# Unit Student Learning Objectives

### Unit 2: Pop Art and the Return of Realism (one week)

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Identify artists and describe qualities associated with Pop Art, Op Art, and Super Realism (Course Goals: 1,2,4,5, GE: 1,4,6,7, Core skills: A, D, E)

* Define key terms associated with these movements and artists (Course Goals: 1,2,4 GE: 1,4,6,7, core skills: A, D, E)
* Question the theory and philosophy behind the movement, with emphasis on Warhol and commercialism. (Course Goals: 2,3,4,5,6 GE: 1,4,6,7,9 core skills: A, B, C, E, F, G)

# Unit Student Assessments & Activities

## Unit 1: Pop Art and the Return of Realism

### Introduction (ULO 3-4)



RICHARD HAMILTON, *Just What Is It That Makes Today’s Homes So Different, So Appealing?*, 1956. Collage

The beginning of Pop Art as an artistic movement is often pegged to **Richard Hamilton**’s 1956 collage *Just What Is It that Makes Today’s Home’s So Different, So Appealing?* and that's where we start our class today. We also look at our local fathers of Pop, **Jasper Johns** and **Robert Rauschenberg**. Both of these artists, whose careers began in New York in the 1950s, show us a style of work that breaks with many of the basic premises of Abstract Expressionism. Yet they also exhibit a quality of painterly expression, which betrays acknowledgement of the prevalent style of the time.

They were also influenced by older artists like, John Cage, a musician and composer who used chance to structure musical compositions. His piece *4'33"* is a performance where a pianist sits at a piano for four minutes and forty three seconds without playing anything. The noise in the auditorium during that time is what he considers the music of the piece. By examining such works, pop artists began to bring ideas such as chance and performance into the visual arts.

So, what was it that makes these artists so different, so appealing? With a little background into the Black Mountain College, and the work of John Cage, we take a peak onto the world of performance, and happenings, and how this work opened up possibilities for artists such as Rauschenberg and Johns. Possibilities which fit outside of the formalist, non-representational work that was receiving most of the attention. Contrary to Greenberg’s wish for each medium to be isolated, we see pieces with representation and narrative, paintings which are also sculptures, sculptures which also serve as backdrops for performance.

Often a distinction arises between the critical nature of British pop art, and the American Pop Art's unapologetic embrace of consumer culture. But let’s not be too broad in this generalization, as the underlying unease we see in the Abstract Expressionists also shows up in pieces like the giant *F-111* by **James Rosenquist**, which features a young child blissfully having her hair done at a beauty salon, while a mushroom cloud erupts in the background. Or **Andy Warhol**’s pieces from the Birmingham Race riots, or the car accidents from his disaster series.

### Textbook : Read Chapter 7 Neo-Dada and Pop Art (ULO 1-3).

Please read Chapter 7 in *Twentieth Century American Art* by Erika Doss, pages 139-159. Then test your understanding by answering the Study Guide Review Questions below.

### Study Guide Review Questions (self assess): (ULO 1-3)

The answer to these questions can be found in chapter 6 of *Twentieth Century American Art* by Erika Doss.

* Two other names for Abstract Expressionism are: *[action painting, New York school]*
* What U.S and international events between 1940 and 1950 occurred that influenced the way artists at that time viewed the world? *[End of the New Deal, World War II, rise of US as a superpower]*
* What change did this bring to the art of that time? *[NY became the center of the art world, artists sought new forms of expression different from New Realism, artists turned towards individual expression]*
* Clement Greenberg was a(n): *[art critic]*
* Who said "The modern painter cannot express this age, the airplane, the atom bomb, the radio, in the old forms of the Renaissance or of any other past culture. Each age finds its own technique."? *[Jackson Pollock]*
* By 1960 New York had how many galleries? *[300]*
* How did Europe feel about the new American Art? *[It was "a joke in bad taste"]*
* Explain the importance of Individualism at this time. *[Individualism and self-expression were seen as aspects of American freedoms, in contrast to communism's totalitarianism.]*
* Explain why Motherwell says Abstract-Expressionism “arose from a feeling of being ill at ease in the universe.” *[After the horrors of WWII and the anxiety of the cold war, artists looked for new means to express the human condition.]*
* Why does the author find Pollock’s interest in the ‘primitive’ to be problematic? *[Calling another society "primitive" makes that society seem simple or dumb compared to ours. Simply stealing the look of another cultures artwork without understanding the history and traditions behind it amounts to "cultural cannibalism."]*
* Why are the most famous Abstract-Expressionists white and male? *[Despite many of the progressive ideas held by the American Abstract Expressionists, racism and sexism were still common.]*

### **Readings**: (ULO 3, 4)

#### Introduction

*insert intro here*

#### Main Points

Before we begin, I want to outline the most important points to look for in this article:

1. 2.

