

Short Answers

1. Psychology and Art

Surrealists and Abstract Expressionists both used psychology in their art in similar ways, in that they both tried in some way to tap into the viewer's or creator's subconscious. Surrealist works would often be more representative of real-life objects, subverting them in creative dream-like ways. Abstract expressionism focused more on the visceral feeling of shape, color, and form.

Sigmund Freud wrote about the unconscious, and himself defined surrealism as “psychic automatism,” a technique that abstract expressionism also tried to express: to remove rational thought and constraint from the process of creation. Often times artists used their own dreams as inspiration for their subject matter, or purposefully combine ridiculous ideas such as fur and a tea cup set in Meret Oppenheim's *Object*.

Jean Arp's *Bell and Navels* is a great example of a piece that lands in-between surrealism and abstract expressionism, as it almost fits right in with Dali's strange melted clocks and at the same time—expresses its own unique shape language and composition. It asks the viewer to relate more with the raw form, than with what the objects could represent.

2. The Importance of Museums

The appreciation and display of art in America exploded at the turn of the 20th century, as many immigrants began to enter the United States. One of the earliest influential exhibitions would be the “Armory Show,” which was in 1913. This show had an enormous turnout for the time and sparked a newfound interest for abstract art within the public, influenced by the new settled Europeans. The MoMA was established in 1870, and has catalogued the evolution of American art from naturalism to modern art—this kind of evolution of style is unheard of, which is why the MoMA is so important to the history of art in the United States.

The National Museum of American History building is an architecturally influential building because it's a direct reference to the classical building style of the Greeks that's been echoed in many American buildings (such as the white house,) but with a stark modern twist. It only suggests structural features. On the other side of the spectrum, the Smithsonian American Art Museum leans into the past, being almost a direct descendent of Greek Revival architecture. Both buildings created further interest in modern, and past architecture.

3. Conceptual Art

"A lot of it looks trivial to create, it's insulting to 'normal' art." While a lot of this art can look trivial to create, the worth of conceptual art—and all art in general is not decided on the effort put into it. Sometimes a meaning or emotion can be evoked from the simplest intentional gesture, and conceptual art is the one of the few places where such pieces can be recognized.

"I don't understand it." "It's ugly." A lot of conceptual art has complex meaning that maybe only the artist can fully understand, and in many ways that is the point. This whole genre of art is meant to make you think about more than just the piece's aesthetic qualities, and get you thinking about the context/abstract emotion/the meta qualities of the piece. One of the most famous conceptual art pieces is *The Fountain*, by Marcel Duchamp. The piece's focus is not on the urinal itself, but on the culture surrounding it. The satirical commentary created by this piece would not be adequately expressed if it wasn't an actual signed urinal placed in a museum setting.

4. Innovations in Architecture

Frank Gehry, *Guggenheim Bilbao*, Spain, 1997. Makes extensive use of titanium and glass on its outer perimeter. In many ways the Guggenheim in Bilbao is an extension of cubism, with its imitation of overlapping gestural forms and sharp corners and violent edges. It's sharpness mirrors that of the chaos created in Picasso's, *Desmoiselles D'Avignon*.

Wright, *Edgar K. Kaufmann House (Fallingwater)*, 1934-37 is build using plain stone, glass, and thing sheeted metal. It's very clean and stubbornly intentional in its construction and composition. In terms of its minimalism, it mirrors that of Russian Supremacist works—such as *Supremacist Composition* by Kazimir Malevich. The Kaufmann House is very "anti-building," as much as supremacism is "anti-art," at least in the traditional sense.

Rudolph Steiner, *Goetheanum II*, Dornach, Switzerland (1924-28) mirrors many of the exciting shape language found during the Futurism movement. It's a building that shows off free-flowing forms, without order but with a lot of movement and motivation. It's built completely out of concrete. It mirrors Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913) in many ways, from its choice of strong material to its flowing forms.

Bullet List Answers

1. Outdoor Art

Benefits

1. If the piece is in an empty environment, it can stand on its own and not compete with other works.
2. Unlike indoor art, outdoor art can be unlimited in size as there is no boundary surrounding it.
3. Outdoor art has the possibility of many more people seeing it, as it can be placed in public places or have more points of view towards it.
4. Outdoor art can be used to recontextualize mundane or public spaces. The artist can use the outdoor medium as a statement.
5. Sometimes art is only seen as something that's in a museum, by putting it outside, it breaks this boundary and makes it a part of the environment. The art can become a seamless part of a person's experience of a place.

Difficulties

1. As a piece in context of other structures—it can be in complete harmony with its environment, or grab all the attention. The artist has to be intentional with this spectrum.
2. If the piece is in a complex or cramped area such as a city, the piece may have to compromise with the people who own the environment. (Such a piece being placed in a town square.)
3. The piece may be weathered down from outside forces, such as rain, wind, and dirt.
4. If a piece is in a crowded area or has a lot of traffic going through, they will have to be weary of how people will interact with the piece—be it vandalism, wear, or safety. This can limit visual and creative freedom.
5. The artist is not in complete control of how the piece will be viewed, there can be a lot of variation in terms of angle, or time of day.

