

20th Century British Artists in the Graves Gallery

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Frank Auerbach

Frank Auerbach's work is primarily **figurative** with a very expressive use of paint. He is best known for his use of pigment, which makes his work instantly recognisable. Auerbach's early career was heavily influenced by David Bomberg, who encouraged him to develop a strong identification with his artistic subjects. As a result Auerbach's subjects rarely change. In fact he has only used three models in his entire career, his wife Julia, the professional model Juliet Yardley Mills and his friend Stella West.

Auerbach's work might broadly be termed **expressionist**, although much of his work carries **expressionist** techniques to extreme lengths. Many of his paintings make use of extremely thick **impasto**, something which he was criticised for in his first solo exhibition. Auerbach layers paint in a repetitive process involving brushing and scraping. This layering is at times so heavy that the paint appears to have been sculpted rather than brushed on. A similar sculptural quality can be found in the artist's drawings, in which he layers multiple sheets of paper as much as half an inch in thickness.

Auerbach continues to be a leading figure in British art, and still devotes his life to his work, spending nearly 70 hours a week painting in his studio.

"I think I've been trying to do the same thing all my life in different ways. It's trying to find the essential painting. A new, raw, exciting and unpredictable invention. One which stands absolutely and conventionally for something."

Chronology

1931: Born in Berlin

1939: Jewish parents sent him to England to escape Nazis persecution. He never saw them again

1947: Adopted British Nationality

1948-52: Attended St Martins School of Art

1952-55: Studied at Royal College of Art and had lessons from David Bomberg who encouraged him to take inspiration from Paul Cezanne

1954: Acquired Gustav Metzger's former studio in Camden, London

1956: First solo exhibition at Beaux Art Gallery. Julia Yardley Mills began to model for his portraits

1960: Began studies of great works of art including Rembrandt's *Deposition* and Titian's *Tarquin and Lucretia*

1978: First retrospective exhibition by the Arts Council of England for the Hayward Gallery, London

1986: Exhibited at the British Pavilion at the 17th Venice Biennale. He was awarded the Golden Lion Prize

1995: *Working after the Masters* exhibition opens at the National Gallery displaying Auerbach's drawings made from paintings in the Gallery's collection

2001: Royal Academy marked his 71st Birthday with a Retrospective exhibition of his work

Sir Peter Blake

Sir Peter Blake's work is heavily influenced by popular culture. His interest in music, books, films, magazines and advertisements has been the inspiration behind much of his work. Blake says he had an aim to make art accessible. "I wanted to make an art that was the visual equivalent of pop music". Blake's associations with popular culture led to him being recognised as a [Pop Artist](#). His style however, often distanced him from the movement. It was more personal and had its roots in other traditions. Reflecting his broad art education he worked across media, producing collage, sculpture, engraving and printmaking, as well as commercial art in the form of graphics and notably, album covers.

He is perhaps best known for designing the sleeve for The Beatles' album *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. Although it was one of his most famous pieces, he was paid just £200 for the sleeve, receiving no royalties from the album's phenomenal success. Despite this he continued to design album sleeves including the cover for the Band Aid single *Do they know its Christmas?* And Paul Weller's *Stanley Road*.

In 1975 Blake became a founding member of the Brotherhood of Ruralists, a group of seven painters based in the West Country. Although the painters varied in style, they all took their inspiration from the 'spirit of the countryside'. Blake changed his technique and subject matter accordingly, moving from acrylic paint with its flat surfaces back to the greater flexibility of oil paint applied with fine sable brushes. Blake's work during this period revealed the artist's growing fascination with imagery and the Victorian fondness of mysticism and nature. This was particularly evident in the painting 'Titania', an image of a fairy. Comparing it to his previous work, Blake states "while the cast is usually the same, as the years go by they play different parts. A girl might have been a pin-up in the '60s then when I became a ruralist in the '70s she would have become Titania or Ophelia, and so on." Blake is probably best known for his output during the 1960s [Pop Art](#) movement.

Chronology

1932: Born on June 25th in Dartford, Kent

1948-51: Studied at Gravesend Art School

1953-56: Continued his studies at the Royal College of Art, where his contemporaries included Bridget Riley and Frank Auerbach

1956-57: Won the Leverhulme Research award to study popular art and traveled in Holland, Belgium, France, Italy and Spain

1962: First one man exhibition at the Portal Gallery, London. Featured in Ken Russell's seminal film on [Pop Art](#) 'Pop Goes the Easel' shown on the BBC.

1964-76: Taught at the Royal College of Art. One of the students he encouraged was musician Ian Dury, who remained a friend

1981: Made a Royal Academician

1983: Received a CBE

1994-96: Associate artist at the National Gallery

2002: Received a Knighthood

John Bratby

John Bratby is best known as a painter of his immediate surroundings. On graduating from the Royal College of Art in 1954 he rose to instant fame with his unadulterated view of domestic life. He was soon regarded as a leading light within a group of artists known as the [Kitchen Sink Painters](#). Alongside peers such as Jack Smith, Edward Middleditch and Derrick Greaves, Bratby looked to the everyday as the source of subject matter for his paintings. In an effort to convey social realism he portrayed desperate faces, trapped in the banality of a working class domestic environment. These faces were often those of his immediate family and were portrayed in a variety of domestic settings.

Bratby's use of bright, vibrant colours and [expressionist impasto](#) techniques distinguished his style from that of his peers. More in keeping with artists such as Francis Bacon and Frank Auerbach than those within the [Kitchen Sink Movement](#) it eventually led Bratby to dispense with his portrayal of working class domestic life altogether. He chose instead to paint a series of cityscapes, mostly of Venice, and intimate portraits of his second wife Patti.

