

The Armory Show - 1913

Exhibition of painting and sculpture held in New York City.

Of the 1,600 works assembled, one-third were European, tracing the evolution of modern art from Francisco de Goya to Picasso and Kandinsky.

The show exposed the American public for the first time to advanced European art. Despite the critical turmoil, more than 500,000 people viewed the Armory Show in New York, Chicago, and Boston.



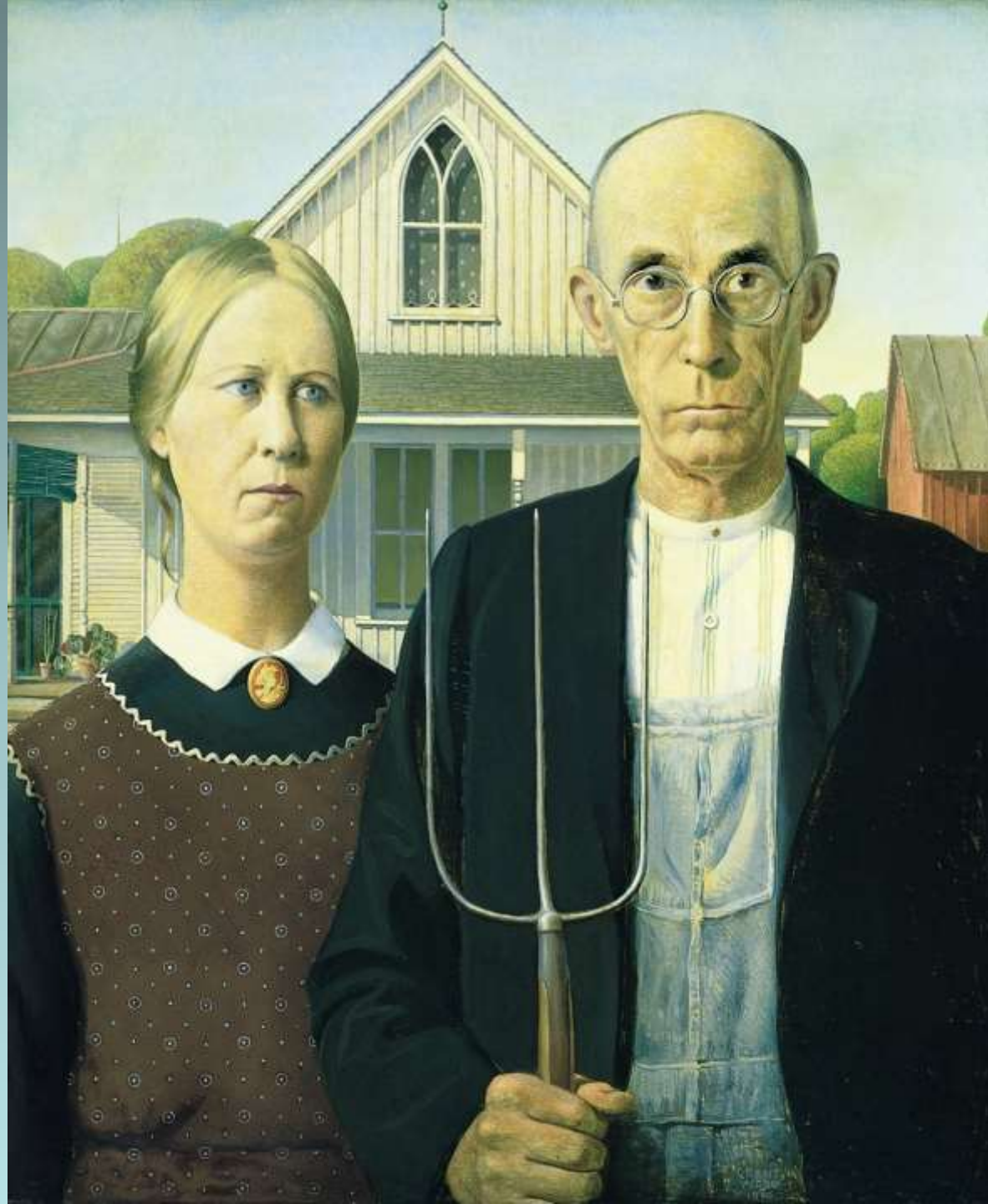
American Scene Painting (1920s-50s):

This is an umbrella term covering a wide range of realist painting, from the more nationalistic Regionalists (the painters of the Midwest) to the left wing Social Realists. They had in common the preference for illustrational styles and their contempt for “highbrow” European abstract.

