

AN AMERICAN IMAGE

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Welcome to the Hunter Museum of American Art. This guide was created for groups like yours to help you navigate your way through the galleries. We encourage you to spend time visiting old favorites and finding new ones.

There is no one “right” path to take through the Hunter. You can choose to go chronologically, visiting the mansion first and following the order in this guide, or you can just explore in any order you’d like.

We’ve designed the galleries to make you, as the visitor, central to the experience. The labels often both give information and ask intriguing questions, which you can then answer in nearby journals. Guide by cell prompts and staff favorites lend a voice to the story, as do the videos and books in our reading rooms. We hope you enjoy your visit to the Hunter.



This tour will help you to do a walk through American history by looking at the images and objects created by Americans and of Americans.

Often, we can learn as much from what is in a painting as by what is left out. We can learn about individuals, about national ideals, about politics and about how people hoped to be remembered in the future.

The art created is a living document that helps us to gain further insight into our nation's history.



HunterMUSEUM
of American Art

Hunter Museum Mansion

Early American Art

Galleries 1 and 2

As a young country, the United States realized it had a great deal to develop and to prove to other nations. In addition to a constitution, a government system and other standards by which the country would operate for centuries to come, the nation also sought to create symbols and images that could express who we were and what we hoped to become.

There are examples of some of the written documents, as well as the popular images inspired by patriotism, in the learning nook, adjacent to the galleries.

George Washing-

ton's likeness was one of the most replicated images of early America. As you can see in this gallery and the adjacent learning nook, Washington was replicated on every-

thing from paintings to dinnerware and ultimately on our \$1 bill (notably based on a famous portrait done by Gilbert Stuart).

Rembrandt Peale was part of an artist family and his father, the artist Charles Willson Peale, was also known for his paintings of George Washington. Washington sat for several artists during his life and then many copied or imagined their own portraits of him after his death.

In Washington, the nation found not only a first president but also a figure who could serve as a hero and a symbol for other nations to see. We can find this daring in the noble gaze and surrounding golden light Peale has given the president in this portrait.

Military strength was also emblematic of our patriotism, as is seen in *The "Constitution" in Boston Harbor*. The



Portrait of George Washington
Rembrandt Peale (1778-1860)
Undated
Oil on Canvas
Gift in Loving Memory and Honor of S.K. "Skeeter" Johnston, III and partial Museum Purchase



U.S.S. Constitution, also known as “Old Ironsides,” fought during the War of 1812. When **Fitz Henry Lane** created this painting of Old Ironsides at Boston Harbor, the battleship had already retired from active service. But many nineteenth-century Americans still saw this famous ship as a symbol of American strength.



The “Constitution” in Boston Harbor
Fitz Henry Lane (1804-1865)
c. 1848-1849
Oil on Canvas
Mounted on Panel
Museum purchase

Americans today continue this tradition and celebrate our nation’s might with displays of our military symbols. For instance, photographer Joe Rosenthal’s iconic image of the raising of the American flag at Iwo Jima during the Second World War has been reproduced in sculptural form, on stamps, and is frequently re-printed in the press.

Portraits of less famous Americans also provide a window into the American self-view of the day. Some portrait painters, like **Thomas Sully**, painted primarily the very wealthy. He portrays the prosperity of the Young family by showing Martha Young’s rich fur wrap and her smooth skin, which exhibits no evidence of manual labor, in a portrait that hangs above the Hunter’s fireplace.

Other artists in this gallery, like **Ammi Phillips**, catered to a different clientele. Compare his portrait of an unknown woman to Sully’s Martha Young. This woman chose to wear a dark, sober costume and to hold a hymn book to show her religious devotion, rather than her wealth and privilege. Her starched, lace-trimmed cap is her one note of vanity.

Samuel F. B. Morse was born in Charlestown, Massachusetts in 1791. After attending Phillips Academy as a child, he started attending college at 14. He also became interested in art and became a pupil of Washington Allston, a well known American painter.

He aspired to create large paintings that portrayed the strength and grandeur of American democracy. In such paintings, Morse carefully created realistic portraits of famous politicians. Sadly, although people knew the politicians’ reputations, they did not recognize their faces, so these paintings never gained popular or financial backing. Instead, he made his living by doing portraits like the one of Mrs. George Watson.