One of the most prolific artists of his generation, by his death in 1992 Bratby had painted over 1500 portraits. Fittingly, Bratby's auction record for an oil painting was for a painting of a kitchen sink.

Chronology

1928: Born on 19th July in Wimbledon, London

1948-50: Studied at Kingston School of Art, Surrey

1951-54: Studied at Royal College of Art in London. Awarded bursary to travel to Italy

1953: Married artist Jean Cooke. They had four children

1954: First solo exhibition at Beaux Art Gallery

1956: Taught at Carlisle College of Art. Chosen to represent Britain at the Venice Biennale

1957-58: Taught at Royal College of Art

1958: Commissioned to paint pictures for film adaptation of Joyce Cary's novel, *The Horse's Mouth*. Shared Guggenheim award with Ben Nicholson

1960: Wrote his first novel *Breakdown*, which he also illustrated

1967: Began a series of portraits of celebrities including actress Billie Whitelaw. These developed into the *Hall of Fame* series.

1971: Elected Royal Academician.

1973: Divorced Jean Cooke and met Patti Prime, who was his constant companion until his death

1991: Retrospective exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery. Included in *The Kitchen Sink Artists Revival* at the Albermarle and Major Galleries, London

1992: Died in Hastings

Gerald Leslie Brockhurst

Gerald Brockhurst is best known for his portraits and [etchings](#) of glamorous women. Regarded from the age of twelve as 'a young Botticelli', he studied in England, France and Italy. Brockhurst's placement of a portrait within a surrounding landscape, recalls the work of Italian [Renaissance](#) masters, such as Leonardo da Vinci. Like Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, there is a sense of mystery and the unknown, which separates the viewer from the sitters. In Brockhurst's portraits his sitters are given extra emphasis by their surroundings and are usually composed close-up, looking straight at you, positioned in shallow space, against a ledge, or against a blank background.

Brockhurst created his etchings in a mechanical way, his etchings created line by line and dot by dot. He added a very human, sensual touch however, simply by changing the pose, setting or costume he could seemingly transform the model into an entirely different person. To add to the shroud of mystery and romance of the image, and to encourage the imagination of the viewer, Brockhurst would attach exotic titles such as, Ophelia, Viba, Xenia and Anais (Brockhursts given name to the sitter/painting on display in the Graves Gallery).

Whilst living in the UK in the 1930s and later in New York, Brockhurst became a fashionable portrait painter with famous sitters including Marlene Dietrich and the Duchess of Windsor. In retrospect he is regarded as an impressive portraitist and printmaker, yet surprisingly he has received little scholarly and popular attention.

Chronology

1890: Born in Birmingham, England, and raised by his mother

1902: Studied at the Birmingham School of Art

1913: At the Royal Academy in London he received the Gold Medal and a travelling scholarship enabling him to study abroad. Whilst living in Italy Brockhurst studied the styles of the great Italian [Renaissance](#) painters Piero Della Francesca and Leonardo da Vinci.

1914: Introduced to [etching](#)

1915-1919: Lived in Ireland where he was influenced by the simplicity of colour and form in the work of Augustus John

1919: Returned to London, held his first significant exhibition

1920: Began his career as an etcher in earnest, creating 19 plates in this year alone. He used his wife Anais as the model for most of his early etchings

1930: Began painting again, using teenage model and future wife, Dorette Woodard as his subject.

1933: After falling in love with Dorette and divorcing Anais, negative public opinion forced him to leave England. This was largely due to his most famous etching, called Adolescence, the image of Dorette sitting naked before her bedroom mirror, shown at the Royal Academy

1945: Living in New York, Brockhurst became famous for a series of society portraits but his printmaking output diminished, especially his [etchings](#). He produced a few [lithographs](#) at the end of his career

1978: Died in New York

Patrick Caulfield

Patrick Caulfield was a painter and printmaker known for his bright and bold images. Caulfield rose to prominence during the 1960s as one of the new generation of British painters. He quickly became identified as a [Pop Artist](#), alongside contemporaries such as David Hockney and Joe Tilson. He disliked this association however, as he was more interested in the traditions of European painting.

Caulfield's work was heavily influenced by the [abstract](#) styles of Juan Gris and Rene Magritte and a deep admiration for the American painter Edward Hopper. The poetic loneliness inherent in much of Hopper's work comfortably found its way into Caulfield's view of contemporary British life. Caulfield's paintings are figurative, often portraying a few simple objects in an interior. Characterised by their [abstract](#) settings and ironic representations, they are instantly recognisable through their use of bright, flat colours and black outlines; two techniques synonymous with the [Pop Art](#) movement. Unlike other [Pop Artists](#) however, Caulfield declined to use subjects from popular culture, preferring instead to paint subject matter from every day life.

One of the most widely admired and well respected British arts of the 20th century, Caulfield's artistic output was minimal in comparison with some of his contemporaries. He was a slow and exacting worker, completing on average, between four and six works a year.

Chronology

1936: Born on 29th January in London

1956-60: Studied at Chelsea School of Art, London

1960-63: Studied at Royal College of Art alongside David Hockney

1963: Returned to Chelsea School of Art to teach

1964: Exhibited at the *New Generation* show at London's Whitechapel Gallery after which he became associated with [Pop Art](#)

1965: First solo exhibition at the Robert Fraser Gallery

1973: First print retrospective held at the Waddington Galleries, London

1981: Exhibition of his work 1963-81 held at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Later toured to the Tate Gallery.

