CONTENT AREA 10
Global Contemporary
1980 C.E. to Present

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 10-1. Global contemporary art is characterized by a transcendence of traditional conceptions of art and is supported by technological developments and global awareness. Digital technology in particular provides increased access to imagery and contextual information about diverse artists and artworks throughout history and across the globe.

▶ Essential Knowledge 10-1a. Hierarchies of materials, tools, function, artistic training, style, and presentation are challenged. Questions about how art is defined, valued, and presented are provoked by ephemeral digital works, video-captured performances, graffiti artists, online museums and galleries, declines in (but preservation of) natural materials and traditional skills, predominance of disposable material cultures, and the digital divide — access or lack of access to digital technology.

▶ Essential Knowledge 10-1b. Diverse art forms are considered according to perceived similarities in form, content, and artistic intent over broad themes, which include existential investigations, sociopolitical critiques, as well as reflections on the natural world, art’s history, popular and traditional cultures, and technological innovation.

▶ Essential Knowledge 10-1c. Artists frequently use appropriation and “mashups” to devalue or revalue culturally sacred objects, and to negate or support expectations of artworks based on regional, cultural, and chronological associations. Intended meanings are often open-ended and subject to multiple interpretations.

▶ Essential Knowledge 10-1d. The iconic building becomes a sought-after trademark for cities. Computer-aided design impacts the diversity of innovative architectural forms, which tend toward the aspirational and the visionary.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 10-2. In the scholarly realm as well as mainstream media, contemporary art is now a major phenomenon experienced and understood in a global context.

▶ Essential Knowledge 10-2a. Art history surveys have traditionally offered less attention to art made from 1980 to the present. While such surveys often presented contemporary art as largely a European and American phenomenon, today, contemporary art produced by artists of Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the First Nations is receiving the same, if not more, attention than work produced in Europe and the Americas.

▶ Essential Knowledge 10-2b. The waning of colonialism, inaugurated by independence movements, shifts in the balance of power with the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the rise of China, and the development of widespread communication networks such as the Internet have all contributed to representations of the world that are global and interconnected rather than Eurocentric.
Essential Knowledge 10-2c. The art world has expanded and become more inclusive since the 1960s, as artists of all nationalities, ethnicities, and sexual preferences, as well as female artists, have challenged the traditional privileged place of white, heterosexual men in art history. This activism has been supported by theories (e.g., deconstructionist, feminist, poststructuralist, and queer) that critique perspectives on history and culture that claim universality but are in fact exclusionary.

Essential Knowledge 10-2d. The worldwide proliferation of contemporary art museums, galleries, biennials and triennials, exhibitions, and print and digital publications has created numerous, diverse venues for the presentation and evaluation of art in today's world.
Image Set


![The Gates](image1)

The Gates
© Chip East/Reuters/Corbis

![The Gates](image2)

© Panoramic Images/Getty Images


![Vietnam Veterans Memorial](image3)

Vietnam Veterans Memorial
© James F. Blair/Corbis

![Detail](image4)

Detail
© Ian Dagnall/Alamy


228. **Androgyne III.** Magdalena Abakanowicz. 1985 C.E. Burlap, resin, wood, nails, and string.


234. **Earth’s Creation.** Emily Kame Kngwarreye. 1994 C.E. Synthetic polymer paint on canvas.

![Earth’s Creation](image1)


![Rebellious Silence](image2)

Rebellious Silence

Courtesy Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels


![En la Barberia no se Llora](image3)

En la Barberia no se Llora

Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Art, New York/
www.feldmangallery.com


![Pisupo Lua Afe](image4)

Pisupo Lua Afe

© Michel Tuffery MNZM/Museum of New Zealand To Papa Tongarewa # FES10518

![Electronic Superhighway](image1)

**Electronic Superhighway**
Photo © Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC/Art Resource, NY


![The Crossing](image2)

**The Crossing**
Photo © Kira Perov


![Guggenheim Museum Bilbao](image3)

**Guggenheim Museum Bilbao**
© Rolf Haid/dpa/Corbis

![Guggenheim Museum Bilbao](image4)

**Guggenheim Museum Bilbao**
© Jacques Pavlovsky/Sygma/CORBIS

242. **Lying with the Wolf.** Kiki Smith. 2001 C.E. Ink and pencil on paper.


245. *Old Man’s Cloth.* El Anatsui. 2003 C.E. Aluminum and copper wire.


Sculpted and painted porcelain.

*Kui Hua Zi*

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