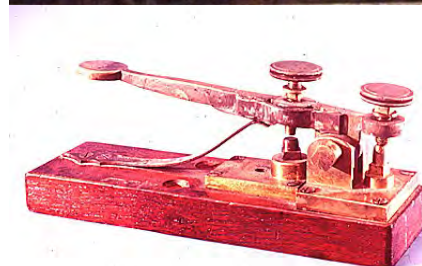
Discouraged by his lack of success with his large “history” paintings, in 1837, Morse turned to another passion -- science. In 1844 he unveiled his greatest invention: the telegraph, an instrument that proved crucial to the expansion of America.



Portrait of the Artist



Mrs. George Watson
Samuel F.B. Morse (1791-1872)
C. 1825
Oil on Canvas
Museum Purchase



Morse’s invention, the electric telegraph

Scenes of Everyday Life

Gallery 3

The years surrounding President Andrew Jackson's time in office (1829-1837) have been referred to as the "Era of the Common Man." During this period, for instance, all white males, regardless of property ownership, were granted voting rights. Genre painting, or scenes of daily life of regular people, not just the wealthy, coincided in popularity with the Jacksonian era's social and economic reforms.



Hunters, Old and New
Lawrence Carmichael Earle (1845-1921)
1878
Oil on Canvas
Gift of Scott L. Probasco

While genre painting tended to decrease in popularity after the Civil War, Lawrence Carmichael Earle's painting, *Hunters, Old and New*, continues to exhibit the subject and values embedded in this type of painting. Here the artist depicts a humorous tale contrasting an old fashioned sportsman, located on the right, with his well equipped, dapper counterpart. Although firearms developed after the Civil War (such as the gun in the left man's hand) provided safer and more reliable technology, this painting still celebrates older ways of life—and older values—of an earlier era; it is the hunter on the right with the bounty of birds. Old fashioned items, then as now, reassure us that traditional values continue in our lives.

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Women in the Nineteenth Century

Depicting women could equally express traditional values in the nineteenth century. Randolph Rogers's sculpture, *Ruth Gleaning*, depicts the Old Testament heroine picking up wheat from a harvested field to feed herself and her mother-in-law, Naomi. In the story, Naomi, upon the death of her son, urges Ruth to leave her and return to her home country. Ruth replies:

"For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God."



Ruth Gleaning
Randolph Rogers (1825-1892)
1851
White Marble
Museum Purchase

In the United States at this time, women were expected to be virtuous, modest, and connected to the home. The sculpture's reference to Ruth's loyalty and the theme of feeding one's family demonstrates these values. Although nudity was often taboo for Americans in the nineteenth century, the statue's associations with fertility through the exposed breast, the Biblical subject matter, and the stylistic references to classic Greek and Roman statuary seals the work off from appearing too erotic.

While women lacked legal rights in the "Era of the Common Man," the remarkable career of Lilly Martin Spencer shows how women could also achieve success as producers, rather than only subjects, of art. Spencer supported her family through her painting, and her husband, Benjamin, took on the role of helping his wife's professional endeavors.



The Young Husband: First Marketing
Lilly Martin Spencer (1822-1902)
Circa 1854
Oil on canvas
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Scott L. Probasco, Jr.

The Young Husband: First Marketing, which may be modeled on Benjamin, shows a man who is clearly inept at carrying goods home from the market. While men in Cincinnati, where Spencer lived, frequently did the marketing, the novice husband's ineptitude counters his masculinity, as reflected in the rear figure's jeering expression. This painting offers a humorous view of marriage in mid-nineteenth century America.

New Colonists to America

The nineteenth century witnessed a great influx of immigrants seeking opportunities in the United States. Initially from northwest Europe, and later from the eastern and southern parts of the continent, individuals and families from abroad helped to contribute to the robust growth of American cities.

Charles Blauvelt created many paintings of European immigrants coming to America's shores. Between 1840 and 1860, when he created *The Immigrants*, 4 million people came into the United States from the portal of New York City, the artist's home. Immigrants and their immediate descendants accounted for a large portion of America's phenomenal population increase from 17 million to 31 million people in this period.

Here we see a young mother and her children sitting at a dock on trunks that hold their meager possessions. Many immigrants from Europe were fleeing food shortages and political unrest in the middle of the century. Bathed with dramatic lighting and holding an infant to her chest, Blauvelt's sympathetic subject is reminiscent of the Madonna and Child theme in religious art.