1984: Commissioned to design sets and costumes for Michael Corder's Ballet, *Party Game*, at the Royal Opera House

1987: Nominated for the Turner Prize

1994: Designed a giant mosaic entitled *Flower, Lily pad, Pictures and Labels*, for the National Museum of Wales

1995: Joint winner of the Jerwood prize

1996: Awarded CBE and received honorary fellowship of the London Institute

2005: Died on 30th September in London

Prunella Clough

Prunella Clough was best known for her paintings of industrial subjects. The paintings grew out of her concern to reinterpret [figurative](#) painting free from its traditional associations. In an interview for *Picture Post* in 1949 Clough commented that: "Anything that the eye or the mind's eye sees with intensity and excitement will do for a start; a gasometer is as good as a garden, probably better.....whatever the theme, it is the nature and structure of an object – and seeing it as if it were strange and unfamiliar, which is my chief concern."

In her early work Clough embraced French [Cubism](#) and was also associated with English [Neo-romanticism](#). She became drawn to geometric forms in landscape and was concerned with representing the memory of a scene. Her colours were usually warm and muted, close-toned and strongly textured. She invented a personal abstract language with which to celebrate the most commonplace urban and semi-industrialised scene. Waste grounds with rusting, abandoned machine parts or broken implements often provided Clough with inspiration, but her subjects were always seen close up. A discarded handful of nails and fragments of wire mesh were enough, rather than the big bulk of a machine. The parts seemed more eloquent to her than the whole.

Clough produced prints throughout her career, making [lithographs](#) on her own press as early as 1948. Throughout her career she continued to experiment with all the print disciplines. She was a member of a group in the 1950's which included Michael Ayrton, Keith Vaughan, John Croxton and the poet Dylan Thomas. They met in the Camden Hill Studio, which John Minton shared with Robert MacBryde and Robert Colquhoun. By the time of her death in 1999 she had twenty six solo exhibitions and been seen in over fifty group shows.

Chronology

1919: Born in Chelsea, London. Her father worked for the Board of Trade and her aunt was the architect designer Eileen Gray

1937: Attended Chelsea School of Art (part-time). Studied design, life drawing and sculpture (where Henry Moore was a tutor)

1939-45: Worked in Office of War Information (USA) drawing charts and maps and working on magazine layouts

1946-49: Studied with Victor Pasmore at Camberwell School of Art (part-time). Visited and found inspiration from various fishing ports in East Anglia

1956-69: Taught part-time at Chelsea School of Art.

1966-97: Taught part-time at Wimbledon School of Art.

1972: Solo exhibition at the Graves Gallery, Sheffield

1996: Solo exhibition at Camden Arts Centre, London

1999: Exhibitions at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge and Graves Gallery, Sheffield.
Awarded Jerwood Painting Prize.
Died 26 December in London

Peter Coker

Peter Coker was one of the leading exponents of the Post-war British Art movement, dubbed the [Kitchen Sink Painters](#). Along with artists such as John Bratby, Jack Smith and Derrick Greaves, Coker painted uncompromising compositions of everyday subjects in strong, thick paint-work using an expressionistic palette.

Coker upheld the French [Romantic](#) painter Eugene Delacroix's belief that a painting, first and foremost, should be a feast for the eye. He found a wide range of places and subjects to paint and altered his method of attack accordingly. But in every picture, large or small, his artistic signature emerges in the passion and directness of his gaze and in the excitement and energy with which he worked.

Coker's reputation is defined however, by a few atypical works completed over just a few years. His most famous works, a series of large, fiercely painted canvases of animal carcasses in a butcher's shop near his home in Leytonstone, dominated the artist's first exhibition at Zwemmer's Art Gallery, London in 1956. These paintings also formed the basis of a Royal Academy exhibition in 1979 however it was landscape painting that would subsequently sustain the artist.

In 1990 Coker suffered a stroke, followed by a period of illness that left him almost unable to work. Some years later Coker found some drawings that he had made in Paris in the 1970s. The sight of them released a burst of pent-up creativity. Over the next nine months, he revisited Paris in his imagination, using the drawings as the starting point for ideas that eventually found expression in a variety of different media. This later work expressed the artist's delight in the affirmative power of colour, line and mark.

Chronology

1926: Born in London

1941- 43: Studied part time at St Martin's School of Art

1943- 46: Joined the Fleet Air Arm

1947: Returned to full-time study at St Martin's for three years

1950- 54: Studied at the Royal College of Art where he coincided with the [Kitchen Sink Painters](#) – Bratby, Greaves, Middleditch and Smith. His paintings

of tabletops and the interior of a butcher's shop placed him with the gritty realism associated with this school

1951: Awarded a Royal Scholarship

1953: Awarded a British Institution Scholarship

1954- 73: Coker returned to St Martin's School of Art to teach painting

1955- 58: His son, Nicholas, featured in several paintings and drawings

1973- 85: Taught at City and Guilds of London Art School

1985: Death of his son Nicholas

2004: Died in London

Ronald Brooks Kitaj

Ronald Brooks Kitaj is an American painter and graphic artist who has spent much of his career working in England. Kitaj's work shows the political and social effects of **contemporary** mass culture, often with reference to historical events and their manipulation via the mass media. In this respect he was influenced by the work of fellow American, Robert Rauschenberg. By grafting ordinary objects onto his early paintings he was also pivotal in sparking the birth of British **Pop Art**; a movement with which he has been associated throughout his career.

Despite this, Kitaj claims not to be a **Pop Artist**. Rather than borrowing elements from popular culture, he uses a variety of sources including history, literature and politics for the inspiration behind his paintings. 19th Century French art has been a major source of inspiration as has a preoccupation with his own Jewish identity. His preference for figuration has also distanced him from the **Pop Art** movement relating him more to the work of Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud and Frank Auerbach.

