CollegeBoard
Advanced Placement Program

AP®
Art History

2007–2008
Professional Development
Workshop Materials

Special Focus:
Art of the Twentieth Century

The College Board: Connecting Students to College Success

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 5,000 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT®, the PSAT/NMSQT®, and the Advanced Placement Program® (AP®). The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns.

For further information, visit www.collegeboard.com.

Page 6: Memory Board (Lukasa), 19th–20th century. Wood; L. 21 9/16 in. (54.77 cm). Democratic Republic of Congo; Luba (c) Metropolitan Museum of Art. Reprinted with permission. *Page 7:* Jacob Lawrence. The Migration Series, Panel No. 1: During World War I there was a great migration by Southern African Americans. (1940–41). The Phillips Collection, Washington D.C. © 2007 The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation, Seattle/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. *Page 10:* Benjamin West (1738–1820). The Death of General Wolfe. 1770. Oil on canvas, 44.5 cm high × 63.5 cm wide. © The National Gallery of Canada. Reprinted with permission. *Page 10:* Lorna Simpson (1960 –). Waterbearer. 1986. Gelatin silver print and engraved Plexiglass plaque, 41 3/4" × 79 1/4" × 2 1/4". © Lorna Simpson. Courtesy of the artist. *Page 11:* Artist Unknown. Akan symbol of Sankofa. Adinkra print from gourd. © Michael Bieze. Reprinted with permission. *Page 12:* Hugo Vilchis. Retablo. 2006. Votive Painting. © Michael Bieze. Reprinted with permission. *Page 17:* "What is Surrealism?" by André Breton from *What is Surrealism? Selected Writings*. Copyright © 1978 by Franklin Rosemont. Reprinted by permission. *Page 20:* "What is Surrealism?" by Andre Breton from *Theories of Modern Art* by Hershel B. Chipp © 1968 by The University of California Press. Reprinted with permission. *Page 21:* "Manifesto for the First Bauhaus Exhibition" by Oskar Schlemmer from *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-century Architecture* edited by Ulrich Conrad. © 1975 by The

(continued on next page)

The College Board wishes to acknowledge all the third party sources and content that have been included in these materials. Sources not included in the captions or body of the text are listed here. We have made every effort to identify each source and to trace the copyright holders of all materials. However, if we have incorrectly attributed a source or overlooked a publisher, please contact us and we will make the necessary corrections.

MIT Press. Reprinted with permission. *Page 22:* "The Realist Manifesto" by Naum Gabo from Theories of Modern Art by Hershel B. Chipp. © 1968 by The University of California Press. Reprinted with permission. *Page 23:* "Aaron Douglas Chats about the Harlem Renaissance" by Aaron Douglas and Leslie Collins. By permission of The Fisk University Franklin Library, Special Collections, and the Estate of Aaron Douglas. *Page 28:* "Programme of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar" by Walter Gropius from *Modern Architecture Since 1900* by William Curtis. © 1996 by Prentice Hall College Division. *Page 29:* Walter Gropius (1883–1969). Bauhuas. Exterior. 1926–1927. Bauhaus, Dessau, Germany © Vanni/Art Resource, NY. Reprinted with permission. *Page 31:* Marcel Breuer (1902–1981). Armchair, Model B3. Wassily Chair by Late 1927 or early 1928. Chrome-plated tubular steel with canvas slings, height, 28 1/8" × width, 30 1/4" × depth, 27 3/4". The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY; Gunta Stölzl-Stadler. Gobelin/Bauhaus Tapestry 1926–1927. © 2007 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/Beeldrecht, Amsterdam. *Page 37, 41 and 42:* Judy Chicago. The Dinner Party from © Artists Rights Society (ARS)/Judy Chicago

Special Focus: Art of the Twentieth Century

Introduction

Robert Nauman
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado

In teaching a survey course in the field of art history, one of the concerns is trying to cover all the material. This is especially daunting when teaching the material while at the same time trying to prepare the class for the AP® Exam. Too often, the year ends and twentieth-century material ends up getting condensed or even omitted.

The material that follows has as a theme of the twentieth century. It has been written with the intent of providing several models to teachers as they deal with this material in its own context, as well as providing an opportunity to review larger issues that they have discussed throughout the year. The authors for this project were chosen not only for their expertise in twentieth-century art and architecture but also because they have, for many years, taught the survey (at either the high school or college level) and served as Readers for the AP Exam. In teaching the survey, they have encountered the same problems we all encounter as teachers—how to communicate information to students, while motivating them to approach the subject critically and creatively. Their contributions to this series are therefore twofold: they have written essays that deal with specific twentieth-century topics; and they have contributed lesson plans that present possible activities to supplement the essays. While some of the essays deal with general themes, others deal with specific works, thus providing several different types of models for teaching the material.

The first essay, for example, deals with the general theme of "The Artist as Historian." It offers a model whereby students can be challenged to think about the very notion of how history is constructed, and by whom. While the focus of the essay and lesson plan terminates with a discussion of Jacob Lawrence's *Migration Series*, teachers could adopt a similar model in discussing any number of contemporary artworks. The second essay is narrower in its time frame, providing a sample framework for discussion of material between World Wars I and II. The lesson plan offers a model whereby teachers can take advantage of the unique opportunities offered by their specific geographical locations. The final two essays are focused on specific twentieth-century works—the Bauhaus and *The Dinner Party*. The Bauhaus essay deals with a topic that can be difficult to approach—architectural history—in part because its concerns are different from those of the other visual arts. This essay offers a model for teaching architectural history and an accompanying lesson plan that serves to engage the students in an activity-based scenario. The final essay in this collection deals with an iconic contemporary feminist work by Judy Chicago. Again, the lesson plan provides an example of how a piece of contemporary art may be discussed not only on its own terms and within the context of twentieth-century art, but also as a format for reviewing the entire year's material in preparation for the AP Exam.

As a whole, then, these essays provide a variety of ideas and methods that may be applied when discussing art of the past century. In addressing the field as they do, the authors provide insights into the relevance of art history as it pertains to contemporary issues, and offer opportunities for us all to think about ways to engage our students in critical discussions that are meaningful to their own contemporary existence.

The Artist as Historian

Michael Bieze
Marist School
Atlanta, Georgia

> "The same truth that guides the pen of the historian should govern the pencil of the artist."
> Benjamin West

This essay encourages teachers to raise questions in class which expand whom we consider to be historians and, more importantly, what we mean by the word history when used as a theme or subject in art. On the first point, the intellectual inquiries conducted by artists, particularly when producing historical accounts, are largely unknown to students learning from survey texts. A few students know about the vigorous research conducted by recent artists in the West during the past century, but most students leave an introductory course in art history believing that artists are skilled artisans only conveying ideas generated by someone else. While this is sometimes the case, frequently it is not. As Ross King notes in the recent best seller *The Judgment of Paris*, the famous French painter Ernest Meissonier stated: "If I had not been a painter I should have liked to be a historian. I don't think any other subject could be so interesting as history." When Meissonier used actual artifacts from Napoleon to breathe truth into his historical paintings, he joined a long tradition of artists researching what is now called material culture.[1] As to the second point, an AP Art History course is not about lists of names and dates in history, but rather how to ask meaningful questions within the discipline. Starting with the very concept of history itself places a value on the importance of examining the language we use and how we use it when discussing images.

Who qualifies as an historian, and what constitutes history, is an open question in my classroom. The Western tradition tends to identify an historian as an individual who studies and chronicles the past and history as a written interpretation of past events. One of my goals in teaching a global survey of art history is to show students the importance of trying to understand world cultures on their own terms instead of being measured exclusively by Western values. Among those values that are open to challenge in the classroom are the belief in progress and, by extension, the universality of the beliefs and ideas, which served as the basis of that judgment. The notion of progress often appears in class discussions when students describe, for example, how space is constructed. To make the claim that Renaissance spatial illusion is superior to Gothic or Japanese space is to fall into a troubling social Darwinism, which ranks movements and peoples rather than considers them closely. Such ranking is ultimately based on students' unquestioned acceptance of universal truths and standards in the social sciences. The philosopher Elizabeth Minnich describes this problem as that of false neutrality and "closet Platonism," suggesting that we should be very careful to note that terms, labels, and the categories used in Western history are not as

1. Ross King, *The Judgment of Paris* (New York: Walker & Company, 2006), 5.

objective as they appear, but laden with judgments and values.[2] An emphasis on "history" in the art history course opens up ways of seeing how no single definition of history, or for that matter, historian, exists in the world.

Many cultures do not have formally trained historians, written historical traditions, or the Western concept of time. For example, the First Peoples of the west coast of Canada have visually told their history on totem poles. In the case of the Luba people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, small wood memory boards called *lukasa* record history in beads, cowry shells, incised designs, and relief images. In both cases, people, places, and events are documented, from a Western point of view, in alternative methods of conveying important events in a culture's past. With respect to early Indian art, Vidya Dehejia points out that India's "cyclical rather than linear concept of time, which was conceived as a vast revolving wheel with cycles of creation" contributed to keeping records of history in ways unlike the West.[3] Oral traditions and poetry often kept cultural memory. Therefore, it may be argued that there is a difference between history and History, the latter being the Western conception that privileges some methods and discredits or ignores others.

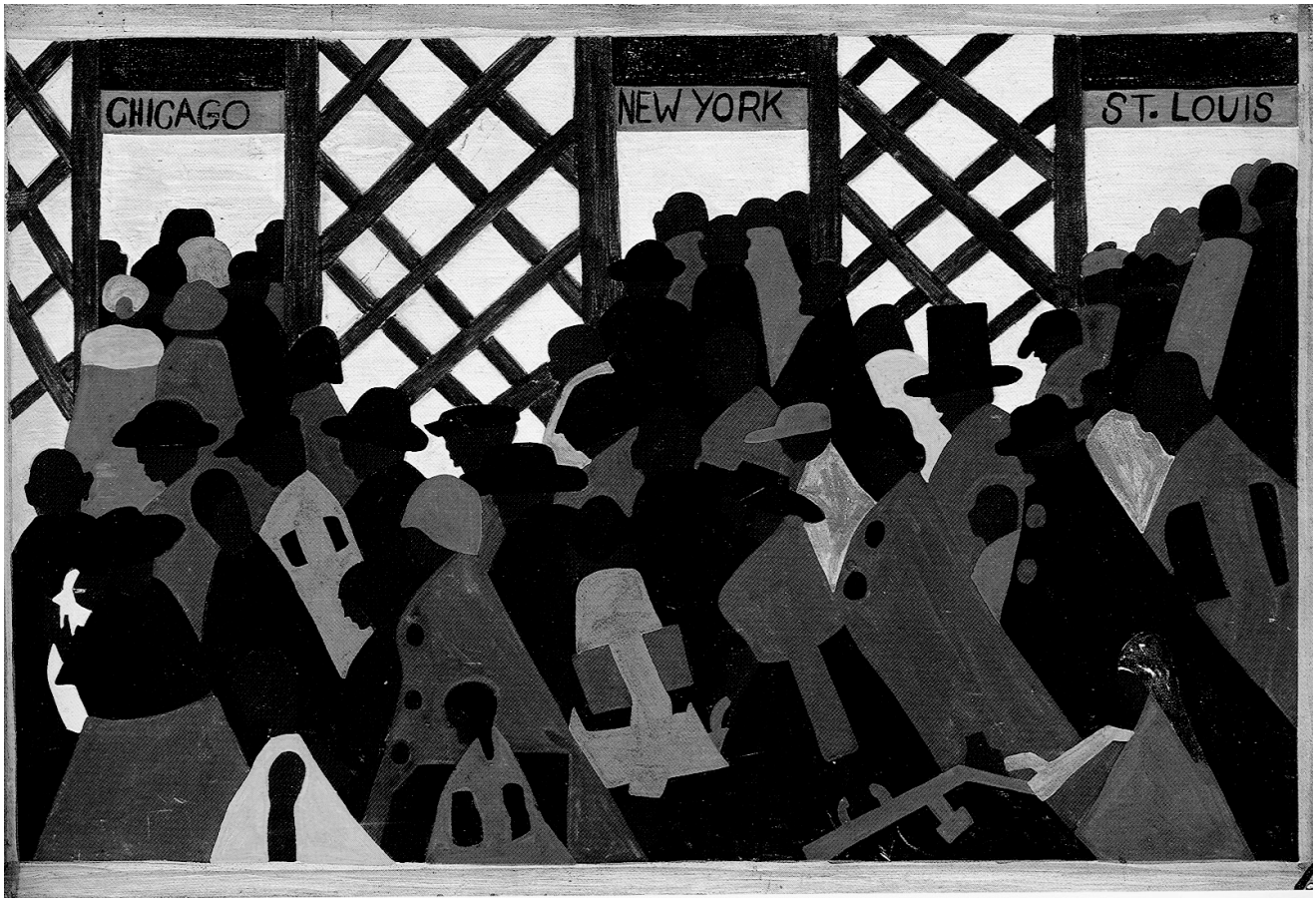
Memory Board (*Lukasa*), 19th-20th century, Democratic Republic of Congo, Luba

2. Elizabeth Komarck Minnich, *Transforming Knowledge* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 85–88.

3. Vidya Dehejia, *Indian Art* (London: Phaidon Press Limited,1997), 7.

Closer to home, American history has excluded many people and events that did not register in the mainstream culture's official chronicles. The African American artist Jacob Lawrence, the son of parents who participated in the Great Migration of the early twentieth century, was part of a generation of black men and women determined to write into history many things that had been ignored, distorted, or hidden. His visual narrative account of that struggle, documented in the 60 panel series known as the *Migration of the Negro*, provides both an opportunity to see him an artist-historian, and also to consider how the series may be history as opposed to merely an illustration of important events. Lawrence's series provides strong examples of how artists may pursue the creation of their historical accounts in ways similar to historians. He deliberately combined traditional research in libraries, the study of visual traditions, and his personal experiences as a black man shaped by Jim Crow America into a powerful historical series.

