

# POP ART

In Pop art, materials are often visually removed from known contexts, isolated, and/or **combined** with unrelated materials.

is an art movement that emerged in the mid-1950s in Britain and in the late 1950s in the United States. Pop art presented a challenge to traditions of fine art by including imagery from **popular culture** such as advertising, news, etc.

- Robert Rauschenberg is associated with both the **Abstract Expressionist** movement as well as the Pop Art movement
- Rauschenberg is perhaps most famous for his "**Combines**" of the 1950s, in which non-traditional materials and objects were employed in **innovative combinations**
- By 1962, Rauschenberg's paintings were beginning to incorporate not only **found objects** but found images as well - **photographs** transferred to the canvas by means of the **silkscreen process**



Rauschenberg. *Monogram*. 1955-56, "combine", collage and mixed media on canvas

- Previously used only in **commercial applications**, silkscreen allowed Rauschenberg to address the **multiple reproducibility** of images, and the consequent "flattening of experience" that is implied

- Rauschenberg used images of **current events** gathered from magazines and newspapers for his 1964 collage *Retroactive 1*
- A large press photograph of **John F. Kennedy** speaking at a televised news conference was the source for this screen print on canvas
- He **juxtaposed** the image of Kennedy with another photo silkscreen of a **parachuting astronaut**
- The overlapping, and seemingly **disparate** composition creates a colourful visual commentary on a **media-saturated culture** struggling to come to grips with the **television era**



Rauschenberg. *Retroactive 1*,  
1964. Collage and silkscreen on  
canvas.

***"I don't want a picture to look like something it isn't. I want it to look like something it is. And I think a picture is more like the real world when it's made out of the real world."***

- In the late 1950's, Jasper Johns emerged as force in the American art scene. His richly worked paintings of **maps**, **flags**, and **targets** led the artistic community away from Abstract Expressionism toward a new emphasis on the **concrete**

Encaustic is an art technique where you paint with wax.

- Johns laid the groundwork for both Pop Art and **Minimalism**
- It was a new experience for gallery goers to find paintings solely of such things as flags and numbers. The **simplicity** and **familiarity** of the subject matter piqued viewer interest in both Johns' motivation and his process

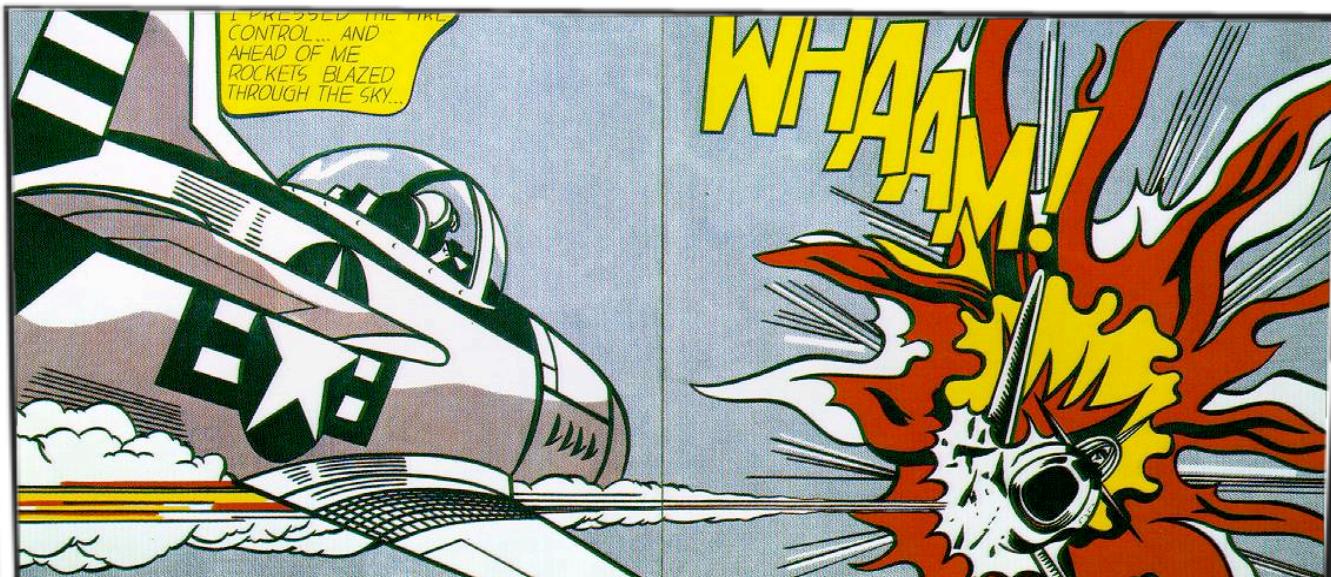


Johns, Flag. 1954-55, Encaustic, oil, and collage on fabric mounted on plywood

Detail of flag



- “Whaam!” is based on an image from 'All American Men of War' published by **DC Comics** in 1962
- Throughout the 1960s, Lichtenstein frequently drew on commercial art sources such as comic images or **advertisements**, attracted by the way **highly emotional** subject matter could be depicted using **detached techniques**
- Transferring this to a painting context, Lichtenstein could present powerfully charged scenes in an **impersonal manner**, leaving the viewer to decipher **meanings** for themselves



Lichtenstein. “Whaam!” 1963, Oil on canvas.