After decades of living in London, Kitaj recently moved to California. "He is increasingly reclusive." notes Alistair Hicks in his book on the Saatchi Collection, "Yet through the written word, the telephone and meeting people for lunch, he has frequent contact with many fine minds. He observes the world with a frightening clarity."

Chronology

1932: Born in Cleveland, Ohio

1950: Studied at the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York

1951- 1954: Became a merchant seaman and signed on various tankers. He then went to Europe for the first time and studied at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Vienna, under Fritz Wotruba

1955- 1957: Served in the American Army, following which he studied at the Ruskin Drawing School in Oxford

1960 – 1962: Studied at the Royal College of Art and became a friend of David Hockney with whom he showed in the *Young Contemporaries* exhibitions

1961-1967: Taught at Ealing Technical College, at the Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts, and at the Slade School

1962: Collaborated with Eduardo Paolozzi and started using collage

1963: First solo exhibition at the Marlborough Gallery, London

1973: Exhibited with Jim Dine at the Cincinnati Art Museum. During this period they were both drawing intensely from the human figure

1975: After a visit to Paris he was inspired by Edgar Degas to take up pastel, which he has used for much of his subsequent work

1976: He was included in the exhibition *Pop Art in England* shown at Hamburg, Munich and York

1994: Solo retrospective exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London

Richard Long

Richard Long is a [Contemporary](#) artist whose work brings together sculpture, [Conceptual Art](#) and Land Art. His work is inspired by his long solitary walks through landscapes and remote or inhospitable terrain. He often collects objects such as stones and twigs on these walks and then exhibits them in gallery spaces, arranging them into circular or other simple geometric shapes. He also exhibits these works in their original settings documenting them with photographs, text and maps.

Long explains the inspiration for his work by saying 'Nature has always been recorded by artists, from pre-historic cave paintings to 20th century landscape photography. I too wanted to make nature the subject of my work, but in new ways. I started working outside, using natural materials like grass and water, and this evolved into the idea of making a sculpture by walking. My landscape sculptures inhabit the rich territory between two ideological positions, namely that of making monuments or conversely, of leaving footprints. As sculpture may be moved, dispersed and carried. Stones can be used as markers of time or distance, or exist as parts of a huge, yet anonymous sculpture.'

Long currently lives and works in Bristol. He has an international reputation and has attracted a lot of attention from critics. Most of them approve of his work, although the critic Peter Fuller described his work as 'the barren arrangement of gathered stones.'

Chronology

1945: Born in Bristol, England

1962-5: Studied at West of England College of Art, Bristol

1966-8: Studied at St. Martin's School of Art, London

1967: Made his first walking work – a straight line in a grass field

1968: First solo exhibition in Dusseldorf

1969: Started to walk and create his art abroad

1973: Exhibited 'Circle of sticks' at the Tate Gallery, London

1976: Represented Britain at the Venice Biennale

1979: Exhibited 'Slate circle' at the Tate Gallery, London

1989: Won the Turner prize

2002: Solo exhibition at the Tate Gallery, St Ives

2006: Solo exhibition at the Graves Gallery, Sheffield

Paul Nash

Paul Nash was one of the most evocative landscape painters of his generation. Nash found his inspiration in the English landscape, viewing himself in the tradition of English mystical painters such as William Blake and Samuel Palmer. He was particularly drawn to landscapes with a sense of ancient history, such as the standing stones at Avebury and Stonehenge. Nash's approach to such landscapes was characteristically analytical, reducing his subjects to their essential form. Nevertheless, he remained conscious of the intangible mystery in all matter, and his subjects, no matter how **abstract**, are never made to look mechanical or geometric.

As with so many artists of his generation Nash's war time experiences were the inspiration for a large proportion of his work. Commissioned as an Official War Artist, Nash produced some of the most memorable images of both the First and Second World Wars. His stark landscapes of the Western Front were sinister and surreal, yet remained rooted in the traditions of English landscape painting. They continue to be displayed today as a representative of the reality of war.

During the 1920s and 1930s Nash became a pioneer of **Modernism** in Britain, promoting the **Avant-garde** European styles of **Abstraction** and **Surrealism** and co-founding the influential modern art movement **Unit One**. He became particularly interested in **Surrealism** and the power of objects to evoke associations alien to their basic form. Many of his landscapes from this period are empty of people, yet the artist's manipulation of other objects, such as rocks, trees and flowers implies they are present within the work.

Alongside his painting Nash also worked as a designer, photographer and writer. His collective writings were published in a single volume three years after his death.

Chronology

1889: Born on 11th May in London

1910-1912: Studied at Slade School of Art, London

1912: First solo exhibition at Carfax Gallery, London

1914: Enlisted in the Artists' Rifles serving at Ypres on the Western Front

May 1917: Invalided home as a consequence of a non-military accident. While he was recovering Nash worked from sketches to produce a series of war paintings. After viewing his work the War Propaganda Bureau recruited Nash as an Official War Artist

November 1917: Returned to the Western Front where he painted some of his most famous works including, *The Menin Road*, *Ruined Country* and *Spring in the Trenches*

1922: Moved to small Dorset coastal town of Dymchurch

1929: Nash's father died. This coincided with the deterioration of his own health.

1933: Co-founded influential modern art movement [Unit One](#)

1936: Organised and exhibited in the International [Surrealist](#) Exhibition in London

1940: Once again employed as a war artist. This time Nash chose to depict the air war, painting the *Battle of Britain* and *Totes Meer*.