GRANT WOOD
(Regionalist)

American Gothic (Depict an
Iowa farmer and his
daughter)

1930. Oil on beaverboard, 2'
5 7/8" x 2' 7/8". Art
Institute of Chicago.







World War II (1939 – 45)

International conflict principally between the Axis Powers — Germany, Italy, and Japan — and the Allied Powers — France, Britain, the U.S., the Soviet Union, and China. In the last stages of the war, two radically new weapons were introduced: the long-range rocket and the atomic bomb. World War II was the deadliest military conflict in history. Over 60 million people were killed.

It ended in 1945, leaving a new world order dominated by the U.S. and the USSR

From top left: Marching German police during Anschluss, emaciated Jews in a concentration camp, Battle of Stalingrad, capture of Berlin by Soviets, Japanese troops in China, atomic bombing of Nagasaki



“To write poetry after Auschwitz* is barbaric”

-Thodore Adorno

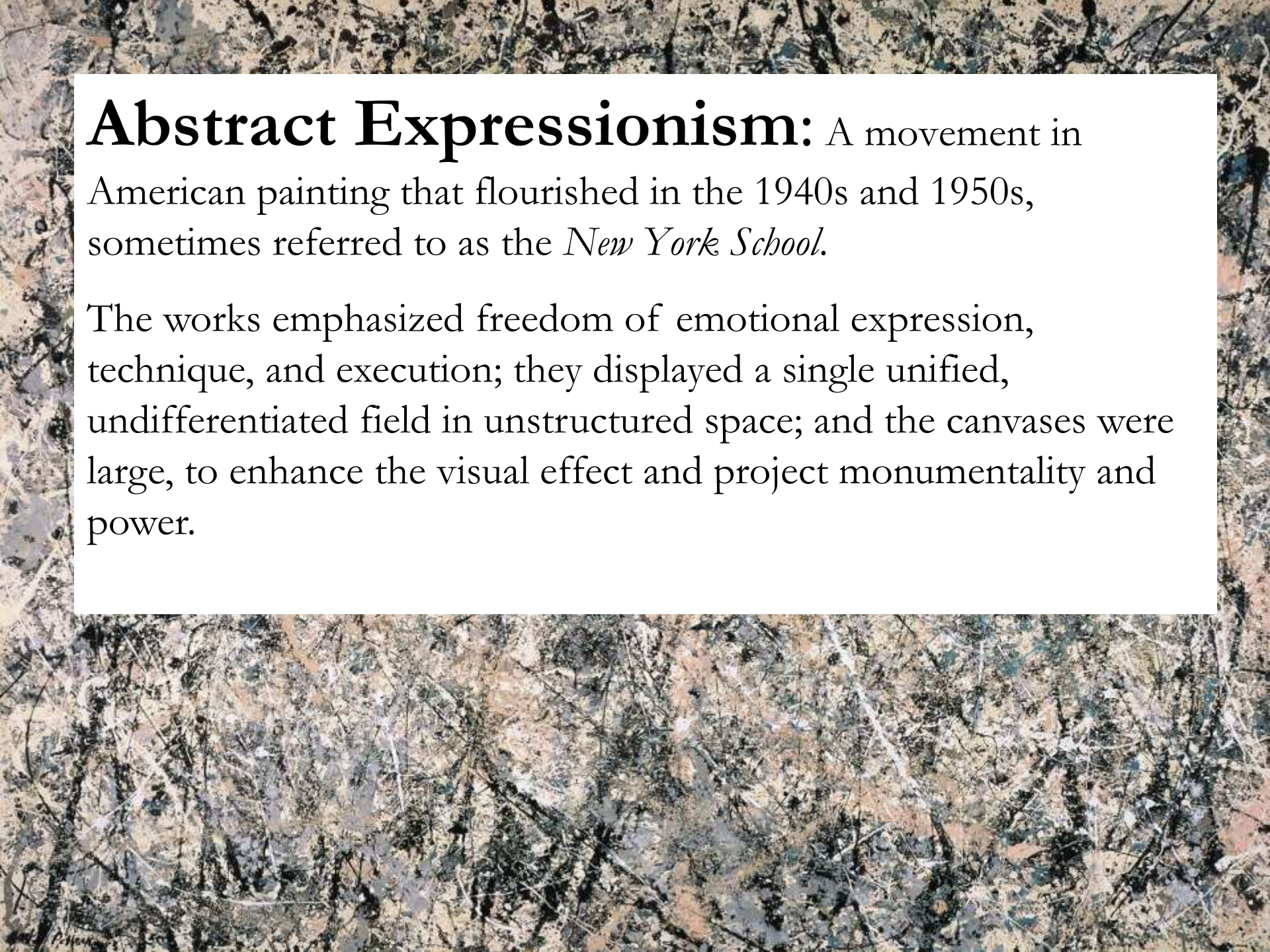
The American painter Barnett Newmann recalled that artists of his generation:

