



YEAR 9

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM - MINIMALISM

- Abstract Expressionism Key Knowledge
- Abstract Expressionism is a post–World War II art movement in American painting, developed in New York City in the 1940s.
  - It was the first specifically American movement to achieve international influence and put New York at the centre of the Western art world, a role formerly filled by Paris.
  - Hans Hofmann is a key artist in the Abstract Expressionism. Hofmann’s wildly varied paintings point the way toward a large swath of the most exciting contemporary abstraction. He was a gallant experimenter, refusing to settle on a single style for long. His career is a case study in spurning easy answers. “What I would hate most is to repeat myself over and over again,” he once wrote.
  - Hans Hofmann produced a series of work known as ‘Fury’. These paintings were executed at the end of the Second World War and immediately afterwards and saw Hofmann’s style develop into his more well-known abstract style. The works within the series personify the insecurities of period.

- Minimalism Key Knowledge
- Minimalist art began in the 1950s with a group of artists who did not make paintings and sculptures about the things they saw in the world, like a house, or a bottle, or a snowy landscape. They made paintings and sculptures about the materials they used, like paint, and wood and metal. Their artworks look like they might have been made in a factory.
  - Minimalism in visual art, generally referred to as "minimal art", "literalist art" and "ABC Art" emerged in New York in the early 1960s.
  - In the 1960s artist Frank Stella, seen as a leading member of the minimalist movement, began to use a wider range of colours, typically arranged in straight or curved lines.
  - When Stella was in his early 20s he began a series of paintings called The Black Paintings. The image to the left shows you one of his ‘black paintings’, this is what one of them looked like. The Museum of Modern Art, in New York was so impressed with these paintings that they bought some of them.
  - Later he began his Protractor Series of paintings, in which arcs, sometimes overlapping, within square borders are arranged side by side to produce full and half circles painted in rings of concentric colour. These paintings are named after circular cities he had visited while in the Middle East earlier in the 1960s.
  - Frank Stella created a series of work known as ‘The Moby Dick’ series, where the chapter titles of the book influenced him to create more sculptural pieces of work. This work was more comparable to his protractor series with his use of striking and bold colour.



Hans Hofmann - Fury No.1, 1945



Artist Profile – Hans Hofmann

Born: 21 March, 1880 in Germany  
Died 17 February, 1966 (aged 85)

Hans Hofmann routinely receives more credit as a teacher than as an artist in studies of his era, his most enduring work came only at the end of his long career, and his paintings regularly straddle the line between various schools (elements of Cubism, Fauvism, and more cohabit), all of which has made him a tricky figure to pin down and properly appreciate. But he’s an underrated giant of 20th-century art hiding in plain sight. Plenty of successful artists spend a lifetime fixated on one visual idea. Hans Hofmann was the exact opposite, rethinking his art and rethinking it again, bobbing and weaving for decades. Along the way, he inspired countless essential artists, remade his life after fleeing oppression, and produced some of the 20th-century’s most scintillating, most prescient paintings.



Hans Hofmann – Toward Crepuscule

Artist Profile – Frank Stella

Born: 12th May 1936 (85 years old)  
Nationality: American

Frank Philip Stella is an American painter, sculptor and printmaker, noted for his work in the areas of minimalism and post-painterly abstraction. He is still alive today and works in New York City, USA.

As with most minimalist artists, he reacted against the expressive use of paint by most painters of the abstract expressionist movement, instead finding himself drawn towards "flatter" surfaces. This was a departure from the technique of creating a painting by first making a sketch.



Key vocabulary

Circle

Arc

Critic

Critique

Abstract

Scale

Gallery

Analyse

Explain

Composition

Emotion

Push and Pull

Technique

Literature

A circle, is measured by its circumference, diameter, and radius. any connected part of a circle. Specifying two end points of an arc and a centre allows for two arcs that together make up a full circle.

A person who judges the merits of literary or artistic works, especially one who does so professionally. Evaluate (a theory or practice) in a detailed and analytical way.

Relating to or denoting art that does not attempt to represent external reality, but rather seeks to achieve its effect using shapes, colours, and textures.

Scale refers to the overall physical size of an artwork or objects in the artwork.

A room or building for the display or sale of works of art.

determining what the features suggest and deciding why the artist used such features to convey specific ideas.

Make (an idea or situation) clear to someone by describing it in more detail.

Give a reason so as to justify or excuse.

Composition is the arrangement of elements within a work of art.

A strong feeling deriving from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others.

A technique coined by artist Hans Hofmann, it proved that the illusion of space, depth, and even movement on a canvas could be created abstractly using colour and shape, rather than representational forms

Written works, especially those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit.

Frank Stella - The Pequod meets the Rachel, 1988

Frank Stella – unknown, 1936