1946: Died on 11th July in Boscombe, Hampshire

Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson

Christopher Nevinson was a painter of landscapes, urban and industrial subjects, war scenes and [figurative](#) studies. Nevinson's work was initially influenced by [Impressionism](#) and [Post Impressionism](#). It was however, the [Futurist](#) exhibition of March 1912, held at the Sackville Gallery, which proved decisive for his development. At the exhibition he met the [Futurist](#) painter Gino Severini and returned with him to study in Paris. Here Nevinson was introduced to other [Futurist](#) artists including Umberto Boccioni and Ardengo Soffici. He was inspired by the [Futurists'](#) interest in modern technology and their depiction of motion. During this time he began to pursue similar themes in his own work. Nevinson announced his affiliation with the movement by exhibiting a painting called *Rising City* in the Friday Club exhibition of January 1913. This was followed by a series of fragmented, [Futurist](#) inspired urban works giving him the reputation of being England's only [Futurist](#) painter.

In 1917 Nevinson was commissioned as an Official War Artist. His work drew the public's attention to the increasingly mechanised nature of modern warfare, something that was far removed from the romantic artistry that had accompanied the early stages of the war. One critic wrote of his most famous work, *Machine Gun*: "the hard lines of the machinery dictate those of the robotised soldiers who become as one with the killing machine." His 1918 work, *Paths of Glory* depicted the bodies of two dead British soldiers and was considered so harrowing it was censored by the War Office. Nevinson's war paintings confirm that he saw the war as a tragic event. Bleak, outspoken and angry, they are among the masterpieces of his career.

After the war Nevinson abandoned [Futurism](#), preferring to paint more conventional landscapes and cityscapes. His work remained dynamic and powerful. A series of paintings of New York were particularly striking, revealing the artist's feelings about the dehumanising effect of urban life. In later years Nevinson's work became less radical. He concentrated more on pastoral scenes and flower pieces where a gentler mood prevailed.

Chronology

1889: Born on 13th August in London

1907-08: Attended St John's Wood School of Art

1908-12: Studied at Slade School of Art, London

1912-13: Studied at the Academie Julian in Paris where he shared a studio with Amedeo Modigliani. Worked at the Cercle Russe where he made friends with Gino Severini.

1914: Co wrote, *Vital English Art*, a Futurist manifesto with Marinetti. Volunteered for the Red Cross

1915: First solo exhibition held at Leicester Galleries, London. Proved controversial because of its realistic depictions of war

1917: Commissioned as an Official War Artist. He was the first artist to depict war from the air

1919-20: Visited New York which inspired works such as *Soul of a Soulless City*

1929: Elected to New English Art Club

1939: Elected Royal Academician

1946: Died on 7th October in London

Sir Stanley Spencer

Sir Stanley Spencer was an artist of many contradictions, at once innocent and worldly, spiritual and sexual, realistic and primitive, hopeful and despondent. Spencer's early work was heavily influenced by the [Pre-Raphaelites](#) and their emulation of medieval and early [Renaissance](#) painting. He was particularly drawn to their religious subject matter and began to incorporate it into his own work. He painted a series of paintings setting the New Testament story in and around his home town of Cookham. His most famous work, *The Resurrection*, was set in the village churchyard, depicting the villagers as characters from scripture.

Spencer left Cookham in 1915 to serve in the Royal Army Medical Corps and was stationed at Beaufort War Hospital. His sympathy towards the wounded and dead soldiers he encountered there had a substantial impact on his work. He painted pictures for them and of them, in order to take their minds off the war. In doing so the focus of his work changed. His religious idealism was replaced by a desire to focus on reality.

Spencer's wartime experiences also led to his sexual awakening, which became the subject of much of his work during the 1930s. A series of portraits of his second wife Patricia Preece, proved highly controversial. One of these portraits, *Leg of Mutton Nude*, painted in 1937, was both raw and uncompromising. In it Spencer sought to question ideas of beauty by presenting the body of his wife as nothing more than uncooked meat. The explicit nature of this work angered many within the English art establishment who subsequently threatened to have Spencer prosecuted for obscenity.

Chronology

1891: Born on 30th June in the village of Cookham, Berkshire

1907: Studied Art at Maidenhead Technical Institute

1908-1912: Studied at the Slade School of Art under Henry Tonk. His Contemporaries included William Roberts, and Paul Nash

1912: Exhibited in Roger Fry's second [Post Impressionist](#) exhibition

1915-1918: Served in Royal Army Medical Corps during the First World War

1919: Commissioned to paint *Travois arriving with Wounded* for the Imperial War Museum

1925: Married Hilda Carline

1927: First one man exhibition at the Goupil Gallery where his painting *The Resurrection* proved controversial

1932: Became a Royal Academician

1937: Divorced Hilda and married Patricia Preece four days later. Their marriage ended almost immediately

1950: Awarded CBE

1959: Knighted

1959: Died on 14th December at Canadian War Memorial Hospital, Cliveden

Keith Vaughan

Keith Vaughan is best known as a **figurative** painter who combined male nudes with **abstract** settings. Influenced by contemporaries such as Graham Sutherland and John Minton his early work was decorative in style, and gave prominence to the British landscape. Vaughan's unidentifiable, yet unmistakably human subjects inhabited idyllic representations of this landscape and as a result he became recognised as a **Neo-Romantic**.

He quickly strayed from this style however, striving instead to be a truly **classical** artist. His work was driven by a progressive understanding of ancient Greek art, adopting its rhythms, forms and invention. As a consequence of this deepening of understanding, his work became grander in conception. His **figurative** forms became reminiscent of the **Moai** figures of Easter Island and the **abstract** shapes of the Ancient Greek **Cycladics**. The landscapes that Vaughan's figures inhabited developed; becoming increasingly more abstract. This was in part due to the influence of Henri Matisse and Nicholas Da Stael who encouraged him to experiment with **abstract** settings for his figures and in so doing liberated both his use of colour and form.