The Immigrants
Charles Blauvelt (1824-1900)
Circa 1850
Oil on Canvas
Museum Purchase

Landscape Painting in America

Gallery 4 & 6

In the early nineteenth century, artists, poets and politicians saw America's vast land as an embodiment of great potential. Landscape painting provided a lush, pure wilderness artists could imbue with symbolism regarding the future of the country. Religious artists and viewers also personally found reference to the spiritual in these paintings. As the nineteenth century marched on and the United States became more industrialized, many artists painted the land as untouched as a reminder to protect the country's natural resources and vistas.

Although a native of England, **Thomas Cole** was seen as the "father" of American landscape painting, as he truly popularized the trend towards elevating the land as an important painting subject. He took inspiration from the Hudson River Valley and the surrounding Catskill Mountains in New York. Many New York City and more broadly New England-based artists working after him, including Asher B. Durand, Albert Bierstadt, and **Sanford Robinson Gifford** represented in this gallery, came to be known as the "Hudson River School."



Cabin in the Woods
Thomas Cole (1801-1848)
Circa 1848
Oil on Canvas
Museum Purchase



A Home in the Wilderness
Sanford Robinson Gifford (1823-1880)
c. 1867
Oil on Canvas
Museum Purchase

Gifford was particularly skilled in capturing plays of light on landscape scenes. The golden light is very striking in this painting, another reference to the heavens perhaps and also to the natural beauty of the area.

Here, we see a small cabin, dwarfed by the mountains that surround it. Gifford could be showing the entrepreneurial spirit in America of settlers finding new land and building homesteads.

You'll notice, however, that the land is relatively undisturbed and kept lush with trees. This could have been done both to show the beauty of the land and to encourage settlers to leave the area untouched, as much as possible, while building new homes.

Westward Expansion

In addition to capturing the beauty of virgin land in the East, landscape artists also chronicled the opening of the west in the early nineteenth century. The mantra “Go West” echoed throughout the land as waves of explorers and settlers moved across the country. Many believed that as Americans it was their right and duty to settle the land, often coming into conflict with Native Americans, who had been living on the land for centuries.

James Earle Fraser’s sculpture symbolizes the profound effect of the Euro-American settlement of the United States on its native peoples. For ten years of his childhood, from ages four to fourteen, Fraser lived in the Dakota Territory. His father, a civil engineer and builder for the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad, worked with crews extending the train lines westward into the Sioux prairielands. As Fraser later recalled in 1924:

“I was oppressed with sadness, the tragedy of it all. The Sioux around us had ceased to go upon the warpath, and were being pushed farther and farther back. They were not permitted to go off their own reservations, even to hunt; and remember, their fathers and their fathers' fathers had hunted all over those broad plains, and considered them their own. Occasionally they would break loose and chase some small game across somebody's homestead, and then what a furor there was! The Indians were loose again! They would be herded back into their corrals like so much cattle, and really treated very little better.”

One senses the Euro-American settlement and the policies of the U.S. Government slowly pushing the Native American subject (for whose likeness Seneca chief John Big Tree posed) to the end of the continent.



End of the Trail
James Earle Fraser
(1876-1953)
1915 (cast 1965)
Bronze
Museum purchase
chase

After the Civil War

Gallery 5

Rosy Morning
George Inness
(1825-1894)
1894
Oil on Canvas
Gift of the Joseph
H. Davenport, Jr.
family in memory of
Laura Voigt and
Joseph Howard
Davenport



The debates regarding the extension of slavery into western territories in part brought on the Civil War, providing a poignant connection between the previous gallery of landscapes and this gallery.

In the wake of the war, Northerners and Southerners alike began to search their souls to cope with the enormous loss of life. The bold landscape and the humorous family scene no longer seemed

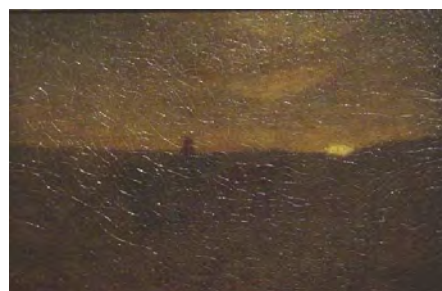
to represent the country. Instead, more contemplative scenes grew in popularity. Some Americans looked for comfort in music, literature, or the spiritualist movements of the day.

George Inness was one such artist who joined a New Jersey artist colony and began to follow the spiritual writings of 18th century Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg. He and others believed that nature had a spirit within it. This belief could be seen in the hazy setting and the glowing light among the grass seen in this painting.