Jacob Lawrence, *Migration Series,* 1941



What is History?

What exactly does the word "history" mean when applied to the subject of a work of art? Historical accounts are one of the most prevalent themes found in art history survey texts.

Yet many of us seldom stop to consider the diverse meanings the term carries in the books we use in class or how we are use the term in discussions with students. Tackling such questions has been one of the great joys of working with the AP Art History examination over the years. It is natural to slip into a place of comfort with basic key terms. What I have discovered from my participation in the AP Reading is that the most familiar words and phrases are the ones requiring the most vigilance. In our classrooms it is easy to simplify, through repeated use, the meanings of words such as portrait, expression, ideal, narrative, allegory, western, and representation. However, when presenting our own definitions of these words to a room of teachers and professors trying to construct an assessment rubric, certainty is shaken. What usually emerges in such discussions is a spectrum of meanings and possibilities, reaffirming the need for holistic scoring of student responses. Such debates have become central to my approach to teaching the discipline of art history. I now spend as much time in class discussing the words being used in the discipline as I spend examining works of art. Critical thinking in art history class must be both visual and textual. My starting point for discussing history is when the Gardner text states that the *Palette of King Narmer* is "one of the earliest historical (versus prehistorical) artworks preserved." The authors make it clear that the *Palette* is historical not only because of the advent of writing but also because it records events. In the process of establishing the context for how it weaves together iconography, writing, and formal devices to produce an historical record specific to ancient Egypt, the many issues and complexities of constructing history begin to arise.

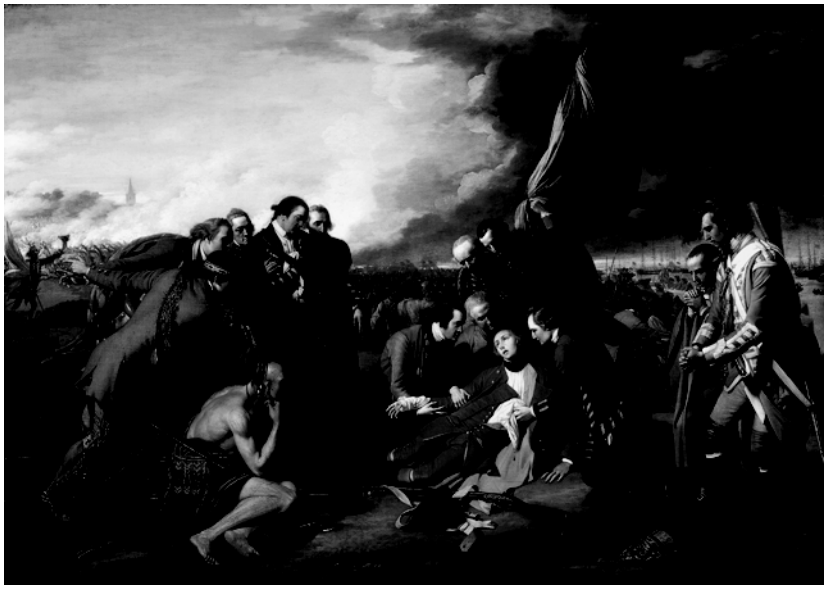
Early in the year, as we begin discussing art historical methodologies, I present the students with five basic ideas concerning art and history:

(1) The first idea is that all categories are slippery and that many works of art resist simple labeling. This is especially true when using the term history. One does not have to look far before entering the briar patch of history painting. For example, the 18th century French Academy elevated history painting. History painters themselves were held in high regard as thinkers steeped in learning. However, many of the themes that patrons commissioned as history paintings are today labeled as mythology and literature. At the time, history painting broadly meant works of art showing allegories and the consequences of moral choices. Within such a framework, even Watteau's *Pilgrimage to Cythera* may be labeled a history painting. Some works of art, such as the Parthenon's cella frieze, equivocate between documenting ritual and recording history. Others, such as Judy Chicago's *Dinner Party*, land between being categorized as history and historiography, since it is as much a critique of traditional history as it is about women in history. Perhaps the most difficult group of artworks to capture under a single category is those that connect the historical and the spiritual. Works of art such as the *Palette of Narmer*, the *Victory Stele of Naram-Sin*, the *Ara Pacis*, the *Arch of Titus*, the life of Buddha on the Sanchi Great Stupa's toranas, and Bernini's *Ecstasy of St. Teresa* all offer teachers opportunities to discuss artworks where allegory, academic history, and ecclesiastical history meet and part. Finally, since some of the works listed above document roughly contemporary events, how do they challenge our notion of history as

the past? Is not the very concept of "contemporary history" paradoxical?[4] Students soon recognize that all labels both capture some ideas and miss others, and are never benign.

(2) The second idea I have the students consider is how art recording history may be positioned on a continuum running from objective documentation of history at one end to the expression of past events at the other. With respect to the former, even the most precise photographs do not correspond to pure facts. For example, it has been shown that the Civil War photographer Mathew Brady's looked upon the camera as means of recording higher truths rather than mechanical documentation. In contrast, Rodin's *Burghers of Calais* conveys meaning beyond the details of physical likeness and evidence. While Rodin did conduct research of the event and consult writings such as Froissart's *Chronicles*, in the end he created a work evoking heroism and tragedy rather than fidelity to verisimilitude. At some point between these works I place Benjamin West's *The Death of General Wolfe*. West's own research resulted in a painting that is an expression of heroic history lent authenticity with a mix of both accurate and fabricated details.

Benjamin West, *The Death of General Wolfe,* 1770

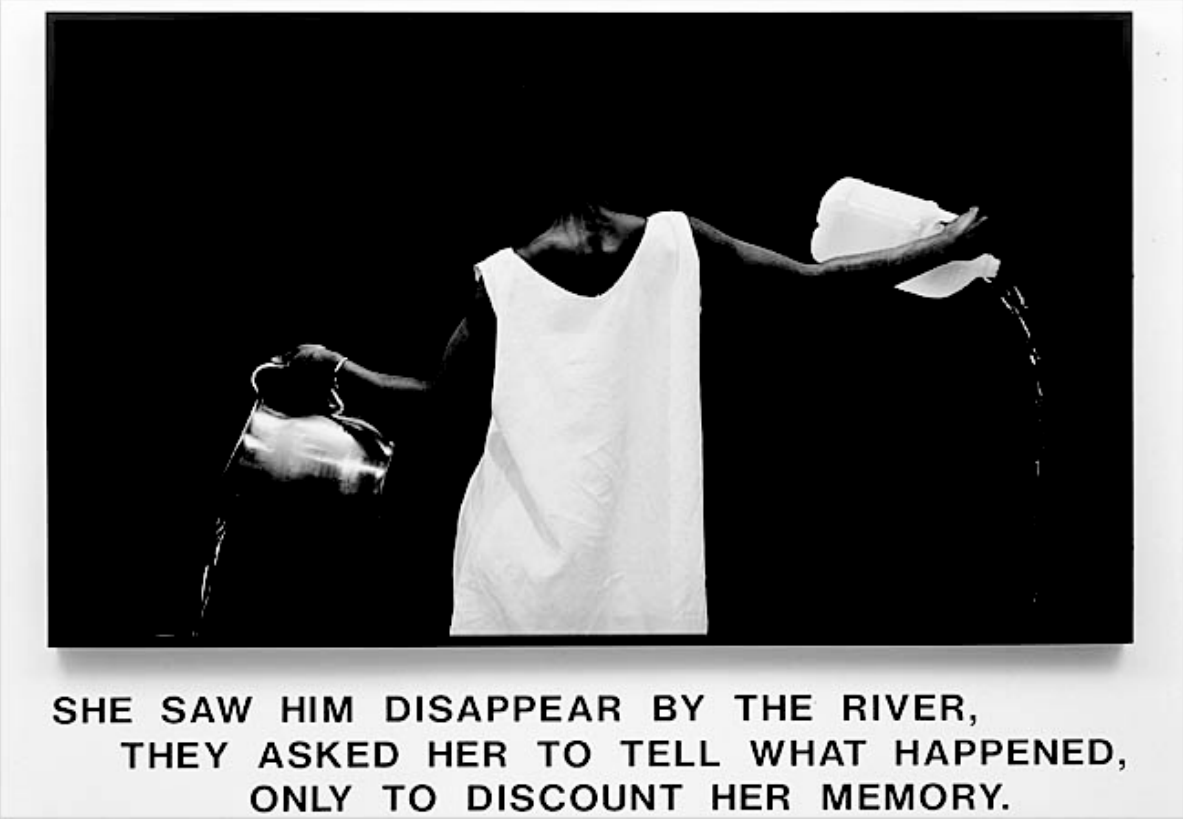


4. For an example of this frequently used phrase, see a description of *The Death of General Wolfe* in Marilyn Stokstad*, Art History*, Revised 2nd Edition (Upper Saddle River, N.J.:Prentice Hall, 2004), 924.

(3) The third idea I present in class is that history may be expressed in many different forms. While professional academic historians write, history may also be told in dance, ceramics, music, architecture, painting, quilts, sculpture, stained glass, and drama—to name a few. Instead of quoting written documents, artists quote or reference works of art. Students often believe that art illustrates history as opposed to being made by men and women formulating their view of history in these various media. Historians often use art as primary source materials without considering how the artist actually constructed a history. This leads to the next point.

(4) Point of view matters. While many historians seek objectivity, artists show us the importance of point of view or theoretical position. Just like academic historians, artists solve research problems through both inquiry and experience. Both study texts and artifacts, primary and secondary sources, debate theoretical positions, and test their ideas in peer review forums. However, most academic historians work within a professional culture that seeks objectivity, or what Peter Novick calls *That Noble Dream*.[5] Artists do not. I initially use Lorna Simpson's *Waterbearer* to make the case. She tells us in no uncertain terms that who tells the story matters. Studying Delacroix's *Massacre at Chios* requires us to examine both his many primary sources (e.g., research on costumes and use of firsthand accounts) and the French Romantic filter through which he selected and interpreted these sources.

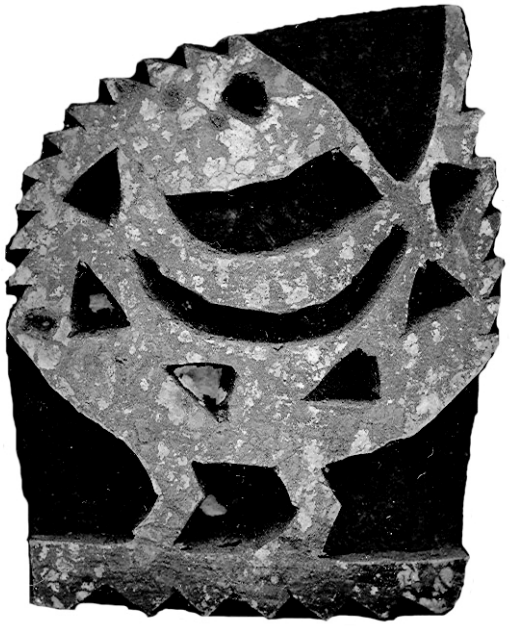
Lorna Simpson, *Waterbearer,* 1986



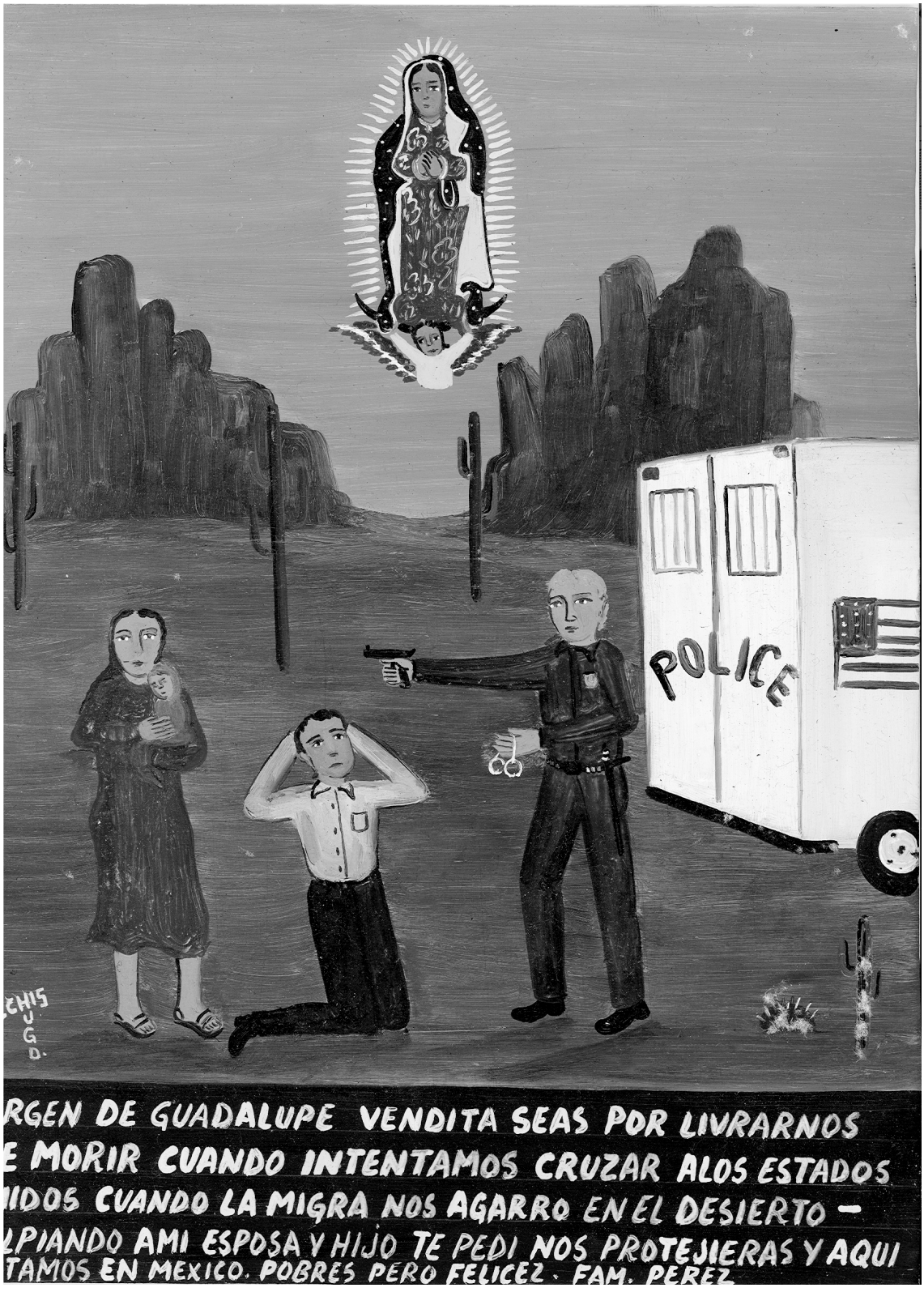
5. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