Despite considerable artistic success Vaughan became increasingly melancholic and reclusive. His journals published during his lifetime and after his death give a graphic insight into his own vulnerable, obsessive and ultimately sad private life. His final entry was made as he took his own life, the words trailing off as he fell into unconsciousness.

Chronology

1912: Born on 23rd August in Selsey, Sussex

1921-1929: Attended Christ's Hospital School in Horsham, West Sussex

1931: Employed in the Art Department at Lintas advertising agency

1939: On the outbreak of war registered as a conscientious objector and joined the St John's Ambulance

1941: Drafted into the Pioneer Corps

1944: First solo exhibition at the Reid and Lefevre Gallery

1946-49: Taught at Camberwell School of Art and at Central School of Arts and Crafts

1951: Commissioned to paint a mural for the festival of Britain's 'Dome of Discovery'

1959-77: Visiting teacher at the Slade School of Art

1957: Arts Council retrospective exhibition

1959: Taught and exhibited at State University of Iowa, USA

1960: Elected an associate of the Royal Academy but rejected the election

1964: Elected an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Art

1965: Awarded CBE

1977: Committed suicide on 4th November in London

Glossary

Abstract - Imagery which rejects representational accuracy, to a varied extent. Abstract artists overstate or understate the forms suggested by the world around them.

Avant-garde - French for vanguard. A term used for artists and their work which stand at the forefront of a movement or of new ideas, often in opposition to accepted traditions; art that's ahead of its time, experimental, innovative. Both the terms avant-garde and vanguard were created by combining the old French words "avant," meaning "fore-," and "garde," meaning "guard." In French, "avant-garde" referred to the troops that marched at the head of the army. 1910 was the first time it was used by English speakers.

Classical (Art) – This term now has many meanings. It was originally used in reference to the art of ancient Greece produced during the fifth and fourth centuries BC. Later it included all works of art produced from 600 BC until the fall of Rome. Still later it was a term used to describe any art form thought to be inspired by ancient Greek or Roman examples. In present times Classical is used to describe perfection of form, with an emphasis on harmony and control of emotion. Often it is applied to works that are representational but idealistic.

Conceptual Art – Imagery which departs from perceptual accuracy to portray a mental formulation of the object, instead of its appearance alone. It is art that is intended to express an idea or a concept to the perceiver, rejecting the creation or appreciation of a conventional artifact such as a painting or a sculpture as a precious commodity. Conceptual Art emerged as an art movement in the 1960s. For the Art & Language group, Concept art resulted in an art object being replaced by an analysis of it. Exponents of Conceptual Art said that artistic production should serve artistic knowledge and that the art object is not an end in itself. The first exhibition specifically devoted to Conceptual Art took place in 1970 at the New York Cultural Center under the title "Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects." Because Conceptual Art is so dependent upon the text (or discourse) surrounding it, it is strongly related to several other movements of the last century.

Contemporary (Art) - Current, belonging to the same period of time, generally refers to today's art. The use of the literal adjective "Contemporary" to define this period in art history is partly due to the lack of any distinct or dominant school of art as recognised by artists, art historians and critics. It tends to include art made from the late 1960's to the present, or after the supposed end of **Modern art** or the **Modernist** period (however, artists are making "Modern art" today, just as they are making art in practically all past styles or modes). Art made or performed since **Modernism** is also sometimes

called **Postmodern** art, but as **Postmodernism** can refer to both a historical timeframe and an aesthetic approach, and many Contemporary artists' work does not exhibit some of the key elements of the postmodern aesthetic, "Contemporary" may be preferred as a more inclusive adjective.

Cubism – An early 20th Century **avant-garde** art movement. The term "Cubism" was first used in 1908 by the French art critic Louis Vauxcelles after seeing a picture by George Braque (French, 1882-1963). He described the picture as 'full of little cubes'. The term 'Cubism' then became popular very quickly and by 1910 critics were referring to a 'Cubist School'. Cubist artwork focused on objects being broken up, analyzed, and then re-assembled in an abstracted form. Instead of depicting objects from a singular viewpoint, the object would be depicted from a multitude of viewpoints to present the piece in a greater context. Unlike Impressionism which had more of an emphasis on light and colour, Cubism followed Paul Cezanne's statement that "Everything in nature takes its form from the sphere, the cone, and the cylinder." in which these 3 shapes are used to depict the object of the painting. Georges Braque (French, 1882 – 1963) and Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881-1973) were the main innovators of the movement. Working closely together they went through several distinct phases before 1920. Analytic Cubism was a concept they worked with from 1909 to 1911

Cycladics – From a collection called 'the Cyclades' formed with more than 350 artifacts made on the Greek islands between 3200 B.C. and 2000 B.C. During this period these small islands in the centre of the Aegean became the home of a flourishing culture. There is archaeological evidence for well-protected, heavily populated settlements and widespread sea-trade. Metallurgy was becoming prominent alongside pottery and presumably skills like wood-carving and weaving which leave no archaeological trace. The most prominent craft in Cycladic culture, however, was stone-cutting, especially marble sculpture. The abundance of white, good-quality marble on most of the islands encouraged its wide use for the creation of artifacts and implements of functional or symbolic nature. Among these, Cycladic Figurines are by far the most distinctive Cycladic creation because of the great numbers in which they are found, the variety of sizes and types and the significance, we may assume, they held for their owners.