Some Americans, such as Albert Pinkham Ryder, looked to poetry for comfort and understanding. This particular painting was inspired by an 18th century British poem:

*The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o’er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me*

- Thomas Gray



Plodding Homeward
Albert Pinkham
Ryder (1847-1917)
Circa 1878
Oil on Canvas
Gift of Mr. and Mrs.
Llewellyn Boyd

Southern Furniture and Paintings

Gallery 8

The paintings and furniture in this gallery provide a window into life in the nineteenth century South. Most of the furniture dates to early in the century. It is simple and lacks ornamentation, since it was made far from the larger cities and their more ornate styles. It was built for middle class families by local craftsmen using native woods.

The paintings were done later, as you might expect. Early residents needed homes and furniture. With the luxury of a more settled life came the desire for paintings to decorate their walls. The paintings also tell stories of developing towns and the prominent families who helped shape them.

For a piece of Chattanooga history, explore **James Cameron's** portrait of the Whiteside family. A wealthy and influential man, Colonel Whiteside helped build Chattanooga and made his fortune through railroads. In the city that spreads out behind him, we can see a railroad chugging through the landscape in the lower right.

The family sits on the veranda of a hotel Whiteside had built on Lookout Mountain just a year before this work was painted. In addition to the three family members, two of their five African American slaves are included in the painting, including the woman seated on the right, who was named Jane.

To learn more about the people and places in this work, look through the nearby drawers.



Colonel and Mrs. James A. Whiteside, Son Charles and Servants
James Cameron (1817-1882)
Circa 1858-1859
Oil on Canvas
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas B. Whiteside

Drawer One – Photos of figures in the painting

- A Kentucky native, James Anderson Whiteside moved to Chattanooga in 1838. Ten years later he was elected mayor. The railroads he brought to the city made Chattanooga a southern hub for rail traffic.
- Whiteside owned property throughout the city. He was particularly interested in developing Lookout Mountain as a healthy summer retreat from the heat in the valley. He built a toll road up the mountain and a hotel at the top to serve the growing tourist trade.

Drawer Two – Photo of Mrs. Whiteside and of the city

- At age 19, Harriet Leonora Straw became a music teacher for Penelope Whiteside, daughter of the recently widowed Colonel Whiteside. He married Harriet in February 1844 and the couple had nine children. In this painting, Colonel Whiteside is 55; Mrs. Whiteside is 34.
- Umbrella Rock provides a dramatic landmark in the center of this painting. However, in reality, it is located to the west of Lookout Mountain Hotel, which was on the site of the present day Incline Railway. Perhaps the artist, James Cameron, “moved” Umbrella Rock to emphasize the connection between the mountain’s natural wonders and Colonel Whiteside’s business plans.
- This 1858 *Harper's Weekly* drawing is the first known image of Chattanooga before the Civil War. Visitors’ opinions of the city depended on where they came from. Southerner Mary Sharp Jones visited in 1859 and wrote home that “Chattanooga is a flourishing town.” However, a northern visitor saw it as a “straggling southern town.”

Drawer Three – Photos of the real hotel and of a table similar to the one in the painting

- Colonel Whiteside built the Lookout Mountain Hotel in 1857. Though a handsome building, it did not have the marble railing or black and white tiled floor shown in the painting. This is an example of artistic license taken by the artist to flatter his sitter.
- Another may be seen in the very high style table between Whiteside and his wife. While the Whitesides were wealthy enough to afford such an expensive piece, it is unlikely that they would have had one on their veranda.

Decorative Arts

Gallery 13

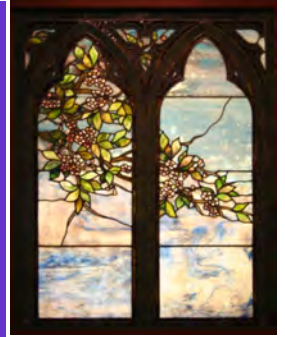
While some Americans were impoverished after the Civil War, others enjoyed great prosperity. The objects in this gallery show that America was growing and thriving in the nineteenth century. Then, as now, Americans displayed their prosperity and their sophistication through household objects. Whether handmade or mass produced, these goods helped define national tastes.

John LaFarge was a painter and a stained glass designer, who helped establish a popular taste for stained glass in domestic architecture in the United States. He was initially stirred to use the material after a trip to Europe in 1856, where he had an opportunity to visit many medieval French and English cathedrals.