(5) The last point I make is that the past is studied because it constantly flows into the present. It can be difficult for students to be self-critical and see the wealth of assumptions, biases, and values that they, like all people, slowly inherited and forged into a perspective that seems neutral. Few works make the point as clearly as Jenny Holzer's text piece, *Much Was Decided Before You Were Born*. Her wry take on history brings us back to the reason that art history can be such an important and enjoyable field of study. It enriches our lives by helping us to discover who we are and how we arrived at our beliefs. To cite the title of Jonathan Foer's novel, *Everything Is Illuminated*, everything is illuminated by the past. The same concept is found in the ideograph of sankofa, the backward-looking bird from the Akan people of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. Literally meaning return (*san*), go (*ko*), and seek (*fa*), it reminds us that the past guides us as we move forward. I am closing this year's class with recent retablo or votive paintings from Mexico, which some students may know from their influence on Frida Kahlo's art. Like the men and women in Lawrence's *Migration*, a new movement of people moving north in search of hope transforms America. My year will close with the students seeing both the *Migration* series from a new angle, as well as understanding in new way the people from Mexico and Central America who they see around them every day.

Akan symbol of Sankofa, adinkra print from gourd



Hugo Vilchis, Retablo 2006



Lesson Plan

Theme: Point of View and History

While the goal of many academic historians is objectivity, all historical accounts are affected by personal experiences and one's theoretical position. Artists often remind us of how important it is to consider the point of view taken by anyone who records or expresses history. In many ways, the working methods of artists resemble those of historians. Just like historians, artists solve research problems through both intellectual inquiry and experience. But artists differ in the way that they frequently craft their version of history from a highly personal vantage point.

The art of Jacob Lawrence provides students with an example of the role a specific point of view plays in the narration of the past. Like an historian, Lawrence spent many hours conducting research from primary sources and secondary sources. Early in his career he immersed himself in the books and art contained in the Schomburg Library. These studies helped him produce powerful historical accounts of the lives of Harriet Tubman, Toussaint L'Ouverture, John Brown, and Frederick Douglass. But his most monumental historical account is the *Migration of the Negro*, a 60-panel series expressing the hardships of the journey north from the Jim Crow south which black men and women, including his parents, endured.

Lawrence constructed these accounts in the new methods of the Harlem Renaissance. The intellectuals of the movement rejected how both white and black Americans had recorded the African American experience. No longer would the mainstream voices and methods be the only ones available. Furthermore, the earlier New Negro movement's emphasis on personal black achievements (contributionism) would be replaced by a questioning of history as a discipline. New scholars, such as Carter Woodson, W.E.B. DuBois, and Alain Locke sought new ways to tell history from a black perspective. Personal experience mattered because black presence had been absent from so much of the nation's official history. Lawrence's *Migration* shares with the writings of these thinkers a deep concern for telling stories, that had been ignored, distorted, or rendered invisible.

A. Summative Assessment

Instructional Goal: To examine works of art in order to understand *how* history is recorded and expressed with a point of view.

How will students demonstrate that the goals have been met?

Students will progress from assignments which are highly directed to those which are more self-directed.

Students will complete three assignments.

(1) The first assignment asks the students to analyze the relationship between Jacob Lawrence's *Migration* series and an essay from the Harlem Renaissance by Langston

Hughes. Many relationships existed during this movement between writers and artists such as Lawrence and Hughes. After reading Hughes' essay *The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain* students will answer four questions:

1. How does Hughes describe artists and the power of point of view?
2. How is race represented in the essay and the *Migration* series?
3. How does Lawrence respond to Hughes call for popular black cultural forms in the new black arts movement?
4. How do these cultural forms express Lawrence's point of view of the great migration?

Students should report to the class in groups after discussing both the forms and content utilized by Lawrence from high and popular culture.

(2) The second assignment asks the students to select a work of art which records and expresses history. Examples of works they may choose include: the *Palette of King Narmer*, the *Arch of Titus*, the *Column of Trajan*, the *Bayeux Tapestry*, Velázquez's *Surrender at Breda*, Goya's *Disasters of War*, prints by Kollwitz, and Picasso's *Guernica*. All of these works express war from a distinct perspective. Students should be shown how all of these works are both particular expressions of history and artifacts used by historians in their accounts of the past. Individual students should select an artwork expressing history (such as those above) and write an essay which addresses three questions:

1. What is the point of view chosen in the expression of the event?
2. How is the event narrated? (Have the students examine the formal elements, the plot structure, theme, whether or not it told in single image or a series, etc.)
3. How does this method of narration amplify the point of view of the artist?

(3) The third assignment directs the student to describe how the event they analyzed in the second assignment could have been visualized from the opposite point of view. This requires the student to look at an historic event from the point of view of people who have been conquered, controlled, ignored by those telling the story. The teacher may look at how United States texts cover events such as the War of 1812 and compare it with, for example, the very different emphasis found in the version told by Canadians in the National War Museum in Ottawa. This essay may require considerable imagination since the other account may be difficult to research. How would the Dacians tell their version of Trajan's campaign?

Performance Assessment:
Idea: How imaginative and thoughtful is the idea?
Structure: Has the student developed a clear and well-supported case?
Grammar: Is the writing well crafted?
Voice: Has the student developed an authentic writing voice?

B. Formative Assessments

Determine how students are progressing and understanding new concepts.

After reading Hughes' essay, students will meet in groups to discuss the meaning of the work. Since the assignment is aimed at considering point of view, students working in teams construct a model for hearing different perspectives.

C. Classroom Strategies

Pedagogy/Instructions on how to present the unit/lesson.

(1) The teacher initially presents Lawrence's *Migration* series as an historic narrative based on experience and research.

Show the students Lawrence's Migration series in books or from a Web site. Have the students describe the overall story and the formal strategies used by the artist

Contrast the Migration series with mainstream accounts of the same period (WPA, FSA, John Steinbeck, Aaron Copland, and books such as *Let Us Praise Famous Men*).

(2) Next, an artistic, social, and historic context should be presented by comparing Lawrence's art as representative of the north end of Manhattan (Harlem) with contemporary Regionalist artists, such as Edward Hopper, working at the south end of Manhattan.

(3) Third, the *Migration* series is discussed within the context of mass movements of people. These may include pilgrimages, the Hajj, walkabout, the Trail of Tears, Exodusters, the Middle Passage, the Grand Tour, and the border crossings in the American Southwest. The discussion is begun by reading about Toni Morrison's recent conversation in the Louvre on displacement, immigration and exile (*New York Times*, November 21, 2006). In this way Lawrence's work is placed within the long tradition of large groups moving for a great range of reasons.

(4) Finally, demonstrate through examples how the same events have been visualized by different artists, each with a different perspective. For example, contrast Benjamin West's painted version of the *Death of General Wolfe* with the one sculpted by Joseph Wilton in Westminister Abbey. A second example to use for the exercise is the Spanish Civil War. After discussing Picasso's *Guernica*, the teacher may show Robert Capa's photographs of the war, Salvador Dali's *Premonition of Civil War*, and Jo Davidson's sculptures.

D. Differentiation of Instructional Delivery:

This lesson includes lecture, slides, Web sites, books, group work, and writing assignments.

E. Student Handouts

Langston Hughes, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," *The Nation*, 23 June, 1926.

Selected Bibliography

Donson, Howard and Sylviane Diouf. *In Motion: The Africa -American Migration Experience.* Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2005.

Hughes, Langston. "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," *The Nation*, 23 June, 1926.

Nesbett, Pete T. and Michelle DuBois. *Over the Line: The Art and Life of Jacob Lawrence.* Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 2001.

Riding, Alan. "Rap and Film at the Louvre? What's Up With That?" *New York Times*, Art Section, November 21, 2006: E1 and E7.

Schama, Simon. *Dead Certainties.* New York: Vintage Books, 1992.

Turner, Elizabeth Hutton, Jacob Lawrence, and Lonnie G. Bunch. *Jacob Lawrence: The Migration Series.* Washington D.C.: Rappahannock Press, 1993.

Restructuring the Narrative: The Decade of the 1920s

Jim Womack
Montgomery Bell Academy
Nashville, Tennessee

"Everything leads to the belief that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and the imaginary, the past and the future, the communicable and the incommunicable, the high and the low, are not perceived as contradictions . . . "[1]

Introduction

A survey of any decade in the twentieth century is, by necessity, defined by its brevity and subsequently is an exercise in futility for a teacher of AP Art History. Its complexities are as paradoxical as those mentioned by André Breton above as he described the Surrealist mindset. Putting the material together in a clear, coherent presentation might truly present the surreal exercise for art history teachers. It is, after all, the modern period that suffers the discrimination of being sacrificed in the rush to finish the course on time, combined with the overwhelming amount of material to consider. While this is nothing new, how many days can one devote to any time period? Broad surveys are bound to focus upon the familiar movements of Surrealism, New Realism or Constructivism, and the Bauhaus. As a European movement, Surrealism seems to dominate the thinking of this age, as well as the imaginations of the students.

The decade of the 1920s, however, is often neglected, whether we concentrate on the European art world or its responses in America. Certainly one of the ongoing issues revealed in this decade is a purely American modern art identity that begins to emerge. How can the AP Art History teacher introduce the important achievements of this decade and consequentially overlook American developments? There is a wealth of new firsthand material in the form of archival newspaper and magazine articles, films, and music recordings available. Most of these movements, whether European or American, are supported by manifestos and artists' statements quotes that can also be cited. Even if a teacher has not organized the class in this fashion in the past, I have always found that the architecture, sculpture, and two-dimensional work needs to be looked at simultaneously if a student has any hope of understanding the aims of so many diverse trends.

A Note to the Teacher

In 30 years of teaching, the overriding concern as I developed this course has been to tailor it to the needs of my students. While the preoccupation of every new teacher is trying to

1. André Breton, "What Is Surrealism?" This was a lecture given in Brussels on June 1, 1934, at a public meeting organized by the Belgian Surrealists, and issued as a pamphlet immediately afterward. http://pers-www.wlv.ac.uk/~fa1871/whatsurr.html

cover the vast amount of material over the centuries, it is important to remember that the Advanced Placement Program® structure is meant to be an umbrella under which you design a course that most closely fits the needs of your students, your setting, and your strengths. We teach to our students, not the test. As a generalist, the more I teach, the more I am aware of my own deficiencies. My search has been one of filling in those gaps. One of those gaps pertains to the coverage of American art, a subject that identifies every student in my classroom. The overview presented in this paper is divided into two focuses. The first is to connect student work directly with their understanding of American history and literature, as it has been covered in their other courses. The second is to take advantage of the unique opportunities offered by your specific location. Mine is Nashville. Part of the learning process is getting out of the classroom and exploring the urban environment. By making the course more relevant and more immediate, the material stays with them longer. On the surface, it seems that these approaches simply add more material. However, these approaches provide a larger context for students to process the art they encounter. It is my hope that as a teacher becomes more familiar with their interests in the course, they can constantly reorganization the material as a means of thinking about various portions of the course. It is important to remember that the best preparation for the Advanced Placement Exam is a strong course. It is a course that demands your stamp as teacher in its preparation and presentation.

The Challenge

One decision that determines the way the decade of the 1920s is organized is to provide a context for the works that enriches and grounds your narrative, continuing themes discussed in class during previous periods and setting sights on the themes or ideas that are to follow. How can you as a teacher cover the number of movements that take place at the same time all over the world? Although it takes another world war before the focus of the art world turns to New York City and America, the decade of the 1920s, particularly in America, is a formative one for the development of the style we define as Modernism. For those teachers who wish to introduce the vision of American art to their students in discussing this decade, it is not enough to simply provide a catalog of European or American art works completed between 1920 and 1929. Not only does the decade expand the vocabulary of Modernism in formal terms through a variety of self-proclaimed movements, but it also summarizes it at the same time, becoming institutional in the United States by the end of this decade through institutions such as the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., in 1921, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1929.