Etching - A printing process which involves an etching needle being drawn into a wax ground applied over a metal plate. The plate is then submerged in a sequence of acid baths, each biting into the metal surface only where unprotected by the ground. The ground is then removed, ink is forced into the etched depressions, and an impression is printed and formed.

Expressionism - (with a capital E – the more specific sense) An art movement dominant in Germany from 1905-1925, especially with groups such

as Die Brücke (The Bridge) and Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider), which are usually referred to as German Expressionism, anticipated by Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (Spanish, 1746-1828), Vincent van Gogh (Dutch, 1853-1890), Paul Gauguin (French, 1848-1903) and others. Expressionism, as it was generally known, developed almost simultaneously in different countries from about 1905. Characterized by heightened, symbolic colors and exaggerated imagery.

Figurative - 1. Relating to or representing form in art by means of human or animal figures 2. Using an allegorical or emblematic human or animal figure to represent an **Abstract** idea or quality. Describes artwork representing the form of a human, an animal or a thing; any expression of one thing in terms of another thing. **Abstract** artwork is the opposite of figurative art in certain ways. Roy Lichtenstein made a series of images of a bull, demonstrating this kind of range in ways to approach figuration and abstraction, beginning with the most highly figurative version, and proceeding through stages to the most **Abstract** version.

Futurism – A **Modern Art** movement which originated in Italy in 1909, when Filippo Marinetti's (Italian, 1876 – 1974) initial manifesto of futurism appeared. Futurism was a celebration of the machine age, glorifying war and favoring the growth of fascism. Futurist painting and sculpture were concerned with expressing movement (especially speed, trains were often chosen as an example of the machine age) and the dynamics of natural and man-made forms.

Impasto – A thick or lumpy application of paint, or deep intense brush marks (brushstrokes), as opposed to a flat, smooth paint surface. It may also refer to a thick application of pastel.

Impressionism -An art movement and style of painting that started in France in the 1860s. Impressionist artists endeavored to paint candid glimpses of their subjects showing the effects of sunlight on objects at different times of day. The leaders of this movement were: Camille Pissarro (French, 1830-1903), Edgar Degas (French, 1834-1917), Claude Monet (French, 1840-1926), and Pierre Renoir (French, 1841-1919). Some of the early work of Paul Cézanne (French, 1839-1906) fits into this style, though his later work so transcends it that it belongs to another movement known as **Post-Impressionism**.

Kitchen Sink Painters – Term originally used as the title of an article by the critic David Sylvester in the December 1954 issue of the journal *Encounter*. The article discussed the work of the realist artists known as the Beaux Arts Quartet, John Bratby (British, 1928-1992), Derrick Greaves (British, 1927), Edward Middleditch (British, 1923-1987) and Jack Smith (British 1928-). Sylvester wrote that their work 'takes us back from the studio to the kitchen' and

described their subjects as 'an inventory which includes every kind of food and drink, every utensil and implement, the usual plain furniture and even the babies nappies on the line. Everything but the kitchen sink? The kitchen sink too'. Sylvester also emphasised that these kitchens were ones 'in which ordinary people cooked ordinary food and doubtless lived their ordinary lives'. The Kitchen Sink Painters celebration of the everyday life of ordinary people carries implications of a social if not political comment and Kitchen Sink art can be seen to belong in the category of social realism. They depicted drab, everyday scenes with an aggressive technique and often brilliant, 'crude' colour. Kitchen Sink reached its apogee in 1956 when the Beaux Arts Quartet was selected to represent Britain at the Venice Biennale.

Lithographs - Lithography - In the graphic arts, a method of printing from a prepared flat stone or metal or plastic plate, invented in the late eighteenth century. A drawing is made on the stone or plate with a greasy crayon or tusche, and then washed with water. When ink is applied it sticks to the greasy drawing but runs off (or is resisted by) the wet surface allowing a print — a lithograph — to be made of the drawing. The artist, or other print maker under the artist's supervision, then covers the plate with a sheet of paper and runs both through a press under light pressure. For colour lithography separate drawings are made for each colour.

Moai – Statues carved of compressed volcanic ash on Rapa Nui (Easter Island). The statues are all monolithic (carved in one piece). They can weigh more than 20 tons and be more than 20 feet tall. One unfinished sculpture has been found that would have been 69 feet tall and would have weighed about 270 tons. On Rapa Nui nearly 400 Moai still remain visible today.

Modernism/ Modern Art - The Modernist movement emerged in the mid-19th century in France and was fixed with the idea that "traditional" forms of art, literature and daily life had become invalid and redundant, and that it was therefore essential to leave them behind and reconstruct a new culture. Modernism encouraged the reconsideration of every aspect of existence, from business to philosophy, with the goal of finding that which was "holding back" progress, and replacing it with new, and therefore better ways of reaching the same end. It encapsulated artist's attempts to come to terms with the urban, industrial and secular society that emerged during this period in Western society.

Many art movements, from **Impressionism** to Minimalism, fall under the umbrella of Modern art. It was no longer important to represent a subject realistically – the invention of photography had made this function of art outdated. Instead, artists started experimenting with new ways of seeing, with fresh ideas about the nature, materials and functions of art, often moving

toward **Abstraction**. The viewer's interpretation was not considered part of the process of art making or as a significant part of the experience of art, as it became in **Postmodernism**.

Neo - Romantic – Strongly theatrical and romantic style of painting from the 1930s and 1940s. Common themes included longing for the perfect love, utopian landscapes, nature reclaiming ruins, romantic death, and history in landscape. Artists connected with the movement included Christian Berard (French, 1902-1949), Eugene Berman (American, 1899 -1972) and John Piper (English, 1903–1992). Many of the artists were influenced by **Surrealism**. Some critics argued that neo-romanticism lacked an adequate notion of evil in the modern world.