- Although he was careful to retain the character of his source, Lichtenstein also explored the **formal qualities** of commercial imagery and techniques

- In the original illustration, the drowning girl's **boyfriend** appears in the background, clinging to a capsized boat
- Lichtenstein **cropped** the image dramatically, showing the girl alone, encircled by a threatening wave
- He shortened the caption from "I don't care if I have a cramp!" to the ambiguous "I don't care!" and changed the boyfriend's name she calls out from Mal to Brad
- In addition to appropriating the **melodramatic content** of comics, Lichtenstein manually simulated the **Benday dots** used in the mechanical reproduction of images



Lichtenstein. *Drowning Girl*. 1963,  
Oil and synthetic polymer paint  
on canvas

- Andy Warhol, was an American artist who was a central figure in the Pop Art movement.
- After a successful career as a **commercial illustrator**, Warhol became famous worldwide for his work as a painter, an avant-garde **filmmaker**, a record producer, an author, and a public figure known for his presence in wildly diverse social circles
- Warhol picked his subjects off **supermarket shelves** and from the front pages of the **tabloids**
- His well-known images from popular culture pushed art out of the **museum** and into the **mainstream**
- A natural **self-promoter**, Warhol made himself into a **media sensation**



Andy Warhol. *Self-Portrait*. 1966.  
Silkscreen ink on synthetic polymer  
paint on nine canvases.

# Warhol Facts/Quotes:

“The reason I’m paintings this way is that I want to be a machine.”

- The pop artist not only depicted mass products but he also wanted to mass produce his own works of pop art. Consequently he founded ***The Factory*** in 1962. It was an art studio where he employed in a rather chaotic way "art workers" to **mass produce** mainly prints and posters but also other items like shoes designed by the artist.
- From 1963-68 Warhol made more than 60 films of **banal subjects**- "Sleep" runs for 6 hours and films a man sleeping. "I like boring things." Warhol said.
- According to Warhol, he wanted anonymity- he hired an **impersonator** for a speaking tour.
- In 1968 all of his art was produced by **assistants**.
- In 1968, he was shot by a groupie who played a bit part in one of his films. From intensive care, Warhol asked about his media coverage.

“Fame is like peanuts,” Warhol said. “When you start, you can’t stop.”

- Warhol's favourite printmaking technique was ***silkscreen***. It came closest to his idea of proliferation of art.



Warhol. 100 Cans. 1962, Polymer Paint (& silkscreen process) on canvas.

- Perhaps Warhol's most recognized works are his Campbell's Soup Can art
- What is the artistic significance of the soup prints? Warhol was acutely aware of the **aesthetics of popular culture** and re-presented the humble soup can as a large piece of art to be enjoyed and admired
  - The soup can is presented large and **icon-like** perhaps suggesting a parallel between **consumerism and religion**
- In much of his works Warhol uses the **repetition of images** to mirror the repetition evident in society through **media and technology**

Warhol. Campbell's Soup Can. 1964, silkscreen on canvas.



Warhol. section of Tunafish Disaster,  
Silkscreen print, 1963.

- Warhol loved all forms of daily media and **collected** various newspapers, magazines, and supermarket tabloids
  - He recognized the power of **mass-circulated** media images in American culture and **appropriated** these as source material for his artwork

- This particular series of paintings, set alongside his depictions of consumer items can perhaps be viewed as a continuation of a theme
- Dramatically illustrating a **breach of faith** in the products of the industrial revolution by featuring consumer products that bring about **death**

- This particular work refers to the women who **died** from tainted **tunafish**
- His “Death and Disaster” series from this period demonstrates the **dark side** of the Campbell's Soup Cans

- Warhol is also well known for his style of **portraiture**
- Using photographs of his subject matter, he would **flatten** the planes of color, and repeat the portrait, to create large, silk-screened masterpieces of shape and color, like this **Marilyn Monroe**
- Bright color is printed purposefully **off-register**, to hit home the medium that is being used to create the portrait, one colour at a time
- In 1964, just as Warhol was completing a series of "Marilyn" canvases, Dorothy Podber (a speed addict and friend of Factory photographer, Billy Name) arrived at Warhol's studio and upon seeing the freshly completed paintings asked if she could "**shoot them**"
- Warhol, apparently not comprehending Podber's meaning of the word "shoot" agreed, at which time Podber pulled out a small revolver and **fired** a shot into a stack of "Marilyn" paintings. The surviving canvases were called the "Shot Marilyn" paintings



Warhol, *Shot Orange Marilyn*, silkscreen, 1964.