One area in which textbooks have greatly improved their presentation is the Modern period. Most texts offer no distinction between the 1920s or 1930s, presenting this material under the general heading, "Between the Wars." Recovering from the aftermath of the war, Europe is left redefining its political structures with the competing ideologies of communism, fascism, and democracy. An ocean away, America is discovering such European movements as Cubism, Futurism, Expressionism, and Dada. One issue that has to be addressed during this time period is the ongoing American search for an original, national identity,

independent of Europe. Aware of themselves as modernists, American artists consciously attempt to ally themselves with this notion of progress. There is no singular approach to this issue of American identity—it is as varied as the culture that produced it. From April 1999, until January 2000, the Whitney Museum in New York mounted a show of American art in two parts entitled, *The American Century: Art and Culture 1900-2000*.[2] The 1920s, described as the "Jazz Age America: 1920-1929," was organized into three chapters: "The Culture of Prosperity," "Precision and the Machine Age," and "Consumer Culture and the Search for National Identity." I propose parallel and overlapping contexts in which to present both American and European material. While the contexts are not revolutionary, they leave room for identifying and managing this specific decade.

1. **The Traditional Narrative Introduced Through Film.** One of the hallmarks of the twenties was the rise of the cinema, particularly as a popular form of entertainment in this country. While Dada artists experimented with film during the previous decade, postwar Expressionism, Surrealism, and industrial urban visions can all be introduced through films of the 1920s. Whether identifying a new society based upon the vocabulary of the machine, as in the Constructivist agenda, unifying the elements of modern design, the worker, and architecture in the Bauhaus, or describing a nightmarish image of the nature of mankind, film offers the opportunity to highlight these themes.
2. **The American Agenda: American Art Deco, the Precisionists, Photography, and the Regionalists.** Addressing this category, I draw on local resources. Resources in Nashville directly address each of these areas. Like many capital cities, Nashville has numerous buildings designed in the Art Deco style. Nashville's Fisk University offers work that relates this section with the next, which is an introduction to the art of the Harlem Renaissance.
3. **The Harlem Renaissance.** Fisk University's Steiglitz Collection, along with the work of Aaron Douglas, former head of the art department at Fisk, draws a clear connection between the writings, artwork, and inspiration of the Harlem Renaissance and Nashville.

1. The Traditional Narrative Introduced Through Film

> **"All human action is expressive; a gesture is an intentionally expressive action. All art is expressive—of its author and of the situation in which he works—but some art is intended to move us through visual gestures that transmit, and perhaps give release to, emotions and emotionally charged messages. Such art is expressionist. A lot of twentieth-century art, especially in Central Europe, has been of this kind and the label 'Expressionism' has been attached to it (as also to comparable tendencies in literature, architecture, and music). But there was never a movement called Expressionism."[3]**

2. Barbara Haskell, *The American Century: Art & Culture*, *1900-1950* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997).

3. Norbert Lynton. "Expressionism," in *Concepts of Modern Art*, Nikos Stangos and Tony Richardson, ed. (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1974), 30.

In understanding the shift from an older European context, disrupted by a war that killed close to 10 million combatants, to the postwar era in America and specifically New York, the 1920s is a seminal period. The decade opens with the aftershocks of World War I and the revolution in Russia, and eventually falls apart in a worldwide depression in 1929. If one of the questions implied by the art in any age is: "What do these images say about us as human beings, and as individuals," the war called into question the relevance of any and all conventional institutions belonging to the old world. The expressive paintings of Beckmann, Dix, or Grosz, or the prints of Kollwitz, are works derived from the context of human suffering experienced during this war. Rather than look away from this tragedy, these artists confronted viewers and forced them to come face to face with the reality of these failures as a breakdown of "civilized society." This loss of faith in institutions, even those such as the "wizardry" of psychiatry, is exposed through the new medium of film in Robert Wiene's 1919 film, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. If Goya recalled the image of *Saturn Devouring His Sons* as a personal horrific metaphor for his experience at the end of his life in Spain, why not raise a Gollum, a somnambulist, to terrorize contemporary audiences? Although escapist in nature, American movie houses in the 1920s were filled with films based upon similar terrifying characters, such as *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1920), *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1921), *Nosferatu* (1922), and *The Phantom of the Opera* (1925). These films not only provided artists with a new medium but also could reach a wider audience beyond the reach of traditional venues of art.

> **"SURREALISM, n. Pure psychic automatism, by which it is intended to express, verbally, in writing, or by other means, the real process of thought. Thought's dictation, in the absence of all control exercised by the reason and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupations.**
> **ENCYCL. Philos. Surrealism rests in the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of association neglected heretofore; in the omnipotence of the dream and in the disinterested play of thought. It tends definitely to do away with all other psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in the solution of the principal problems of life."** [4]

The natural landscape morphed into an internalized setting in the program of Surrealism. André Breton wrote its manifesto in 1924. Like Dada, which preceded it, Surrealism became an international movement spanning all mediums, including music, literature, and film. Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dali's *Un Chien d'Andalou*, created in 1929, exemplifies surrealist film. The strange juxtaposition of images and objects in each dreamlike scene combined with the full range of surrealist ideals, from violence and sex to decay to the world of dreams is given full expression in this film.[5] While it is tempting to dwell on Surrealism, the amount of time allotted to the movement needs to be moderate. Teaching high school students "Veristic or Natural Surrealism" (the images by Dali and Magritte, for example) offers the opportunity

4. André Breton, "What is Surrealism?" in Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 410.

5. When choosing to use any film as a starting point to reference a particular art movement, it goes without saying that careful selection of each clip is necessary. This is particularly true of this film.

for students to "catch their breath" from the onslaught of abstraction seen in the opening decade of the century. While the subject matter is puzzling and intriguing, the imagery displays familiar formal components, such as depth, light, and the depiction of identifiable objects. "Absolute or Organic Surrealism" (the images by Klee and Arp, for example) follows in the tradition of Dada and introduces organic forms and images derived from children's art and prehistoric cave paintings. In a world in which science was redefining the way the world was understood, Surrealism became the artist's experiment in self-discovery, with its laboratory the inner life of its subject. As with Expressionism, the medium of film becomes the vehicle where the ideas of a movement may be introduced.

> **"The Staatliches Bauhaus, founded after the catastrophe of the war in the chaos of the revolution and in the era of the flowering of an emotion-laden, explosive art, becomes the rallying-point of all those who, with belief in the future and with sky-storming enthusiasm, wish to build the 'cathedral of Socialism'."[6]**

The realm of architecture and architectural theory offers both the teacher and student the greatest challenge during this period. Addressing the void left by World War I, simultaneous movements in architecture blossomed throughout Europe. In Holland, the movements of De Stijl (represented by Rietveld) and NeoPlasticism (represented by Mondrian) established a modern design vocabulary. In Germany, the movement of the Bauhaus (represented by Gropius and Mies van der Rohe) sought to unify training and collaboration of all the arts. These movements grew on the foundations of earlier arts and crafts movements that had been halted by the war. The primary difference in this decade was the acceptance of a machine aesthetic that permeated all the arts. No film incorporates an urban vision derived from a machine aesthetic better than Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927). Bordering on the nightmare as opposed to the pleasant dream, this work describes a new world dominated by the machine and the power of the few who control it. While too long to view in its entirety, any clip is certain to bring home the dynamic nature of the machine age, whose images and forms are fascinating. While extreme in its vision, it parallels all of these architectural movements, in that all are united in their adherence to the machine and the dilemma of the modern worker.

With the organization of the Bauhaus in 1919 by Walter Gropius and the construction of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye in 1928, and Mies van der Rohe's German Pavilion at the 1929 Barcelona Exposition, the formal characteristics of modern architecture were firmly established. They were motivated in large part by the desire to produce a modern answer to the design needs of the twentieth century and to provide for the housing needs of a working class. Architecture throughout this period conveyed a social agenda as part of its utopian vision. In 1928, the International Congress of Modern Architecture, organized by Le Corbusier and Siegfried Giedion, set a program for modern architecture that would last

6. Oskar Schlemmer, "Manifesto for the First Bauhaus Exhibition," in Ulrich Conrad's *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-Century Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1971), 69.

until the 1950s. By 1932, this architectural approach had been identified by the Museum of Modern Art as the International Style, and the style would appear in almost every city in this country, fueled by the immigration of many of the leaders of the European architectural avant-garde to America.[7]

> **"The realization of our perceptions of the world in the forms of space and time is the only aim of our pictorial and plastic art.**
> **In them, we do not measure our works with the yardstick of beauty, we do not weigh them with pounds of tenderness and sentiments.**
> **The plumb-line in our hand, eyes as precise as a ruler, in a spirit as taut as a compass... we construct our work as the universe constructs its own, as the engineer constructs his bridges, as a mathematician his formula of the orbits."** [8]

The art movement of Russian Constructivism or NeoRealism (represented by artists such as Gabo and Pevsner) was the outgrowth of Kandinsky's redefinition of nonobjective art and Malevich's Suprematist abstractions. Just as Kandinsky cannot be understood without both Cubism and Futurism, the artists of these two movements need the context of World War I and the Russian Revolution to be understood. Entirely political, the agenda of the Constructivists was to provide a radically revolutionary art form to attend a radically redefined Communist society. They redefined the vocabulary of color, volume, mass, and space. With the death of Lenin in 1924 and the eventual rise of Stalin, any hope of artistic movements that would parallel attempts to shape a new society was crushed by the adoption of a Socialist narrative art that, interestingly enough, closely resembled the narrative art of Fascism. Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 film *Battleship Potemkin* masterfully crafted a background for the revolt and suppression of Russian sailors and villagers by the czar's troops. The importance of this film to the history of cinema, and its overlap with the radical techniques employed by Russian avant-garde artists, make it worth introducing here.

2. The American Agenda: American Art Deco, the Precisionists, Photography, and the Regionalists

A discussion of America during the 1920s brings us to the juxtapositions mentioned in the initial quotation. Politically, it was the decade in which the 18th Amendment was added to the Constitution, prohibiting alcohol and leading to the rise of gangster violence in the Midwest. It was also the decade of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote.[9] America, whose armed forces tipped the tide of the outcome of World War I, turned inward by limiting immigration and retreating from its global responsibilities. This was the age of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sinclair Lewis, and Ernest Hemingway, whose writing identified the heroic nature of the youthful American for the twentieth century. That youthful spirit also found its

7. Walter Gropius went to Harvard, Mies van der Rohe went to Chicago, Josef Albers (of the Bauhaus) went to Yale and then Black Mountain College, and Piet Mondrian went to New York City.

8. Naum Gabo, "The Realistic Manifesto," in Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 325.

9. It was Tennessee's ratification of this amendment that proved to be the vote that made the amendment official.

expression in jazz, as the country attempted to ignore the effects of a worldwide economic depression. In addition to big bands such as those of Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong, American listeners were treated to the sounds of Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" (1924) and "An American in Paris" (1928).

Architecture in America continued to be defined by the development of the skyscraper, the businessman's urban expression of himself and his prowess. Influenced by the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs and Industriels Moderne in Paris, Art Deco was adopted as the official representative of the modern style. The Chrysler Building in New York, designed by van Alen and constructed between 1928 and 1930, stands as a testament to the power of this style. Art Deco would find expression in all areas of modern life from the graphic arts to household wares. Through the sharpened lens of Precisionist artists like Charles Sheeler, a utopian industrial landscape was added to our urban environment. Regional artists throughout the country, in contrast, sought the familiar and uniquely American way of life as a source of inspiration. One does not have to travel far to experience some of the best work from this era. Exploring the rich architectural history of Nashville, Tennessee, for example, one finds the influence of Art Deco. In addition, the Van Vechten Gallery at Fisk University is filled with some excellent examples of early American modernist photography from this period, including the work of Steiglitz. The trick for the teacher is to identify the gems in their own hometown and capitalize on them. It is worth the effort.

3. Harlem Renaissance

> **"There are so many things that I had seen for the first time, so many impressions I was getting. One was that of seeing a big city that was entirely black, from beginning to end you were impressed by the fact that black people were in charge of things and here was a black city and here was a situation that was eventually to be the center for the great in American Culture."[10]**

While American Art can be viewed as a search for an identity that lay outside the boundaries of Europe, it was in Harlem, where writers such as Langston Hughes and James Weldon Johnson, artists such as Aaron Douglas and William H. Johnson, actors such as Paul Robeson, and musicians such as Duke Ellington explored what it meant to be black and American. Their influence was felt far beyond the geographical and chronological borders of New York City. Again, the connections that can be drawn between New York and Nashville are numerous. The work of Aaron Douglas is an example. Douglas was chairman of the art department at Fisk University, and the university houses a number of his works. Cravath Hall, an Art Deco building in the middle of campus, houses a series of murals by Aaron Douglas describing the achievements of African Americans in all fields of learning, while the library displays Douglas's *Building More Stately Mansions*. Although this work was

10. Aaron Douglas, "Aaron Douglas Chats About the Harlem Renaissance," in *The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader,* David Levering Lewis, ed. (New York: Viking, 1994), 118–119.

completed in 1944, it offers a direct tie to the Harlem Renaissance, while familiarizing my students with a part of Nashville's history.