Pop Art – An art movement and style that had its origins in England in the 1950s with various investigations into the nature of urban popular culture, notably by members of the independent Group at the ICA (Institute of Contemporary Arts) in London. It made its way to the United States during the 1960s and blossomed as a major style, affecting not only Fine Art but many aspects of Decorative Art. Pop artists focused attention upon familiar images of popular culture such as billboards, comic strips, magazine advertisements, and supermarket products. Leading exponents are Richard Hamilton (British, 1922), Andy Warhol (American, 1928-1987), Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923-1997), Jasper Johns (American, 1930), and Robert Rauschenberg (American, 1925).

Post- Impressionism - Post-Impressionism is an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of artists who were influenced by **Impressionism** but took their art in other directions. There is no single well-defined style of Post-Impressionism, but in general it is less idyllic and more emotionally charged than **Impressionist** work, showing a greater concern for expression and rejecting the emphasis on naturalism and the depictions of fleeting effects of light. The classic Post-Impressionists are Paul Gauguin (French, 1848-1903), Paul Cezanne (French 1839 - 1906), Vincent van Gogh (Dutch, 1853-1890), Henri Rousseau (French, 1844-1910) and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (French, 1864-1901). The term was coined by the British art critic and painter, Roger Fry (1866-1934), on the occasion of an exhibit of works by these artists, which he curated in 1910 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Post- Modernism – Art that opposes earlier **Modernist** beliefs by reintroducing traditional or classical elements of style or by carrying **Modernist** practice to extremes.

Pre- Raphaelites –An alliance of English artists in 1848 who aimed to recapture the simplicity and splendour of the medieval world. The art movement reacted to the sterility of English art, along with the materialism which was a consequence of England's industrialization. They identified with Raphael (Italian, 1483-1520) and the scientific interests of **Renaissance** art, which they felt had strongly influenced modern technological development. They aimed to infuse their works with vivid colours, literary symbolism, and attention to detail. The founders of the Brotherhood were the painters Dante Gabriel Rossetti (British, 1828-1882) William Holman Hunt (British, 1827-1910), John Everett Millais (British, 1829-1896), James Collinson (British, 1825-1881), Frederic George Stephens (British, 1828-1907), sculptor Thomas Woolner (British, 1825-1892), and writer William Michael Rossetti (British, 1829-1919), the painter's brother.

Renaissance –A revival or rebirth of cultural awareness and learning that took place during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, particularly in Italy, but also in Germany and other European countries. The period was characterized by a renewed interest in ancient Greek and Roman art and design and included an emphasis on human beings, their environment, science, and philosophy.

Romanticism - An art movement and style that thrived in the early nineteenth century. It put emphasise on the emotions painted in a bold, dramatic manner. Romantic artists discarded the composed way of thinking of **Classicism**, which was the established art of the times, to paint pictures of nature in its untamed state, frequently with an emphasis on the past. **Classicism** was nostalgic too, but Romantics were more emotional, often melancholic, and sometimes melodramatically tragic.

Surrealism - A twentieth century **Avant-garde** art movement that originated in the nihilistic ideas of the Dadaists and especially of its founder, French writer and former Dadaist André Breton (1896-1966). He wrote three manifestos about Surrealism in 1924, 1930, and 1934, and opened a studio for "surrealist research" Inspired by the theories of the pioneer of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud (German, 1856-1939). The images found in surrealist works are heavily influenced by dreams and the subconscious; they often have a realistic, though irrational style, as in the works of René Magritte (Belgian, 1898-1967), Salvador Dalí (Spanish, 1904-1988), Yves Tanguy (French, 1900-1955), and Alfred Pellán (Canadian, 1906-1988). These artists were also inspired by Symbolism and the metaphysical Painting of Giorgio de Chirico (Italian, 1888-1978). It could have a more abstract style, as in the works of Joan Miró (Spanish, 1893-1983), Max Ernst (German, 1891-1976), and André Masson (French, 1896-1987). They invented spontaneous techniques, modeled upon the psychotherapeutic procedure of "free

association", a creative method used to eliminate conscious control in order to express the workings of the unconscious mind.

Unit One – A British group set up by Paul Nash in 1933 to promote **Modern Art**, architecture and design. At the time two of the major movements in modern art were seen as being **Abstract Art** and **Surrealism**. Unit One embraced both movements, Nash himself made both **Abstract** and **Surrealist** work in the mid 1930s and was instrumental in the organisation of the *International Surrealist Exhibition* in London in 1936. The launch of the Unit One group was announced in a letter from Nash to *The Times* newspaper. He wrote that Unit One was 'to stand for the expression of a truly **Contemporary** spirit, for that thing which is recognised as peculiarly of *today* in painting, sculpture and architecture'. The only Unit One group exhibition was held in 1934 accompanied by a book *Unit One*, subtitled *The Modern Movement in English Architecture, Painting and Sculpture*. It included statements by all the artists in the group, photographs of their work, and an introduction by the critic and poet Herbert Read, who was an important champion of **Modernism** in Britain. The other artists involved were John Armstrong (British, 1893 – 1973), John Bigge (British 1892 – 1973), Edward Burra (British, 1905- 1976), Dame Barbara Hepworth (British, 1903 -1975), Henry Moore (British, 1898 –1986), Ben Nicholson (British, 1894- 1982), Edward Wadsworth (British 1889 – 1949) and the architects Welles Coates (Japanese, 1895 –1958) and Colin Lucas (British, 1906- 1988).