The two Hunter windows include gothic arches and botanical subjects suggestive of the seasons. The asymmetrical design and botanical motif may have been inspired by the arts of Japan; indeed, Japanese art was all the rage in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, when Japanese ports reopened to foreign trade. LaFarge was also one of the first American artists to travel extensively in that country.

Spring
John LaFarge (1835-1910)
Circa 1896
Stained Glass Window
Gift of Mrs. Arthur Hays Sulzberger

This stained glass suffered some damage over time and required the attention of a conservator. To learn more about how it was treated, see the materials located nearby on the wall.



Impressionism and City Scenes

Galleries 11 & 12

The turn of the century brought many changes to America, particularly with the shifts in the national economy from agriculture to industry and the new flow of immigrants coming primarily from Europe. This changed the culture of the country.

American artists painted scenes reflecting the lives of the wealthy, who made their money through industry, as well as the downtown immigrants, who had moved to the rapidly growing cities for job opportunities. Some artists followed well-to-do patrons into their homes and gardens to paint their refined way of life. Other artists chose to wander the crowded, noisy streets to capture the vitality of city life.

Regardless of who they painted, artists often used a style that was new to America – Impressionism. Impressionism came to America about a decade after it first appeared in Paris. When Claude Monet exhibited his painting, *Impression: Sunrise*, in 1872, critics greeted it with great hostility. They claimed that such “unfinished” paintings were an insult. But by the time Impressionism found its way to America in the 1880s, it was a “legitimate” style and an emblem of sophisticated taste.



French Tea Garden
(also known as *The Terre-cuite Tea Set*)
Childe Hassam (1859 – 1935)
1910
Oil on Canvas
Gift of the Benwood Foundation

Allen Street
George Luks (1867-1933)
1905
Oil on Canvas
Gift of Miss Inez Hyder



A comparison of **Childe Hassam's** *French Tea Garden* and **George Luks's** *Allen Street* reveals two artists using a similar Impressionistic style, but with vastly different subjects. In *French Tea Garden*, we see a woman at her leisure within a lush setting surrounded by expensive objects, such as the terracotta tea set. *Allen Street* shows the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where immigrant women are still hard at work deep into the evening. In the shop upstairs, George Luks includes a display of fashionable gowns,

subtly marking the distance between the working women and the upper class women who can afford these beautiful clothes.

The New Woman

The role of women was in transition during the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century, as women began to reject the domestic sphere and move into higher education and employment.

Traditionalists believed that women should possess certain virtues, including piety, purity, and submissiveness (remember the sculpture of Ruth in the Mansion). **Abbott Thayer** held this view. In *Young Woman*, Thayer's maid, Bessie Price, takes on an ethereal quality when dressed in a Roman toga-like garment. This takes her out of every day existence and places her in an idealized setting, far beyond the corrupting influence of the real world.



Young Woman (Bessie Price)
Abbott Handerson Thayer (1849-1921)
c. 1897-98
Oil on Canvas
Museum purchase

William Glackens's *Miss Olga D* exhibits no such pretensions. She seems almost bored with her interior surroundings. "Olga" was not a society lady but a studio model for Glackens and a modern, independent woman. Despite her boredom, the painting radiates energy from its pattern and color—formal elements Glackens gleaned from a trip to Europe a few years prior to this painting, in which he met Impressionist Pierre Auguste Renoir and the Fauve painter Henri Matisse.



Miss Olga D
William Glackens (1870-1938)
1910
Oil on Canvas
Gift of the Benwood Foundation

Early Abstraction

Gallery 14

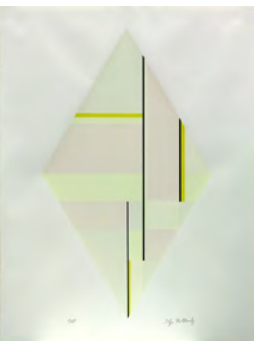
In the early twentieth century, European and American artists made a significant break with past artistic conventions. They abandoned the idea that the subject matter of art had to be recognizable. Art became more abstract.

Artists were spurred to adopt abstraction through different sources, including the simplified forms of African art and American folk art and the geometric design of modern industry. While some artists were attracted to the formal purity of abstract art, others found deeper meaning within it. Abstract art could evoke emotions through color; create a sense of harmony and balance; or it could even help inspire society to embrace technology and innovation.

While not completely abstract, **Oscar Bluemner** used simplified, geometric shapes and brilliant color to concentrate on form and mood. As an architect, he often included structures in his work and painted them in pure colors he believed communicated certain emotions. Red, for instance, connoted power and energy. He so often applied this color that critics referred to the artist as the "vermillionaire."