It goes without saying that there can be no singular blueprint for covering material from any age. The challenge of teaching this subject is that it offers an infinite number of potentially rewarding possibilities, with each year building upon itself. Deepening the experience of the survey course adds a rich layer to the texture of the material and continually offers new opportunities for both the teacher and the student. What is important is taking the step to make this material more relevant. The Surrealist desire to bring together the reality of the dream world and the waking world is a fitting paradigm for the relationship between life and art. Our work at the high school level is just a beginning.

Lesson Plan

Art Deco in Nashville

Introduction

A number of possibilities exist for approaches that extend beyond the traditional narrative. While the use of film as an anchor for the presentation of familiar art movements during the decade of the 1920s works well to introduce essential ideas and themes, the larger context for understanding a modern period begins when one asks questions of one's environment. I consciously have tried to get my students out of the darkened classroom and into their city. By the time we reach the modern period, students have been responsible for quarterly writings on art shows that are organized at various venues around Nashville. They are also responsible for finding and reporting on a number of architectural sites around the city. In the first quarter, an assignment features a visit to Nashville's Parthenon, followed up with visits to architectural structures that exhibit Classical characteristics. We study the Acropolis and Classical Greek art in the classroom. Armed with that information and a handout with quotes on the Greek Parthenon by Le Corbusier and historian Vincent Scully, students are asked to not only respond to the building itself but to respond to prominent individuals who reference the Parthenon in their writing. Students are asked to follow this up in the second quarter with a search for architecture that features inspiration from Romanesque and Gothic sources, including examples that are not churches. Students are asked to look at both the characteristics of each style and the proportions of the structures. The third quarter offers a class visit to Nashville's Sri Ganesha Temple. This is a Hindu temple built in 1985. Since few of my students are Hindu, this offers a genuine opportunity to look in-depth at a culture beyond the European tradition. The final quarter, despite its increased focus upon the test, is devoted to some aspect of modernism. The assignment this year will deal with Art Deco.

Art Deco Assignment

Patterned after the other three assignments, students are asked to prepare for their journey by reading the appropriate sections of the text. Since Art Deco, calling itself the Modern Style, is an approximation and summation of Bauhaus, Constructivist, and other modernist sources of inspiration, it is a good way to tie together many of the disparate influences in modern architecture, graphic art, and sculpture. Reading the presentation in the text is the departure point for each student. It presents the working definition we will use in this assignment. Each student is responsible for finding five buildings in Nashville whose characteristics reflect Art Deco elements. Using digital images, drawings, or throwaway cameras, students are asked to photograph the building, as well as details that they see as specifically Art Deco. A short description of each building, its location, and its function accompany each work. Students are encouraged to do this part of the assignment in groups. Rather than limit this assignment to an architectural study, I ask each student to augment the images of their Art Deco structures with copies of advertisements from prominent contemporary magazines (they can be found in the school library) that feature an Art Deco image and spirit. Last of all, I require each student to complete the assignment by making a visit to Nashville's Lane Motor Museum to compare automobiles build at the end of the 1920s with the Art Deco styles they have seen in class, in buildings around town, and in graphic media. They are also encouraged to make this trip in groups. Each of these examples that the students see and the images they select exist as firsthand documents. I am interested in seeing how each student makes sense of these disparate images from completely different but familiar media. In anticipation of what they will see later in class with the art of the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, I want them to begin to start looking at images that go beyond "traditional" art media. Each student will be asked to respond to the elements of style that are common among all of these images. I also have them refer to the specific volume of the magazine where they found their printed image(s) and identify the issues that the magazine treats as important.

Assessment and Conclusion

This assignment will be given at the beginning of the last quarter after we return from spring break. It will be due in mid-April as we are working our way through this period. Each paper will include the results of their search. The aim of the assignment is to synthesize this material into a new definition of Art Deco. Students are also judged upon the quality of the works they choose, since it is my experience that the quality of their answers is dependent upon the quality of their choices. As with any exercise that extends beyond the classroom, the value of the experience is not an end in itself. In this exercise, students also will gain knowledge of their own city.

Selected Bibliography

Breton, André. "What is Surrealism?" in Hershel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.

Douglas, Aaron. "Aaron Douglas Chats about the Harlem Renaissance." In *The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader.* David Levering Lewis, ed. New York: Viking, 1994.

Duchamp, Marcel, "Painting... at the Service of the Mind." In Hershel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.

Gabo, Naum. "The Realistic Manifesto." In Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.

Haskell, Barbara. *The American Century: Art & Culture, 1900–1950.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997.

Lynton,Norbert. "Expressionism." In *Concepts of Modern Art*. Nikos Stangos, and Tony Richardson, ed. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1974.

Malevich, Kasimir. "Suprematism." In Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.

Schlemmer, Oskar. "Manifesto for the First Bauhaus Exhibition." In Ulrich Conrad's, *Programs and Manifestos on 20th Century Architecture*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1971.

The Bauhaus and Modernism

Jeff Ball
Minnesota State University
Moorhead, Minnesota

Twentieth-century functionalist modernism has come under heavy criticism over the last several decades. In the eclectic design world of today, the strict limits imposed by the functionalist aesthetic that emerged after 1900 seems to restrain creativity, social interaction, and human desire for whimsy, humor, and variety. How can one explain to AP Art History students the motivations of the modernists and their desire to fix the world's ills through efficient design? More directly, how can one develop in them an appreciation for these modern buildings and products? As is usually the case, the answer comes through greater knowledge. By looking at the philosophy and aesthetics of the Bauhaus, the preeminent model for understanding modernist ideals, students can explore these original ideas and the methods for their application to modern life. A study of the Bauhaus also provides us with an important model for looking at the role of the machine in modern art and design, an issue of continued importance in the world today.

Founded in 1919 by Walter Gropius, the Bauhaus is the most famous example of early twentieth century modernist ideals applied to the education of artists, designers, and architects. Until it was closed by Nazi authorities in 1933, the school's curriculum centered on the concept of functionalism, an idea expressed directly in Gropius's design for the school's new building, opened in 1926 in Dessau, Germany. The Bauhaus philosophy had its origins in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century artistic movements that attempted to re-establish the close ties between artistic creativity and production, a bond many felt had been destroyed by the Industrial Revolution. Its curriculum was based on a return to workshop training, as opposed to what Gropius felt was an impractical system of academic studio education. The structure of the school, at least initially, incorporated the processes of art academies, schools of arts and crafts, and architectural training, resulting in a closer cooperation between the "fine" and "applied" arts and architecture. A major aim was to elevate the status of the various crafts to that of the fine arts. Another key concept fully explored at the Bauhaus was the unification of all the arts through basic design principles. Echoes of this idea are seen in the foundation courses included in most art programs to this day.

History of the School

The history of the Bauhaus divides into three distinct stages. The school was established in 1919 in Weimar when two earlier academies, the Academy of Fine Arts and the School of Applied Arts, were incorporated under Gropius's leadership. He published a manifesto that first year that outlined the school's purpose and hope. In it, Gropius emphasized the desire to unify the arts and crafts so as to make a better society:

> The ultimate aim of all artistic activity is building. Architects, sculptors, painters, we must all get back to craft…The artist is a heightened manifestation of the craftsman. Let us

> create a new guild of craftsmen without the class snobbery that set out to raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist. Let us conceive, consider, and create together the new building of the future that will bring all into one simple integrated creation: architecture, painting and sculpture rising to heaven out of the hands of a million craftsmen, the crystal symbol of the new faith in the future.[1]

Such attitudes, echoing the earlier writings of A.W.N. Pugin, John Ruskin, and William Morris, and associated with the English Arts and Crafts Movement, were potent in the postwar period. During this period, Gropius was one of the many people who had serious doubts about the relationship between the machine and progress, a position he expressed before the war. Initially, at least, his ideas for the Bauhaus reflected a romantic idealism toward the Middle Ages and its perceived union of spirituality and community.

Leading avant-garde artists joined Gropius as instructors. The initial group of teachers included Lyonel Feininger and Johannes Itten, soon to be joined by Paul Klee, Oskar Schlemmer, and Wassily Kandinsky. The curriculum was based on the mixture of craft and art suggested by Gropius's manifesto. Every student started with a six-month design course (*Vorkurs)* taught by Itten. This course was meant to teach the students that all of their production, regardless of medium, was based on simple principles of design and its relationship to the creator's intuition, expression, and intellect. It was also designed to clear the minds of the students of any preconceived ideas the teachers felt were rooted in outdated European educational practices.

After this compulsory course, students moved on to the study of their chosen media and skills. These courses lasted three years, and were designed to stress the dual nature of creation rooted in artistic and practical instruction. Kandinsky's course "Introduction to the Abstract Elements of Form," was representative of the artistic approach. The practical approach was centered on the Bauhaus workshops, Gropius's replacement for the traditional art school studios. In the early period of the school, terms like master and apprentice replaced professor and student. Two masters ran each workshop—an artist and a craftsperson. The truly revolutionary activity of the Bauhaus took place in these workshops. The two masters stressed that the students should learn the fundamentals of their areas by doing, concentrating on practical craftsmanship wedded to their own aesthetic language. As Gropius put it, the individual creative ideas of the form master were transformed into "a public institutional language."

By 1922, Gropius moved away from his utopian ideas of craft-based creativity, and began to consider the use of industrial production to change society for the better. As the war retreated further into history, as well as the memory of its industrialized death and destruction, people turned increasingly to solving the problems of meeting their practical and necessary needs

1. Walter Gropius, "Program of the Staatliche Bauhaus in Weimar," April 1919; cited in William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 3rd Ed. (London and New York: Phaidon Press, 1996), 184.

through technological means. This new approach away from craft and toward industry coincided with the integration of Russian Constructivist and De Stijl ideas into the school's curriculum. Kandinsky contributed to this, but its strongest adherents were new instructors El Lissitzky, Theo van Doesburg, and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, who replaced Itten as the *Vorkurs* teacher. Moholy-Nagy introduced scientific content, and technical reproducibility became the guiding principle for the entire school. As Gropius famously put it, "Art and technology, a new unity: technology does not need art, but art does need technology."[2]

The new energy and approach was celebrated publicly in the form of a large exhibition in 1923 that attracted more than 15,000 visitors. The display items produced in the workshops featured the formalist, modernist ideas of the school's leaders, marked by simple geometries and reduced forms. The show received positive reviews, but conservative political forces attacked the avant-garde approach of the curriculum. The state cut its financial support so severely after the victory of right-wing parties in the 1924 elections that in March 1925 the Bauhaus at Weimar closed.

The Dessau Years and the Bauhaus Building

The second stage of the school started with its move to Dessau, an emerging industrial town in eastern Germany. With the move came changes to the curriculum. The compulsory course was lengthened to an entire year. Josef Albers, who had been a student at the Bauhaus since 1920, taught it from 1926 until the close of the school in 1933. The workshops were overhauled to give them a greater emphasis on industrial design. For instance, the printing department was renamed the advertising department. Instead of the dual teaching model of an artist and a craftsperson, the heads of the workshops were now entrusted to a group of Bauhaus-trained teachers known as the Young Masters.

Walter Gropius, *Bauhaus,* Dessau, Germany, 1925–1926

2. Quoted in Curtis, 198.

With the financial support of the city of Dessau, Gropius designed a new building to house the school Finished in 1926, his design is one of the key milestones of functionalist architecture and served as a crucial model for the emerging International Style of modernism. Using the primary materials of modern architecture–steel, concrete, and glass–Gropius clearly expressed the separate interior functions of the school with corresponding exterior cladding. For the workshops, he used huge fields of glass to produce a formal echo of the large open spaces within. The living areas were marked by simple geometric balconies emerging from unornamented concrete walls punctuated by simple windows. The plan of the new building reflected Gropius's belief in the dynamism of the new age of industry. It was arranged as an asymmetrical triad of rectangular blocks, which in plan reminded one of circular energy and dynamic unbalance. Gropius suggested the motion of an airplane propeller as an appropriate metaphor for the quickened modern condition. The new building seemed to mark the full emergence of the school and its principles. The assertively modern building was a reminder to the instructors and students of their mission, to change the world for the better through practical and usable designs.

The period of 1925 to 1930 is in many ways the high point of the Bauhaus. In the same way that Gropius's building became a key model for subsequent modernist design, so too did the new approaches to production in the workshops transform modern design in general. The school had emerged as a laboratory, producing prototypes for industrial production, with the textile, metal, and furniture workshops especially successful. Marcel Breuer, who had been a student at the school since 1920, ran the furniture workshop, and produced successful designs in tubular steel directly related to their functions and easily adaptable for mass manufacturing. His chairs are perhaps the most famous of such pieces, known for their strength, openness of form, lightness, and ease of movement, with the frame acting as a skid. Moholy-Nagy ran the metal workshops and produced innovative modernist designs for such items as light fixtures. Other notable developments of this period were the simple and bold typefaces of the advertising department, led by Herbert Bayer, as well as the industrial approach to textile design, whose workshops were led by Gunta Stölzl. She focused on integrating both utilitarian materials (for furnishings, especially) and new types of materials such a synthetic fibers.

In 1927, the Bauhaus finally set up a department of architecture, led by the Swiss architect Hannes Meyer, who succeeded Gropius as director of the Bauhaus a year later. The method of training architects had a profound influence on the practices of other schools. Meyer introduced a curriculum founded on scientific principles, with no attention to aesthetic ideas that he felt were antithetical to his socialist-inspired functionalist approach. Discarded was any interest in history, decoration, and ornament, except as they reflected the purity and simplicity of socially effective designs. The department of architecture soon became the central focus of the entire school. At the same time, this was the period of greatest profitability for the school, as its prototypes of clean designs for modern goods coincided with the industrial rebirth of the German economy.