2. Emptiness

1. Kelly, *Red Blue Green*, (1963) is a painting in the “Hard-edge painting” style. This piece avoids showing perspective or showing images in whole, instead focusing on the space in between shapes.
2. Flavin, *site specific installation*, (1996) is a light-based sculpture. Flavin’s 3D work focuses on creating a barrier between the viewer and an imaginary space, the sculpture takes up little space and draws attention to its gaps. It also presents the space as a place where the viewer can go, and can’t.
3. Tony Smith, *Die*, (1968) is a cube-like sculpture that features little detail, but takes up a lot of space. Its blank faces draw attention to how it removes detail from the surrounding scene, acting almost like a void.
4. Heizer, *Double Negative*, (1969) is a dugout in Nevada that aims to draw attention to the stark difference between natural formations and industrial shape language by “negating” a mesa.
5. Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *Running Fence*, draws attention to the space in between the environment by creating a visual division/barrier. The pieces causes an otherwise seamless hill or formation to become two distinct spaces.

3. Jackson Pollock vs. Joseph Beuys

1. Jackson Pollock's technique could be described as a performance, where the artist's gestures as movement are visible throughout the piece, as his pieces sometimes took months to create.
2. Parts would be completely redone overtime, making the pieces autobiographic in a way.
3. Joseph Beuys took this to another level, as his work was almost performance-first. He stated in interviews that he used his "shamanistic" techniques to heal and teach the viewer.
4. Pollock mentioned that he doesn't fear of destroying his image, despite his violent style. He states that the painting has a life and motivation of its own. In a way, Pollock was only the conduit for his paintings.
5. Many works attributed by Beuys are not done by his hand—his idea of the "social sculpture" emphasized his belief that everyone was an artist, and required many people other than himself to complete a task. The result or process would be the art.

4. Experimentation of Medium

1. Jean-Baptiste Sabatier-Blot, *Portrait of Louis Daguerre*, 1844 was photograph done on a Daguerreotype. It led to the development of modern photography as we know it, and led to people to creating multiple prints of something from a single negative.
2. Mucha, *Cigarettes Advertising Poster*, 1890s. The advent of printing and revolutionized the spread of information and imagery. During this time, printing had improved substantially and thus, so did the demand and production of advertising. This piece combines art and product well.
3. Picasso, *Guitars* 1912 – 1914. These pieces show the beginnings of the movement from cubism, to modernism. Picasso experimented with creating the same forms out of several strange materials, attempting to bridge the gap between "high" and "low" art—a statement about consumerism and museum art culture.
4. Naum Gabo, *Column*, 1923. This piece is a prime example of Russian Constructivist sculpture. In many ways, this piece mirrors the leading architectural styles of the time. It plays with the intersection and creation of space, showing these qualities clearly to the viewer through its transparency. It's made from a variety of materials, including glass and wood.
5. Carlo Carra, *Patriotic Celebration*, 1914. This piece is a direct product of the proliferation of information and printed media. It makes use of cut up newspapers collaged and glued together into a poster-like composition. It's uniquely repeating shapes and tones capture the motion that originally inspired futurism.

Essay

Social Awareness

Throughout American history there has almost always been a considerable divide between people in terms of wealth and class. While historically undocumented due to a lack of resources and fair voice in culture—due to the propagation of information and the arts beginning in the early nineteenth century, people’s opinions and troubles began to be brought forward to a considerable portion of the mainstream public’s eye. Uncovering certain movements of American art such as The Ashcan School, Documentary Photography, and Depression Age Art, can help us uncover the very different situations in which Americans lived, and the social injustices they suffered.

Fire on 24th Street, New York City by Everett Shinn painted in 1907 shows a version of the early nineteen-hundreds that you don’t often see. Looking back, it’s easy to think that things were ideal, as much of the art then (specifically the Precisionists) aimed to remove all the grime and unsightly things that plagued inner-city life—much as we do with art and photography today. Shinn however, portrays New York almost apocalyptically—showing these concrete structures as suffocating and almost omnipotent. The perspective does not let up for the sky, as smoke, fire, and deliberately blank buildings block all environment light. People are shown as a mass, as indifferent to the tiny building’s suffering as the towering builds adjacent to it.

Everything within the scene is affected by the fire, nothing is shown as if it’s a part of daily life or a routine. Despite the fire’s source building being purposefully tiny, the blaze is massive. The firefighters are miniscule in comparison and it can be deduced that they are “too little, too late” to control the inferno visibly spreading to the other buildings. This painting is a warning to inner-city life, and how the systems built around them will spread fail everybody within it. The ashcan artists were not an officially organized group or movement, but instead the manifestation of many people’s desire to express their lives within the inner-city as it truly was, and not as an idealized architectural drawing—it was in a way, a form of protest against forgetting the “other” denizens of New York.

Blind Woman, New York by Paul Strand. Taken in 1916, is a perfect example of the kind of opportunities given to people by the spread, and newfound accessibility of photography in the early twentieth century. Strand specialized in candid pictures; he took this piece using a special handheld camera that hid the fact he was taking photos to his subjects. Contrast this method to painting, or creating any other intentional work of such a subject, an artist’s bias can quickly seep in. While not wholly objective, Strand’s photograph still captures something that most wouldn’t want to spend time representing, as peddlers are considered invisible or forgotten. In this way, it’s an incredibly rare look into the life and existence of New York’s most forgotten people.