Form and Light, Motif in West New Jersey
Oscar Bluemner (1867-1938)
1914
Oil on canvas
Gift of the Benwood Foundation



Untitled
Ilya Bolotowsky (1907-1981)
1979
Silkscreen
Gift of Mrs. Sarah Glassner

One can also find a sense of architectural style in the work of **Ilya Bolotowsky**. Bolotowsky fled to the United States in 1923 in the wake of the Russian Revolution. He began creating abstract works in the 1930s. For him, abstract images helped lend order to a period of chaos in the early twentieth century, which had been marked by war, revolution, and rapid modernization. His grid-like forms were initially inspired by the Dutch artist Piet Mondrian, who aimed for harmony in his signature compositions of black lines and bold colors.

The Depression and Alternative Views

Gallery 15 and 16

The Great Depression had a profound effect on the social and economic lives of Americans. As it cast a pall over the country, many American artists turned to and celebrated our traditions and folkways. Realism again became popular in the art scene.

Thomas Hart Benton based many of his works on American history and its myths. His *Wreck of Ole '97* was inspired by a railroad disaster in Virginia in 1893. The incident became romanticized in oral traditions and then transferred into folk music.



The Wreck of the Ole '97
Thomas Hart Benton
(1889-1975)
1943
Egg tempera on gessoed masonite
Gift of the Benwood Foundation

Benton took artistic license and moved the scene from the South to the cornfields of his native Midwest, an area he celebrated in many of his works of this period. This Midwestern focus led critics to brand Benton and other artists engaged in provincial American culture as Regionalists.



The Arrest
Jack Levine (1915 - 2010)
1983
Oil on Canvas
Gift of Ralph Shumacker in loving memory of his wife, Elizabeth Schumacker

Other artists, primarily photographers but painters, as well, took a more critical view of the Depression and its aftermath, examining the social ills of the day. Since the 1930s, **Jack Levine** has used his painting as a platform to explore corruption, capitalism, and power. *The Arrest* features two policemen leading away a man in an orange suit and a paper bag over his head. The officers are somewhat anonymous, too, their faces blurred. Both the law and the accused are obscured and illegible, imparting a feeling of an unease to this scene.

Precision and Pattern in the 1930s and 1940s

While photography during the Depression registered the hardships experienced by Americans, most notably by artists hired by the government to spur President Roosevelt's New Deal, artists such as **Edward Weston** created photographs valued for their formal beauty and technical skill.



Dunes, Oceano
Edward Weston
(1886-1958)
1936
Gelatin silver print
Museum purchase

Weston's eye was particularly drawn to the abstract designs within the dunes of Oceano, California, such as the patterns made by the wind on sand and the diagonal lines made by overlapping dunes. He refrained from manipulating his print once back in the darkroom, preferring the purity of his original vision. "*The ultimate end, the print, is but a duplication of all that I saw and felt through my camera,*" he said.



The Apartment
Jacob Lawrence
(1917-2000)
1943
Gouache on paper
Museum purchase with funds provided by the Benwood Foundation and the 1982 Collectors' Group

The artist **Jacob Lawrence** has dedicated his career to visualizing the situation of African Americans from the earliest time of their removal from Africa, through the period of slavery, to the struggles in twentieth century urban areas. His art is characterized by vivid color; flat pattern; simplified shapes; and the frequent use of masks or mask-like faces—all of which draw on the forms and practice of African art. In the highly segregated American society of the 1940s, Jacob Lawrence was the first contemporary black artist to realize widespread critical acceptance in the white-dominated art world.

Abstract Expressionism and the Beginning of Postmodernism

Gallery 17

In the years surrounding the Second World War, Americans began to explore more emotional, physical, and philosophical artistic expressions. This was due, in part, to the immigration of notable European artists, who had fled the continent, and the war itself, its profound effect causing many to turn away from the optimistic paintings of America's heartland that were popular in the 1930s.

These new artists became known as the Abstract Expressionists because their art did not resemble recognizable subject matter, but instead it exhibited the artist's individual expression across a canvas and perhaps his or her mental state. These paintings tended to be larger and more focused on the paint and the painting process rather than the theme and the story represented. As Harold Rosenberg, a critic of the time, wrote, thus establishing the myth surrounding the Abstract Expressionist artists,

"What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event. The painter no longer approached his easel with an image in his mind; he went up to it with material in his hand to do something to that other piece of material in front of him. The image would be the result of this encounter."