Marcel Breuer, *Wassily Chair*, 1925

Gunta Stölzl, *Gobelin* tapestry, 1926–1927

With Meyer as the new director, conflicts arose among the faculty over the new direction of the Bauhaus. By 1930, most of the major early figures had left, including Gropius, Klee, Moholy-Nagy, and Breuer. Meyer himself was dismissed in 1930 because of his Marxist connections. Gropius recommended that the new director be Mies van der Rohe, another functionalist architect. Mies steered the school away from politics and returned it to some of its founding ideas, especially the demand for the highest aesthetic standards of production. Under his leadership, the Bauhaus turned more to a traditional teaching format, reducing the importance of the production workshops.

With the victory of the National Socialist in the local elections of 1932, the Dessau Bauhaus was closed down. It moved to Steglitz, Berlin, where it operated under very difficult financial conditions, before closing for good in 1933 when Adolf Hitler seized power.

The Influence of the Bauhaus

Many of the key figures associated with the Bauhaus found their way to safer areas outside of Germany in the years leading up to World War II. Some became highly influential teachers and promoted Bauhaus methods wherever they ended up. Gropius joined the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University in 1938; Mies settled in Chicago and became the director of the College of Architecture, Planning, and Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1938; Josef Albers and his wife, Anni—who had been a student at the Bauhaus and emerged as an influential textile designer—settled in North Carolina at Black Mountain College. Their courses and workshops probably had the greatest impact on spreading Bauhaus design and teaching methods in the United States.

The Bauhaus became identified with all things modern, functionalist, and clean-lined. It has left its mark on most areas of human production from architecture to textile design. The Bauhaus "created the patterns and set the standards of present-day industrial design; it helped to invent modern architecture; it altered the look of everything from the chair you are sitting in to the page you are reading now."[3]

It is very likely that the classroom you use today is heavily influenced by the Bauhaus. Beyond its role as a center of modernist ideals, the school's impact on how we think of our place in the modern, industrialized world, and the opportunities and limits of how we can change that world, are its greater influences. Its strict modernist aesthetic is still seen in many designers, though most have rejected its limiting principles. What does echo down to today, however, is a Bauhaus attitude of embracing the modern experience, and in doing so, finding the visual metaphors for contemporary life. By looking closely at Gropius and the Bauhaus, your students will open a window on the world that surrounds them still.

3. Wolf von Eckardt, "The Bauhaus," *Horizon* 4 (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., November 1961), 58.

Lesson Plan

A Project for Teaching the Bauhaus and Modernism

Introduction

The impact of modernism is fundamental to understanding twentieth-century art and design. This project allows your students to explore the wide-ranging influence of modernism on many areas of daily life. Fundamental to the Bauhaus ideals is that modern life is pervaded by the results of technology and industry. Thus, modern design must embrace that idea as a foundation of a modern aesthetic. In addition, that vision must be applied to all aspects of our surrounds, from the chairs we sit on to the screws that hold it together.

The Project

After researching various modernist figures and movements connected with the Bauhaus, your students will bring that material together to create a modernist space filled with art and products appropriate to it and conforming to the principles of the Bauhaus and its adherents. Included below is a list of key designers in various media that are possible research areas. Examples of their work are easily found on the Internet and in books on modern design.

This project will work best after the unit on the Bauhaus and modernism is taught. It will take at least a week to do the proper research and presentation material once it is assigned. When you start the project, remind the students of the basic concepts of modernism.

- Everything starts with basic design principles properly applied.
- Modern design is interested in simplicity, with no unnecessary additions, whether that is decoration, historical references, or any other component that detracts from quality and order.
- Objects should be functional and honest to their use and material.
- Good design is easily manufactured and thus worthwhile for modern society. Modern materials are to be embraced and fully explored.
- Decoration (when used) should complement the functional, rationalist ideas of the age.

Instructional Goal

To understand the Bauhaus philosophy toward design in the practical environment of a modern space.

How will students demonstrate that the goals have been met?

Students will use self-directed and collaborative research on individual figures in modernist design to "construct" a modern environment showing the Bauhaus influence on such elements as furnishings, decorative elements, and functional pieces necessary to the space. Each choice will be accompanied with an explanatory text justifying its inclusion. The total

design will also include a summary text explaining the modernist principles demonstrated in the final space.

Performance Assessment

Overall: Is the space an appropriate modernist space according to Bauhaus ideas?

Choices: How appropriate and thoughtful are the group's selections?

Writing: Do their statements fit the Bauhaus goals and match the choices? Are they presented in a clear and well-supported manner? Is the writing well crafted?

Activity

Design a modernist interior based on Bauhaus principles and concepts. Choose the elements of the design by researching designers and selecting works by them to furnish, outfit, and decorate a modernist interior. In addition, put together an advertisement using modernist graphic design aesthetics to "advertise" the overall creation.

The space chosen doesn't matter and can be used to select the items to outfit it. Let the class decide, after some initial research, whether to choose a living space, a kitchen space, or a business space such as an office. Any of these will work equally well. The floor plan can be a simple rectangular space.

The work will be done in groups, with the number in each group determined by the teacher. Each group will have an area of responsibility that will contribute to the final design. These areas could include furniture, textiles, "craft" objects (ceramics, glass, etc.), decorative art/wall paper (including murals and wall hangings), utilitarian objects (including industrial products such as light fixtures and lamps), and graphic design components. One or two students will be chosen to act as design supervisors, making sure the choices conform to a proper modernist aesthetic as well as fit together coherently. Think of the model of a design firm, with head designers supervising the teams doing specific tasks.

Presentation of the project may be done in any number of ways. Common ways would be through presentation boards with images of pieces/elements used to explain the choices. A model could also be constructed, with small models of individual parts placed within it. Alternatively, a design notebook with a mixture of written reports, images of key works, and drawn images serves to present the whole package.

Regardless of the method of presentation, the presentation of the research is fundamental to the process of student-centered education. Set up a process by which the students teach each other the focused material that explores the modernist ideas with greater depth than the normal class periods allow. Each student should be responsible for at least one research project related to the work of his or her team. Short writings are necessary for each

piece selected, and a longer essay should be included as an overview of the entire design. Throughout the written sections, the students should show how their choices and final design conform to the Bauhaus/Modernist aesthetic and philosophy.

Time Line

Stage One: Presentation to class of Bauhaus and Modernism section.
Stage Two: Students are presented the project and organize into design teams.
Stage Three: Research and group meetings to develop final presentation.
Stage Four: Class presentations by each group, with shared critiques.

Possible Research Areas

Deutscher Werkbund
De Stijl (Netherlands)
Russian Constructivism
Machine Aesthetic
Scandinavian Modernism
Josef Albers
László Moholy-Nagy
Johannes Itten
Theo Van Doesburg
Knoll
Herman Miller
Olivetti
Thonet Company
Marcel Breuer
Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Le Corbusier
Alvar Aalto
Eero Saarinen
Gerrit Rietveld
Charles and Ray Eames
Donald Deskey
Frank Lloyd Wright
Anni Albers
Oskar Schlemmer
Gunta Stölzl
Liubov Popova
Varvara Stepanova
Benita Otte
Marianne Brandt
Wilhelm Wagenfeld
Norman Bel Geddes
Herbert Bayer
Lyonel Feininger
Alexander Rodchenko
Max Bill
Jacques Nathan-Garamond
Wassily Kandinsky
Paul Klee
Ilya Bolotowsky
Joost Schmidt
Hinnerk Scheper

Selected Bibliography

Bayer, Herbert, et al. *Bauhaus, 1919–1928*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1938.

Dearstyne, Howard, and David Spaeth, ed. *Inside the Bauhaus*. New York: Rizzoli, 1986.

Franciscono, Marcel. *Walter Gropius and the Creation of the Bauhaus in Weimar: The Ideals and Artistic Theories of Its Founding Years*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971.

Gropius, Walter. *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*. Cambridge, Mass., The MIT Press, 1965. Translated from the German by P. Morton Shand, with an introduction by Frank Pick.

Hochman, Elaine S. *Bauhaus: Crucible of Modernism*. New York: Fromm International,1997.

Kentgens-Craig, Margret. *The Bauhaus and America: First Contacts, 1919–1936*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999.

Naylor, Gillian. *The Bauhaus Reassessed: Sources and Design Theory*. New York: E.P. Dutton,1985.

Rowland, Anna. *Bauhaus Source Book*. New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1990.

Scheidig, Walter and Klaus Beyer. *Crafts of the Weimar Bauhaus, 1919–1924; An Early Experiment in Industrial Design*. New York: Reinhold Pub. Corp., 1967.

Smock, William. *The Bauhaus Ideal: Then & Now: An Illustrated Guide to Modernist Design and Its Legacy*. Chicago, Ill.: Academy Chicago Publishers, 2004.

Weltge, Wortmann Sigrid. *Women's Work: Textile Art from the Bauhaus*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1993.

Westphal, Uwe. *The Bauhaus*. London: Gallery Books, 1991.

Whitford, Frank. *Bauhaus (World of Art)*. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1984.

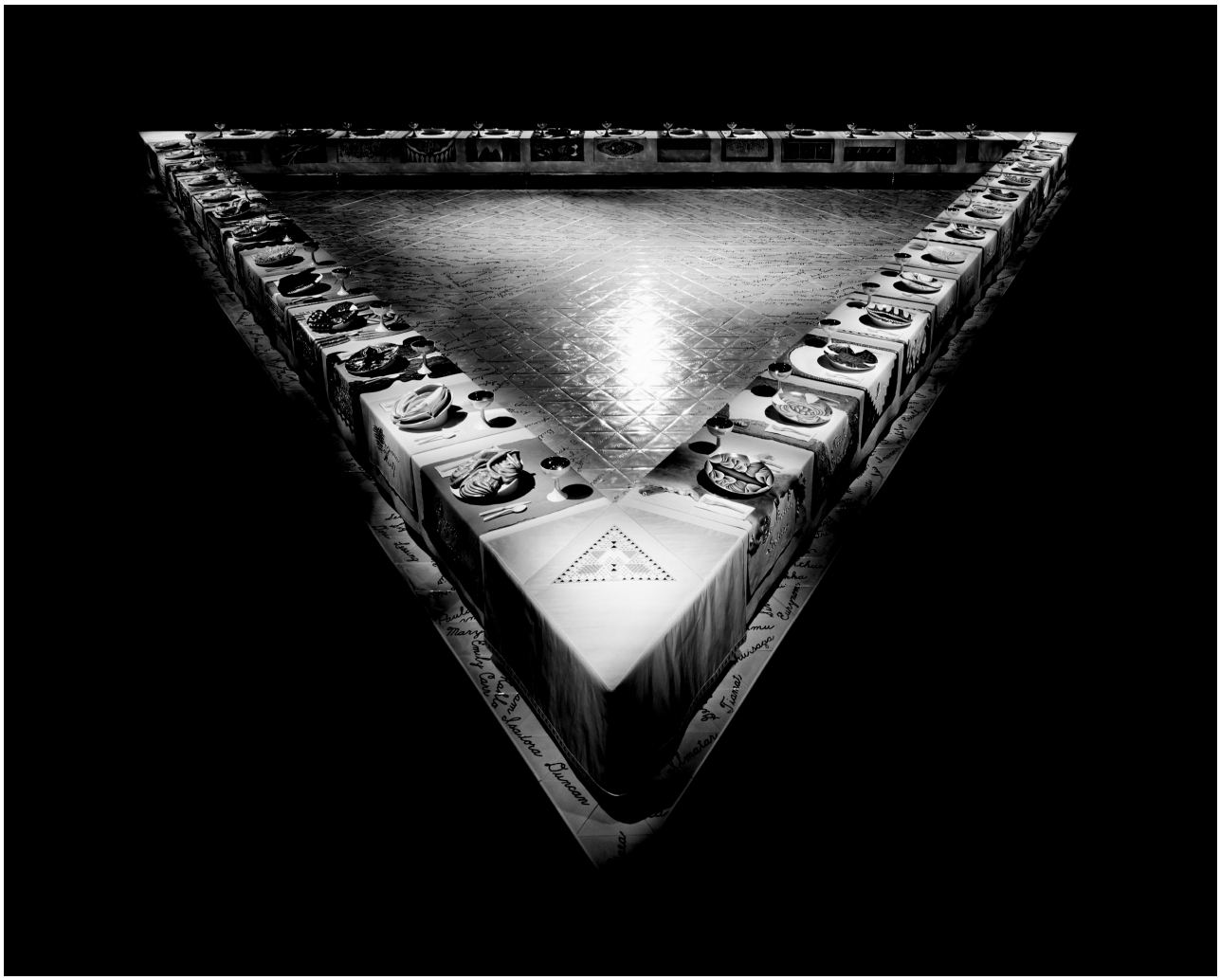
Whitford, Frank and Julia Engelhardt. *The Bauhaus: Masters & Students by Themselves*. Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 1993.

Wingler, Hans Maria and Joseph Stein. *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1969.

Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party*: Inviting Women to the Table

Cheryl Hughes
Alta High School
Sandy, Utah

Judy Chicago, *Chicago Dinner Party*, 1979



Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* has experienced a roller-coaster relationship with the art world and the public since its debut at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1979. From its opening it drew criticism for its controversial imagery, for its use of folk art or crafts, and for its collaborative history; however, with all the slights it has received in the almost 30 years since its creation, it stands as one of the most influential works of the twentieth century. *The Dinner Party* has a place in all the major survey texts used in high school AP Art History and introductory college courses. It has been seen by over a million people in venues around the world, and in March 2007, through an historic gift from the Elizabeth A. Sackler

Foundation, it was permanently installed in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art—an 8,300-square-foot space at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Not only does the Center showcase *The Dinner Party* in a gallery designed especially to house it, but also it includes a computerized study area, a biographical gallery, a gallery space for regular exhibitions of feminist art, and a space for public education programs. After almost three decades, Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* has taken its rightful place of honor as a pivotal work of early feminist art that celebrates the contributions of women who helped to shape their worlds and, in addition, as a work integral to opening doors to diversity and inclusion.

A serious question is what sort of space and time does Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* deserve in a high school AP Art History course? Teachers of AP Art History fully understand the challenge of teaching our course. We must teach the entire history of art, including works from beyond the European tradition, in approximately seven and a half months. At the end of that time our students need to feel prepared for success on a three-hour college-level exam. Just reaching the modern period is a challenge, and giving modern works the kind of time they deserve requires weighing the benefits of fully addressing those works against the demands of the limited days leading up to the AP Exam.

I would argue that *The Dinner Party* is a work that merits in-depth analysis due to its impact on the feminist art movement. It is a work that changed the way artists think about women, the human body, and the inclusion of what were once considered merely craft elements in their own works. Finally, our students need to be aware of *The Dinner Party's* historic importance, as well as the 1,038 women it presents who made significant contributions to our culture.

As we begin looking at *The Dinner Party*, it is important to take a moment to reflect on the way the attitudes about women artists and the availability of information on women of achievement in any field have changed in the last 30 years. We are fortunate to live in a time when the art history survey texts we use contain information on hundreds of women artists and when many new novels such as *The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant (1998), or *Waiting for Odysseus* by Clemence McLaren (2004) are inviting us to rethink classic stories in the Western tradition through a female protagonist's point of view. Judy Chicago was not so fortunate. In order to gain an appreciation for the challenges she would have faced as a young woman artist just beginning her career, we need to look at what was available for students and artists at the time of this work's inception.

Motivation for *The Dinner Party* and finding the women who deserved to be invited

In the late 1960s, Judy Chicago was an undergraduate art student at UCLA. She took a course on the intellectual history of Europe and asked her professor, a respected historian, if he would, at some point in the quarter, talk about the contributions made by women to the Western Tradition. He promised to do so on the last day of class. After looking forward to hearing what he would have to say all semester, she remembers that he "strode in and

announced: 'Women's contributions to European intellectual history? They made none.'" (quoted in *The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago, p. 3). Of course, women had contributed to European culture, which made her professor's statement infuriating. But it motivated Chicago to begin a research project that would consume over five years and absorb the efforts of up to 400 people. Obstacles immediately arose. For one thing, very few women in any area were included in most of the general textbooks used in the early 1970s. In the area of art history, Kathe Kollwitz was the only female artist indexed in Helen Gardner's 5th edition (1970) of *Art Through the Ages*. None of the women who are a standard part of our courses today such as Artemisia Gentileschi, Mary Cassatt, or Georgia O'Keeffe appeared in the text.

Chicago received help during the research phase of her project when Diane Gelon, a young feminist activist and art history student, joined her efforts. Gelon took over the responsibility of cataloging all the research material that was being produced as numerous assistants uncovered the names of thousands of women who had made contributions to civilization over the centuries. Over the next few years, as the number of women's names grew, the plan for a Heritage Floor to showcase those names took shape and was supervised by Gelon.

Searching for form, media, and technique

In the early 1970s, Judy Chicago saw a hand-painted porcelain plate hanging on a wall in an antiques store and began to think about the possibility of uniquely designed and painted plates as the form to symbolically represent the women of achievement she would honor. When she later saw a set of hand-painted dishes displayed on a table in another shop, her vision for the project changed and began to assume its final form. She started thinking about traditional paintings of meals, specifically paintings of the Last Supper, a religious gathering attended by 13 men of importance. For the first time Chicago thought of her work as "a dinner party," and began referring to it ironically as "a reinterpretation of the Last Supper from the point of view of those who've done the cooking throughout history." Her plan was to represent 13 women who had made significant contributions to Western culture and thought, through 13 individual place settings. The number 13 referenced both the number of men who attended the Last Supper and the number of women in a witches' coven. Chicago hoped the shared number would call on viewers to consider why one group was traditionally perceived as holy and the other as evil. As the number of women's names grew to several thousand, it became obvious that the project needed to be expanded. It was at this point that the design of the table was altered to make room for representing three times as many women. The single table became three tables, shaped like an equilateral triangle, and the number of places at the table was extended to 39. The final criteria for selecting the 39 women to be represented was established based on three questions:

1. Has this woman made a worthwhile contribution to her society/world?
2. Has this woman or her work improved women's lives?
3. Does this woman's life and work illuminate a moment in history or provide a model for greater equality for women?

Judy Chicago spent the next two years learning the technique of china painting. Prior to the beginnings of *The Dinner Party* project, Chicago had been working on developing an iconography for the feminine. She had been combining forms that were connected to female anatomy and the concept of freedom by using vulval imagery, flowers, and butterfly motifs. She felt it was important to draw on the shapes of female genitalia openly and without embarrassment, and to combine them with an ancient symbol for freedom—the butterfly (James Hall, in his *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*, notes that in both ancient and Christian art, images of the butterfly emerging from its chrysalis symbolize a human soul being freed from the body at death). Chicago also began to sense that as historical conditions changed for women and they began to gain more freedom and power, she would need a form to express that new freedom. She felt adding a three-dimensional element to the plates would make her designs and patterns more active. Leonard Skuro, a graduate ceramics student at UCLA, helped her in the creation of these plates. It was at this point in the process that Susan Hill came to Judy Chicago to volunteer her time and help. Hill brought with her expertise in medieval needlework and introduced Chicago to ecclesiastical embroidery and the exquisite handwork that had been created by anonymous women of faith for centuries. The idea of adding runners stitched with symbols to facilitate telling the story of each woman at the table began to take shape. When Ken Gilliam, who would design the structural and mechanical foundations necessary for this installation, joined the effort, the studio team was complete, and the dream of *The Dinner Party* began to be realized. Close to a decade of research, planning, and work by Judy Chicago and hundreds of volunteers and assistants resulted in the installation titled *The Dinner Party* and its public life began.

The Completed Work

Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* debuted in 1979 at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and was a huge success. More than 5,000 people attended the opening, and more than 100,000 people visited the exhibit during its three-month showing. *The Dinner Party*'s final form is an installation with many parts, introduced by a series of six woven tapestries that include a series of short phrases. Their presence at the entry to the installation asks viewers to recognize women's history and women's contributions to our civilization. They are joined by three acknowledgment panels that list the names of the hundreds of people who assisted in the project. Finally, seven Heritage Panels document the lives of the 39 women represented at the table and the 999 women whose names are inscribed in the tiles of the Heritage Floor on which the table rests.

The central part of *The Dinner Party* is a table in the shape of an equilateral triangle that measures 48 feet per side. On the table are 39 place settings, each of which presents a symbolic portrait of a specific woman. Each setting includes a runner embellished with needlework, a white napkin with edges stitched in gold, lusterware utensils, a goblet, and a ceramic hand-painted plate. The entire work rests on the Heritage floor—a floor composed of 2,300 ceramic tiles inscribed with the names of 999 other women of achievement. These names are hand-written in layers of gold that give off rainbow hues, throwing colored shadows on the backs of the runners creating a magical glow throughout the room. The

names are arranged behind individual place settings that share a common historical period, geographic area, or field of contribution.

The wings of the three-sided table represent three chronological time periods: Wing One begins with Prehistory and ends with Classical Rome; Wing Two begins with the beginning of Christianity and ends with the Reformation; and Wing Three begins with the American Revolution and ends with the Women's Revolution. The complete list of the individual women represented at each wing is included at the close of this article.

Example of an individual place setting

***Chicago Dinner Party*, Eleanor of Aquitaine setting, 1979**

A discussion of Eleanor of Aquitaine's plate and runner, situated in the middle of Wing Two of *The Dinner Party*, reveals the way plates and runners work together to tell the stories of specific women. Eleanor's plate and runner symbolically represent her rich life story with motifs drawn from her time as both Queen of France and Queen of England. When Eleanor married Louis VII of France at age 15, she brought with her the rich duchy of Aquitaine and the loyalty of the southern nobles connected to it. While married to Louis, she accompanied him on a crusade with 300 women—the Queen's Amazons—who were ready to provide services for the wounded or sick and to fight if needed. The crusade was a disaster, and shortly afterward, Eleanor divorced Louis and married King Henry II of England. While queen in England, she established "courts of love," cultural and social centers where the poetry and music of troubadours were celebrated. In this feudal setting, women heard cases concerning relationships between men and women and set rules for social behavior. Eleanor's attempts to make a significant difference in her world were ended when Henry had her imprisoned for plotting with her sons Richard (the Lion Heart) and John in a failed revolt against their father. Eleanor's plate design incorporates a fleur-de-lis, based on the iris, a flower sacred to the Virgin Mary, whose worship had reached a high point during

the Middle Ages and was integral to the success of the "courts of love." The motif had also been connected to French Royalty from at least the twelfth century and appears in the Rose window at Chartres. The designs on Eleanor's plate rise three dimensionally from its surface, metaphorically symbolizing the power she held. The runner's design is based on a famous unicorn tapestry. Woven by Audrey Cowan, it was in the Aubusson style of Renaissance tapestries. The top of the runner bears clusters of flowers centered around a corral in which the plate rests. The tapestry flowers recall the flower petals that were scattered on castle floors when courts of love were in session, and the corral symbolizes Eleanor's imprisonment. The plate and runner together are beautiful but also specific to an individual woman and work together to make connections that begin to reveal the woman's story to the viewer.

Conclusion

When Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* debuted (at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art) in 1979, it was celebrated by thousands of people. However, it was denounced by art critics, called pornographic during debates on the United States Senate Floor, and attacked by Pat Robertson, who preached against it on his radio broadcasts. Although it was scheduled for exhibition in several other venues, those exhibitions were cancelled, and in spite of thousands of hours of work by hundreds of people to bring the project to fruition, the installation was boxed up and put into storage. Today, thanks to the Elizabeth A. Sackler Foundation donation, *The Dinner Party* is permanently housed in the Brooklyn Museum of Art, where we can all experience the work for ourselves, meet the diverse women of achievement represented in it, reflect on its message, draw our own conclusions, and add our voices to the dialogue that has accompanied this work since its inception.

Lesson Plan

Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party*: Inviting Women to the Table

***Chicago Dinner Party,* Artemisia Gentileschi plate, 1979**

Introduction

When I originally decided to allow a full class period to present Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party*, I justified the time required by combining the presentation with the first stages of a year-end review. I provided a general introduction to the work and then focused specifically on eight of the women represented at the table through images of their plates and coordinating runners. Having an opportunity to examine details of each place setting, students were able to reflect on the ways plates and runners worked together to create symbolic pictures of the women represented, to tell their stories, and to highlight their contributions. We moved chronologically, beginning with Ishtar and finishing with Georgia O'Keeffe. As we concluded our discussion of each place setting, I showed selected images of works we had studied earlier in the year that were related through either historical context, geography, or function. For example, after we examined the Snake Goddess's place setting on the 1st wing, we reviewed the Minoan culture, revisiting themes, vocabulary, and images of the palace at Knossos, the Bull-leaping Fresco, and *Snake Goddess* statues. Hatshepsut's place setting was the starting point for revisiting the New Kingdom in Egypt, Hildegard of Bingen's the Middle Ages, and Artemisia Gentileschi's the Baroque in Italy.

In July of 2006, at an evening for educators at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, I gave a talk on *The Dinner Party*. At its conclusion, I asked the teachers what they thought about giving the work more class time and using it in the context of a year-end review. The response was positive, and when one teacher told the group that she had held an actual dinner party with her students in which each of them was responsible for introducing one of the women at Chicago's table, we began to think about the logistics of making that happen within our own programs. The value of the idea is two fold: first, it allows *The Dinner Party* to be taught in a physically concrete way; and second, it shifts a teacher-directed review to a student-directed one. Beginning with the idea of hosting an in-class "dinner party," I decided to structure an activity that would provide an efficient and effective review of the women artists we had studied since the beginning of the year as well as a celebration of their significant contributions to Western art.

Activity

The general plan is to host an in-class "dinner party" that will serve as both a celebration and a year-end review. Students will receive the assignment to research individual women of achievement. On the day of the "dinner party," through brief student presentations, we will revisit historically significant female figures and women artists who have contributed to the story of Western art.

Setting up the Activity

- Teachers will create a numbered list of female figures or women artists they want their students to research and present. One possibility for creating such a list is to use the 39 women honored at Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* (see list at the conclusion of this lesson plan). Since the first of these women is a primordial goddess and the last is

a modern artist, this list would provide the opportunity to review art historical periods from prehistory to the mid-twentieth century. Another possibility is to create a list using some of the women from Chicago's table, others from the Heritage Floor that supports her table, and still others, not included in Chicago's work, from art history survey texts. This second possibility would allow teachers to focus specifically on women artists and female figures representative of art historical periods or connected to specific works of art. A sample of this type of list is also included at the conclusion of this lesson plan.