- Claes Oldenburg developed three-dimensional, large-scale **blow-ups** of familiar objects
- “I want people to get accustomed to recognizing the power of objects.”
- **Ordinary objects**, he believed, “contain a functional contemporary magic”
- This idea is known as the **“commodity fetishism”**

*[a product of a capitalist (consumer-based) society where social relationships are transformed into relationships between commodities or money ]*

- *Soft Toilet* goes against our **expectations** of the object- what should be hard is soft and sagging/ what should be sanitary looks unhygienic
- Oldenburg makes us “**see**”, perhaps for the first time, an object that we look at every day



Oldenburg. *Soft Toilet*, 1966. Wood, vinyl, kapok, wire, plexiglass on metal stand and painted wood base



Oldenburg, *Floor Burger* 1962  
Canvas filled with foam rubber and cardboard boxes,  
painted with latex and Liquitex  
Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto



Oldenburg, *Floor Cone* 1962  
(as installed at Green Gallery, New York, Fall  
1962)  
Canvas filled with foam rubber and cardboard  
boxes, painted with synthetic polymer paint  
and latex  
Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York



Besides his soft sculptures, Oldenburg is known for  
his **civic monuments**

He suggested in the 1960s that we replace standard  
memorials like soldiers and canons, with monumental  
sculptures of everyday objects

At first, his ideas only existed as witty sketches

Beginning in 1969 with *Lipstick*, he began to make  
his ideas a reality as he erected monuments of  
**everyday objects** all over the United States and  
Europe

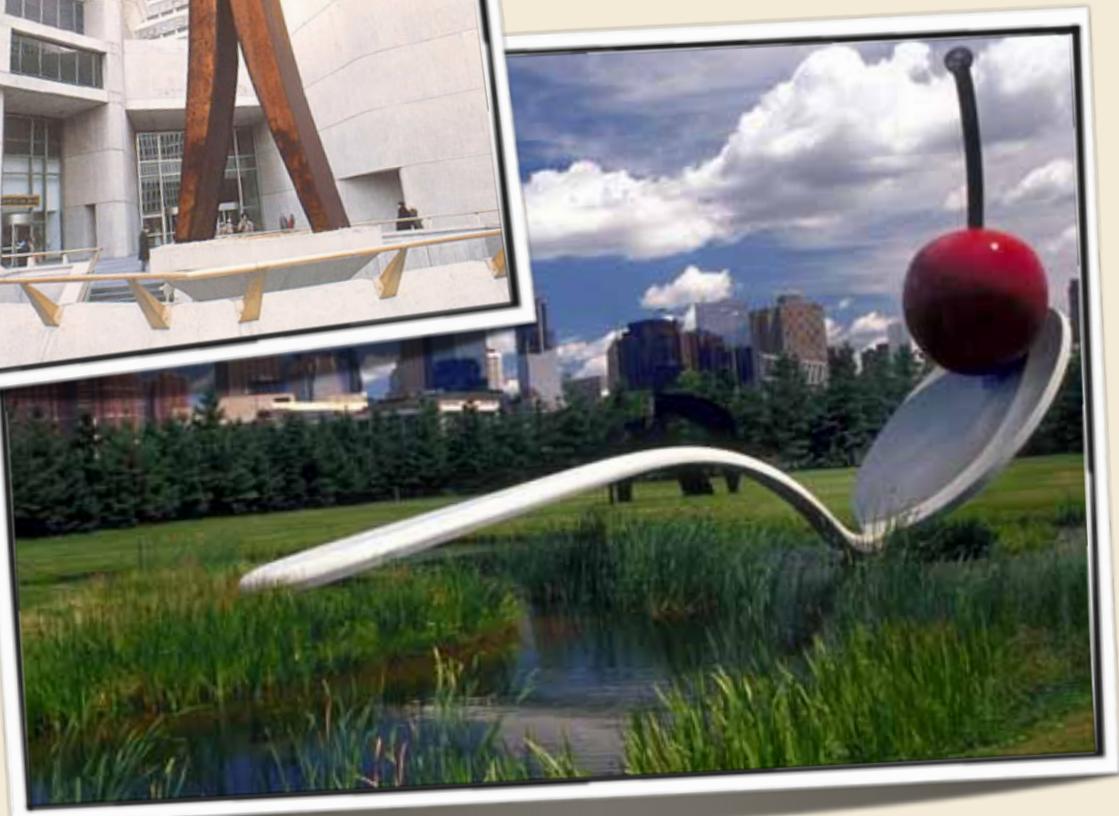


Oldenburg. *Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks*, 1969-74

cor-Ten, steel, aluminium, cast resin;  
painted with polyurethane enamel  
Samuel F. B. Morse College, Yale  
University, New Haven, Connecticut



Oldenburg, *Clothespin*,  
1976, cor-Ten and  
stainless steel,  
Center Square,  
Philadelphia



Oldenburg. *Spoonbridge and Cherry*, 1988  
Stainless steel and aluminium painted with polyurethane enamel  
29 ft. 6 in. x 51 ft. 6 in. x 13 ft. 6 in. (9 x 15.7 x 4.1 m)  
Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis