the sculptor Brancusi, alongside the architecture of the Bauhaus and Le Corbusier. Stateside, Modernism declares itself in the paintings of Sloan, Dove, Hartley, and O'Keeffe, and the designs of Wright, and matures in the late work of Jacob Lawrence and the transplanted Mondrian.

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Section 10: The International Scene, 1945-2000

The post-war surge towards abstraction begins with the haunting portraits of Bacon, progresses in the work of de Kooning and Pollock, and culminates with Albers and Rothko. The architecture of Mies, Saarinen, and Johnson promotes the curtain wall, the arc and the cube. In America, Rauschenberg, Johns, Warhol, Lichtenstein, and Oldenburg push toward Pop Art. Installation and performance art are represented by Kounellis, Merz, Nauman, and others, and the power of feminism is conveyed in the works of Chicago, Mendieta, and Smith. A return to painting is illustrated by the work of Kiefer, Freud, and Richter, while contemporary architectural developments are seen in the designs of Gehry, Hadid, and the burgeoning cities of the UAE.

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