- Students will receive their specific assignment after Chicago's *The Dinner Party* is introduced in class, and at least one week prior to the scheduled in-class "dinner party." The teacher will prepare a basket containing numbered pieces of paper (from one to the number of students in the class). As students arrive, they will draw a number. The number will correspond to a number on the list of women to be researched and presented.
- Teachers will give each student the description of the assignment.
- Teachers will provide each student with a paper plate and piece of paper cut in the shape of a runner.
- Teachers may choose to model the assignment if time permits.

The Day of the Activity

- Teachers will set up a table(s) for the "dinner" students will bring.
- Teachers will arrange desks to accommodate students in an equilateral triangle.
- Teachers will number the desks/places from one to the number of students participating.
- Teachers will place napkins and plates on the desks where students will be sitting.
- As students arrive, they should place their contribution to the class "potluck" on the buffet table provided and then arrange their individual place settings (runners and plates) at their assigned seats.
- After students have visited the buffet and been seated, the presentations should begin. The time allotted each student will depend on the number of students in the class.

Checklist for the day of the in-class "dinner party."

- Dinner plates for members of the class
- Napkins for members of the class
- Numbers (of the women to be presented) to put on desks to indicate where each student should sit
- Cloths or paper to cover buffet table

Assignment Handout

"The best thing about teaching is that you're learning all the time"

***The Corn is Green*—film, 1979**

We are about to have a wonderful opportunity to do research, learn for ourselves, teach our peers, be creative, review for our upcoming AP Art History Exam, *and* have a party.

The Assignment

Each of you drew a number as you entered class today. Look at the list of women of achievement you've received to see the name of the woman next to your number. This is the woman you will be responsible for researching and presenting to the class on the day of our celebration. In addition to your contribution to our "dinner," your task has three parts: an oral presentation; a bibliography showing your sources (at least three); and the creation of a runner and plate. For the first task, you will need to research the woman for whom you are responsible and prepare a brief oral presentation that you will deliver on the day of our party.

In your presentation, you should do the following:

- Situate your woman of achievement within the historical period in which she lived, connecting her life or work to events, geographical places, or art we have studied. Beyond providing relevant dates, you may want to remind us of significant historical figures or events associated with her time—these could be political, religious, or philosophical.
- If the woman was an artist, describe one of her works specifically and explain how the work contributes or relates to her art historical period.

The second part of your task will call on you to be artistically creative. In the spirit of Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party*, you will design a paper runner and plate for the woman you are to present. Your runner will hang over an individual desk into the center of our triangular "table" and will bear the name of the woman you are presenting. The first letter of her name is to be historiated. You will need to include in your letter's design an attribute that represents the woman's place in history or connects to her contribution; most important is that your historiated letter will help the rest of the class to remember something significant about her or her work. Just as Judy Chicago created designs for plates that became symbolic representations of the women at her table, you will need to design and illustrate a "paper plate" for the woman you are presenting. Again, your motivation should be to create a visual image that will help the rest of the class to remember something significant about her. You will use your runner and your plate as visual aides during the oral part of your presentation.

The "Dinner" Party

With our desks arranged in an equilateral triangle—13 desks per side, we are going to have "a dinner party." All will contribute to the "dinner" part by bringing food to share-an

appetizer, salad, or dessert. You will also need to bring your own silverware and goblet (water bottle).

Checklist of what students will need on the day of the in-class "dinner party"

- Oral report on your "woman of achievement"
- Bibliography
- Runner bearing the name of the woman with an historiated first letter
- Decorated plate
- Potluck "dinner" contribution
- Utensils and goblet (water bottle)

Chicago's *The Dinner Party*: Inviting Women to the Table

Women of Achievement:

1. Ishtar
2. Snake Goddess
3. Hatshepsut
4. Nefertiti and Tiye
5. Theodora
6. Hildegard of Bingen
7. Eleanor of Aquitaine
8. Isabella d'Este
9. Sofonisba Anguissola
10. Caterina van Hemessen
11. Lavina Teerlinc
12. Artemisia Gentileschi
13. Judith Leyster
14. Rachel Ruysch
15. Élisabeth Louise Vigée-Lebrun
16. Angelica Kauffmann
17. Julia Margaret Cameron
18. Marie-Rosalie (Rosa) Bonheur
19. Gertrude Käsebier
20. Berthe Morisot
21. Mary Cassatt
22. Paula Modersohn-Becker
23. Hannah Höch

24. Georgia O'Keeffe
25. Käthe Kollwitz
26. Meret Oppenheim
27. Frida Kahlo
28. Gunta Stölzl*
29. Barbara Hepworth
30. Dorothea Lange
31. Helen Frankenthaler*
32. Maya Ying Lin*
33. Louise Nevelson*
34. Louise Bourgeois*
35. Eva Hesse*
36. Audrey Flack*
37. Susan Rothenberg*
38. Miriam Schapiro*
39. Cindy Sherman*
40. Kiki Smith*
41. Ana Mendieta*
42. Barbara Kruger*
43. Lorna Simpson*

*These women were not included in Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party*. (Chronologically, they follow Georgia O'Keeffe, the last of the women represented at Chicago's table.)

Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party*: Inviting Women to the Table Assessment Vehicle

At the conclusion of the class dinner party, students will hand in their bibliographies and receive a take-home essay prompt. As a way to call on students to respond to one another's presentations and to prepare for the type of essay they may be called on to write for one of the 30-minute essays that are a part of the AP Art History Exam, they will be asked to respond to one of the following two essay prompts. Note that both prompts will allow students to use their own research for half of their answer but will require that they use information they learned from one of the other student's presentations for the other half.

1. Choose two women celebrated at our dinner party today. At least one of your choices must be from beyond the European tradition. Describe the contribution or context of each woman, the way her work or story has become an important part of the art historical period or culture of which she is a part, and analyze the way one work she created or one work created to represent her reflects her significance.
2. Choose two women celebrated at our dinner party today, one connected to a period prior to 1900 and one after. Identify a symbol from her plate or runner that allows you to relate what you find significant about her place in the history of art and then focus on a general way her life, story, or work has made a contribution to her culture or art historical period.

The 39 women celebrated by Judy Chicago at her *The Dinner Party*: *Wing One*: From Prehistory to Classical Rome

1. Primordial Goddess
2. Fertile Goddess
3. Ishtar
4. Kali
5. Snake Goddess
6. Sophia
7. Amazon
8. Hatshepsut (15th century B.C.E.)
9. Judith
10. Sappho (610–580 B.C.E.)
11. Aspasia (5th century B.C.E.)
12. Boadicea (died C.E. 62)
13. Hypatia (C.E. 370–415)

Wing Two: From The Beginning of Christianity to the Reformation

1. Marcella (C.E. 325–410)
2. Saint Bridget of Ireland (C.E. 451–525)

3. Theodora of Byzantium(C.E. 500–548)
4. Hrosvitha (C.E. 935–1000)
5. Trotula Salerno(C.E. 11th century)
6. Eleanor of Aquitaine (C.E.1122–1204)
7. Hildegarde of Bingen (C.E. 1098–1179)
8. Petronilla de Meath (died 1324)
9. Christine de Pizan (C.E. 1364–1430)
10. Isabella d'Este (C.E. 1474–1539)
11. Elizabeth R.—Queen Elizabeth I of England (C.E. 1533–1603)
12. Artemisia Gentileschi (C.E. 1593–1653)
13. Anna Maria van Schurman (C.E. 1607–1678)

Wing Three: From the American Revolution to the Women's Revolution

1. Anne Hutchinson (C.E. 1591–1643)
2. Sacagawea (C.E. 1786–1812)
3. Caroline Herschel (C.E. 1750–1848)
4. Mary Wollstonecraft (C.E. 1759–1797)
5. Sojourner Truth (C.E. 1797–1883)
6. Susan B. Anthony (C.E. 1820–1906)
7. Elizabeth Blackwell (C.E. 1821–1910)
8. Emily Dickinson (C.E. 1830–1886)
9. Ethel Smyth (C.E. 1858–1944)
10. Margaret Sanger (C.E. 1879–1966)
11. Natalie Barney (C.E. 1876–1972)
12. Virginia Woolf (C.E. 1882–1941)
13. Georgia O'Keeffe (C.E. 1887–1986)

Selected Bibliography

Chicago, Judy. *The Dinner Party.* New York: Penguin Books, 1996.

Chicago, Judy. *The Dinner Party: A Symbol of Our Heritage*. New York: Anchor Books, 1979.

Hall James. *Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*. New York: HarperCollins, 1979.

Mayer, Marc. "The Dinner Party." Brooklyn Museum of Art Brochure (2002).

General Sources on Women in History, Religion, and Art

Eisler, Riane. *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988.

Warner, Marina. *Alone of All Her Sex*: *The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1976.

Internet Sources

For further information on Judy Chicago and her work, visit her Web site: www.judychicago.com.

For further information on the March 23, 2007, exhibition at the new Elizabeth A Sackler Center for Feminist Art, visit the Web site of the Brooklyn Museum: www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/dinner_party.

Books that address some of the women at Chicago's Table

Artemisia Gentileschi

Bissel, R. Ward. *Artemisia Gentileschi and the Authority of Art: Critical Reading and Catalogue Raisonne.* University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999.

Garrard, Mary D. *Artemisia Gentileschi: The Image of the Female Hero in Italian Baroque Art.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989.

Greer, Germaine. *The Obstacle Race: The Fortunes of Women Painters and Their Work*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1979.

Vreeland, Susan. *The Passion of Artemisia***.** New York: Penguin Books, 2002.

Eleanor of Aquitaine

Konigsburg, E.L. *A Proud Taste for Scarlet and Miniver.* New York: Athenum Books, 1973.

Georgia O'Keeffe

Cheuse, Alan. *The Light Possessed*. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1990.

Hildegard Von Bingen

Bobko, Jane (ed.), Barbara Newman, and Matthew Fox. *Vision: The Life and Music of Hildegard Von Bingen.* New York: Penguin Studio Books, 1995.

Vision: The Music of Hildegard von Bingen. New York: Angel Records, 1994.

Hildegard von Bingen Symphoniae, performed by Sequentia. New York: BMG Music, 1989.

Theodora

Atwater, Richard, trans. *The Secret History of Procopius.* New York: Dorset Press, 1992.

Virginia Woolf

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own.* Orlando, Florida: Harcourt, 2005.

Video/Film

The Hours (Nicole Kidman, Meryl Streep), 2002.

Iron Jawed Angels (Hilary Swank, Anjelica Huston), HBO Films, New York, 2004.

The Lion in Winter (Katharine Hepburn, Peter O'Toole), 1968.

Other Sources

Kerber, Linda K. and Jane Sherron De Hart. *Women's America: Refocusing the Past*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Markey, Kevin. Lorraine Glennon, ed. *100 Most Important Women of the 20th Century*. Des Moines, Iowa: Ladies Home Journal Books. 1998.

Robinson, Hilary, ed. *Visibly Female: Feminism and Art: An Anthology.* New York: Universe Books, 1988.

Contributors

About the Editor

Robert Nauman received dual master's degrees in music and fine arts before completing his Ph.D. in art and architectural history at the University of New Mexico. He currently teaches at the University of Colorado at Boulder, where his research focuses on art and architectural history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nauman has served as a Reader, Table Leader, and Question Leader for the AP Art History Exam, and he teaches an honors section of the art history survey at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Nauman is the author of several books and articles dealing with issues of contemporary architecture. His latest book, *On the Wings of Modernism: The United States Air Force Academy* (University of Illinois Press, 2004), dealt with issues of American modernism and architecture during the cold war era. He is currently writing a chapter for a Northwestern University Press publication on the architect Walter Netsch, in addition to writing a book about English factory towns at the turn of the twentieth century. He received a Presidential Award for his contribution to the publication *Modernism at Mid-Century: The Architecture of the United States Air Force Academy*, and his book *On the Wings of Modernism* was nominated for the Society of Architectural Historians' Alice Davis Hitchcock Award, awarded yearly to—according to the society's Web site—"the most distinguished work of scholarship in the history of architecture published by a North American scholar."

About the Authors

Jeff Ball is an assistant professor of art history at Minnesota State University in Moorhead, Minnesota. He has been an AP Reader since 2002. His graduate work was at the University of Missouri—Columbia, and his research focuses on American public buildings and art in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He is co-author of a book on the decorations for the Missouri State Capitol, which is to be published by the University of Missouri Press in late 2007.

Michael Bieze is the chair of the Fine Arts Department at Marist School in Atlanta. He has been involved with the AP Art History program since the late 1980s as a Reader, and Question Leader, serving on the Development Committee, and conducting workshops throughout the country. His forthcoming book, *Booker T. Washington and the Art of Self Representation* (Peter Lang Publishing), examines the role of Booker T. Washington in supporting African American artists.

Cheryl Hughes teaches AP Art History at Alta High School in Salt Lake City. She has been involved with the AP Art History Program since 1998 as a Reader, Table Leader, and Question Leader for the exam, a member of the AP Art History Development Committee, and a contributor to the 2003 AP Art History Teacher's Guide. She currently serves as a College Board National Teacher Leader, a presenter for AP workshops around the country and as a trainer for new College Board AP consultants.

Jim Womack is chairman of the Visual and Performing Arts Department at Montgomery Bell Academy where he has taught AP Art History since 1979. (The program began at the school the year the AP Art History course began in 1972.) He has a masters degree in Art History from Virginia Commonwealth University having graduated from Davidson College. He has been involved with the AP Art History course since the mid-1980s as a Reader, serving on the AP Art History Development Committee and conducting workshops throughout the country.


F07AHSF107