#### "Title of Article"

..... .....

### Presentation: Artist Slideshows (ULO 1-4)

* Beginnings of pop:
  + Hamilton
  + Cage
* A blending of media
  + Johns
  + Rauschenberg
  + Claes Oldenburg
* Pop and commercialism
  + Roy Lichtenstein
  + James Rosenquist
  + Andy Warhol
* Super realism
  + Chuck Close
  + Duane Hanson

### Interactive activities: artwork identification, and terminology (multiple chances, self assess)(ULO 1, 2)

* Identify artwork images from the slideshows
* Identify names of Pop Artists
  + Jasper Johns
  + Richard Hamilton
  + Roy Lichtenstein
  + Claes Oldenburg
  + Robert Rauschenberg
  + James Rosenquist
  + Andy Warhol
* Identify names of Super Realists
  + Chuck Close
  + Duane Hanson
  + What was Black Mountain College and what were happenings?
* How did performance art influence the work of artists such as Robert Rauschenberg and Claes Oldenburg?*[By experimenting with performance as an artistic medium, artists in the 1960's started adding many artistic elements into their work. Painting, performance, sculpture all became mixed together to make one piece.]*
* How do Pop artists continue Abstract Expressionism’s use of scale?*[Artists like James Rosenquist continued to make huge paintings, sometimes so big they had to wrap around the room.]*
* What is encaustic, and who used it? *[Oil paint mixed into wax, Jasper Johns]*

#### Multiple Choice

* Pop art can be seen as a reaction against:
  1. Consumer Culture
  2. Minimalism
  3. **Abstract Expressionism**
  4. Figurative Painting

1. Which of the following is not a reason Jasper Johns gives for painting targets, maps and numbers?
   1. They are pre-formed, conventional, depersonalized elements.
   2. They suggest the world rather than suggesting personality.
   3. **They are political symbols which adds an additional layer of meaning.**
   4. One thinks of them as having a certain quality, and then in time these qualities change.
2. John Cage made the piece 4’33”, where the pianist played nothing in front of an audience for four minutes and thirty three seconds. This piece demonstrated:
   1. that in minimalism artists were trying to come up with ways to make art with almost nothing.
   2. **the artworks can be created by chance, in this case the chance noises that occurred in the concert hall during the performance of the piece.**
   3. that even Robert Rauschenberg could make music if he felt like it.
   4. that short amounts of time actually feel very long when there is nothing to distract us.
3. Robert Rauschenberg called his early works “combines” because:
   1. it was a combination of the work of Jackson Pollock and Jasper Johns.
   2. **he made artwork by combining several things together: animals, paint, pillows, magazine images, and so on.**
   3. he saw them as combining his love of performance, sculpture and painting together.
   4. they combined images of real life with abstract painting.
4. Which of the following did Andy Warhol not say:
   1. “But when you see a gruesome picture over and over again, it doesn’t really have any effect.”
   2. “I like boring things. I like things to be exactly the same over and over again.”
   3. “I reason why I’m painting this way is that I want to be a machine.”
   4. **“The present painter is concerned not with his own feelings or with the mystery of his own personality but with the penetration into the world mystery.”**
5. Which is an example of a Pop artists continuing Abstract Expressionism’s use of scale?
   1. **James Rosenquist's painting *F-111* is so big it wrapped around the room.**
   2. John Cage was a musician who used chance as a scale.
   3. Objects hung off of and out of Rauschenberg's combines.
   4. The colors in Lichtenstein's paintings were reminiscent of Abstract Expressionist color.

### Discussion Board relating to slideshows and readings (ULO 1-4)

### Additional Artists to Study (ULO 1)

*You will not be tested on the following material, but if you are interested in studying further anything we discussed this week, these artists could also fit into this category*

* David Hockney
* Alex Katz
* Wayne Thiebaud
* Tom Wesselmann

### Optional links for further self-study (ULO 1-4)

*You will not be tested on the following material, but if you are interested in studying further anything we discussed this week, these links are a good place to start:*

* MOMA's 1997 show of [Jasper Johns](http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/1996/johns/index.html)
* A close look at Jasper John's [*Perilous Night*](http://www.nga.gov/feature/artnation/johns/index.shtm)
* [Claes Oldenburg website](http://oldenburgvanbruggen.com/)
* Claes Oldenburg [interview](http://www.askyfilledwithshootingstars.com/wordpress/?p=1371)
* [David Hockney Website](http://www.hockneypictures.com/)
* Alex Katz [interview](http://www.artinfo.com/news/story/9528/alex-katz/)
* Andy Warhol - [The Elvis Works](http://www.elvisinfonet.com/spotlight_warhol_ang.html)