German-born **Hans Hofmann** is renowned for being both an artist and influential teacher. Hofmann had fled Europe during the 1930s and settled in New York, first working at The Art Students League and then setting up his own school.

Hofmann was fascinated by the way color could recede or come forward in a painting, depending on its shade and intensity. In addition to color, he emphasized texture and space to heighten the painting's impact. His deep concern for form is expressed in the title of the Hunter's painting, *Scintillating Blue 38-30*, the final numbers referring to the painting's size.



Scintillating Blue 38-30
Hans Hofmann
(1880-1966)
1956
Oil on Canvas
Museum purchase with funds provided by Ruth S. and A. William Holmberg, Mr. and Mrs. Olan Mills, II, Mr. and Mrs. Scott L. Probasco, Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. Phil B. Whitaker

Opal Reunion
Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008)
1976
Mixed Media
Gift of the Benwood Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Davenport, Jr., Ruth S. and A. William Holmberg, and Mr. and Mrs. Olan Mills II



A different sort of material chaos can be found in the work of **Robert Rauschenberg**. While some artists were painting abstractly, Rauschenberg looked to the everyday world and to commonplace, devalued objects. He actually placed these objects physically in the work of art itself, like in *Opal Reunion*.

Rauschenberg collaged an oar, wings, photos, cloth and newspaper articles into his gigantic work and relied on

chance to dictate how they were arranged. While some elements may contain associative and personal connections for the artist, the work is composed of and is about the fragments of culture, rather than a particular meaning. Rauschenberg was one of the pioneers of postmodern art, which is characterized by the breakdown of the divide between "high" and "low" art; the mixing of different styles and materials; and the layers of meaning that may be discovered and discussed within the work.

Art from the 1960s to Today

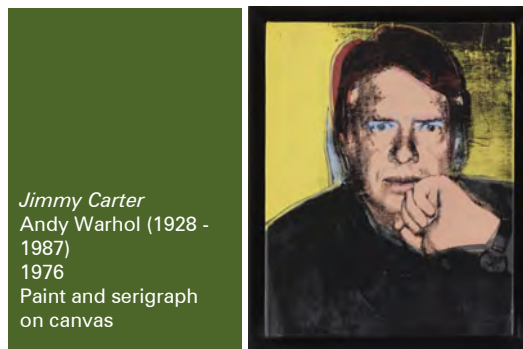
Gallery 18

Pop Art

Several years after Rauschenberg began creating his hybrids of painting, print, and sculptural works, a new movement termed Pop art exploded. These artists pulled imagery from popular culture and mixed them with commercial art techniques usually found in advertising and in magazines.

Many people are familiar with Andy Warhol's Pop art work. He took published photographs of celebrities or graphic packaging on common grocery store items, such as Campbell's Soup, and used a screen-printing process to transfer these images to his canvas.

Much like a stencil, screen-printing is normally used for commercial projects to quickly produce a mass amount of uniform images. Thus in choosing this medium for portraits of Marilyn Monroe or Jackie Kennedy, Warhol's work expressed how movie stars and public figures were also branded, packaged and sold. As Warhol's fame increased, many celebrities and socialites commissioned him to make portraits of them and his style became its own brand.



Abstract Art Survives

Snow Lane #29
Sam Gilliam (born 1933)
1996

Multi-layered relief, die-cut, collaged monoprint with raked acrylic medium on handmade paper
Museum Purchase with funds contributed by the Friends of African American Art with additional support from Warren Barnett



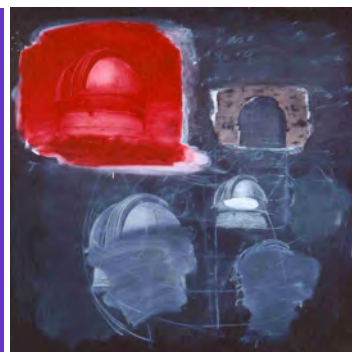
Although Pop art took modern art in new directions, abstraction remained prominent in American art.

Early in his career, **Sam Gilliam** was part of a Washington, DC-based group of artists practicing "Color-Field" painting. These artists would brush or pour thinned paint directly onto their canvas, sometimes pulling the edges of the canvas up or

down to steer the paint's flow (Helen Frankenthaler in Gallery 17 was one of the forerunners of this movement). But Gilliam later craved more texture and body from his works and would fold his canvases into pleats, giving his pieces a three-dimensional effect. The Hunter's print exhibits this interest in layering, collage, and color.