This photograph quickly became a representing symbol of where America, and also its art, was heading. This piece is a large reason why photography is held as a pioneer of art in general, and social commentary. Not only does it represent things almost as true as they can be, but the main difference of this piece being a documentary photograph compared to a piece of

traditional art, is that to a viewer it brought to a very intimate moment with the subject. It becomes almost impossible not to stare, whereas that is the instinct, or even duty—of those higher on the wealth ladder—to do when in the presence of a peddler. This photograph allows the viewer to relate to the subject to an almost revelatory effect, and has no doubt changed the minds of many on their actions towards the unfortunate.

Cradling Wheat by Thomas Hart Benton (1938) is a piece of art that was completed on the tail end of the Great Depression. Art during this period took a slow, but considerate change in style—something that American art hasn't seen before. As this is one of the later pieces produced in this form, a year before the Great Depression was considered to end in 1939, the intent and style is almost masterful. Benton has taken the work around him and synthesized it into something that stands wholly on its own today.

The piece features the working class of America, harvesting grain with rolling hills as their backdrop. Benton is known in his art to bring the working class to the forefront, not only in terms of subject matter and composition, but in rendering and storytelling. The entire scene is meant to convey an almost heroism to the worker's actions, they're built and shaded as it's an epic mythical moment.

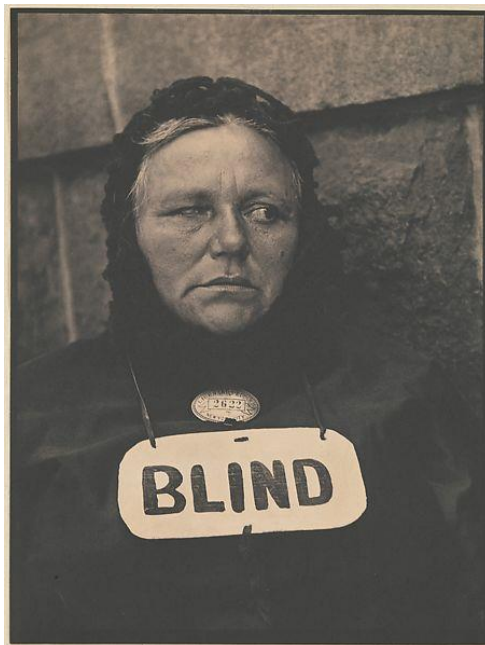
This piece represents the Depression Era of American art for several reasons. Due to the Great Depression, many people lost their jobs in the United States. This in many ways brought a new cultural appreciation for the working class. In a way Benton's work almost seems renaissance-like, in its appreciation for the countryside and "tough man's work." The economic situation has brought to light the importance of America's backbone—the working class. The art produced during this time aims to bring respect and reverence for their work, as it's the only thing keeping the country afloat and fed.

Q. And babies? A. And babies. by the Art Workers' Coalition is a harrowing piece of work done during the 1970s during the tail-end of America's war with Vietnam. Anti-war sentiments were at an all time high, and this is just one groups statement about it. This piece is a product of the technological advances made in the later half of the twentieth century, which makes it embody the 1970s late-war era perfectly. It's a lithograph print, made of a photo, based on a spoken word recorded interview with soldier Paul Meadlo, who had reportedly participated in the shown killing. As the US and Vietnam are geographically far away, it was television and the new propagation of information that caused people's sentiments to change about the war, because many people were now able to see its effects practically "first-hand," the evidence of brutality was right in front of them in modern culture and media.

People have sought to spread their message through art for centuries. However; it was only in the beginning of the twentieth century that information began to reach such a democratic state that minorities and the trodden upon could be heard and seen by the general public. This change in the public's eye and perception has lead to many changes political and behavioral changes over the years, and art's power is only increasing now with the invention of the internet.



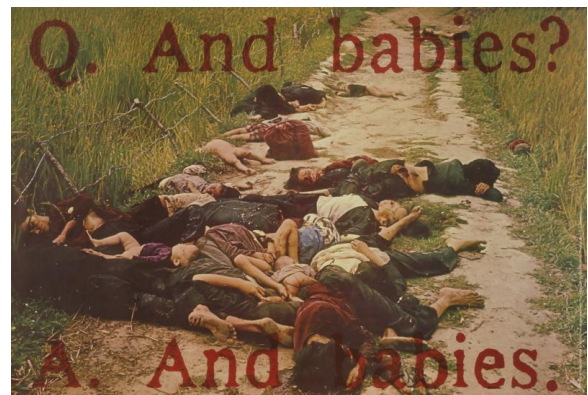
Fire on 24th Street, New York City
 Everett Shinn (1907)



Blind Woman, New York
 Paul Strand (1916)



Cradling Wheat
 Thomas Hart Benton (1938)



Q. And babies? A. And babies.
 Art Workers' Coalition (1970)