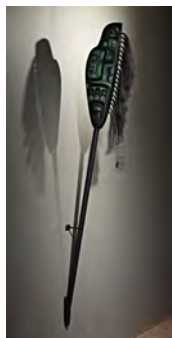
In *Observing Observation*, **Vernon Fisher** uses an image that appears often in his work, a celestial observatory. As observatories map the heavens, the artist literally maps his process of creating his images—his equations, mistakes, and erasures. But the smudged blackboard is only an illusion: Fisher uses an acrylic paint on plywood to create the blackboard surface and the "chalk" is actually very deft painting. His smeared gestures are a nod to the legacy of Abstract Expressionism and process-based art.

Observing Observation
Vernon Fisher (born 1943)
1996
Oil on blackboard slating on wood
Museum Purchase made possible by the generosity of the 2000 Collectors' Group



New Materials and the Politics of Identity

Some artists chose to express themselves with glass rather than paint or conventional materials used for sculpture, such as bronze, marble, or wood. Traditionally, glass could only be made in factory settings. Advances in technology allowed individual artists to be involved in all aspects of the process, so artists could blow glass alone or with a small team of assistants. This led to the studio glass movement in the 1960s in the United States.



Dance Staff
Preston Singletary
(b. 1963)
2005
Blown and sand-
carved glass
Museum Purchase

Glass artist **Preston Singletary** creates objects rich in history and symbolism by drawing heavily from his Tlingit heritage. A common subject he references is the Raven, a shape-shifting hero in Northwest Native American story telling, who brought light to the earth. An abstracted raven is evident in the Hunter's *Dance Staff*. Singletary's interest in identity can be seen as part of a larger trend in artistic practice that began after the Civil Rights and feminist movements of the 1960s and 1970s, when multicultural voices broke through what many perceived as a white, male, Euro-centric barrier.

Karen LaMonte manipulates glass through casting, rather than glassblowing. She works in a large studio in Prague to create her life-size dress sculptures. Her work is in dialogue with many of the artists exhibited in the Hunter's collection that have used the female form as inspiration. *Reclining Dress Impression with Drapery* recalls the exquisite detail of classical sculpture. The body here is literally made into an object of beauty encased in glass, without a identifying person within it.

*Reclining Dress
Impression with
Drapery*
Karen LaMonte (b.
1967)
2006
Cast glass
Museum Purchase



Counting
Lorna Simpson (b.
1960)
1991
Photo engraving and
silkscreen on medium
weight, white wove
paper, Printer Proof
2/4
Museum Purchase

Lorna Simpson uses her photographic and text based works as a platform to explore gender, identity, and history. In *Counting*, Simpson vertically displays three photographs: a cropped head and torso of a woman, a smokehouse once used as slave quarters, and a crown of braided hair. Surrounding each of these images are a series of numbers detailing amounts of time, bricks, twists, braids and locks. Simpson chronicles labor — meticulous, manual, and domestic labor performed by African Americans, women in particular—that causes us to consider the lives and roles played here.

Beverly Semmes also taps into women's labor and subjectivity through her work, but through a different tack. She reclaims and challenges the conventional definitions of "women's work" and craft by creating completely non-functional pieces out of fabric and clay. Her sculptures can be contextualized as part of a larger movement in the DIY age. Instead of casting, chiseling, or welding objects together (this last method particularly present in the art of the 1950s), these artists sew, shear, and glue, highlighting the labor and look of the handmade. In her title, Semmes gives a material body to composer John Cage's renowned conceptual work of absence from 1952 of the same name. In his 4' 33" (shorthand for four minutes, thirty-three seconds), Cage outlined the time frame of the score but let silence—peppered with the occasional sounds within an auditorium—comprise the piece. In her homage, Semmes's hanging sleeve on the left and sash of fabric on the right bracket off four works that nod to Cage's composition.

4' 33"
Beverly Semmes (b.
1958)
2011
Velvet, tulle and
ceramic
Museum Purchase



As observed throughout this guide, art has been a means by which artists could explore their national identity; their culture; their own subjectivity; make forms; challenge conventions; or engage in a dialogue with the viewer. We invite you into conversation with these works, exploring its material, size, colors, subjects, moment in time, point of view, and what kinds of thoughts, issues, or connections it sparks in you.