“Felt the crisis of a world in shambles, a world devastated by great depression and a fierce world war, and it was impossible at that time to paint the kind of paintings that we were doing – flowers, reclining nudes, and people playing the cello.... This was our moral crisis in relation to what to paint.”

*** Auschwitz**

Nazi Germany's largest concentration camp and extermination camp. The total number who died at Auschwitz is estimated at between 1.1 million and 1.5 million, 90 percent of which were Jews.

Abstract Expressionism

The background of the slide is a complex, abstract painting. It features a dense, chaotic composition of colors including earthy browns, greys, blacks, and muted blues. The texture is highly varied, with visible brushstrokes, splatters, and areas of what appears to be layered or dripped paint, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is one of intense, unstructured energy.

Abstract Expressionism: A movement in American painting that flourished in the 1940s and 1950s, sometimes referred to as the *New York School*.

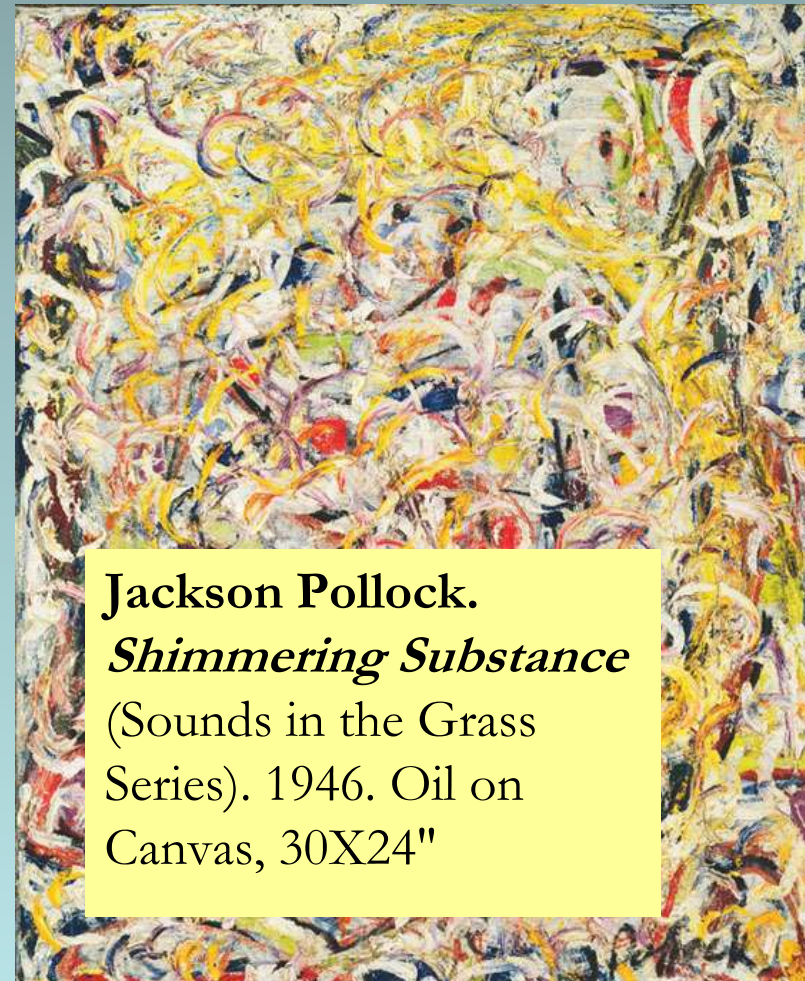
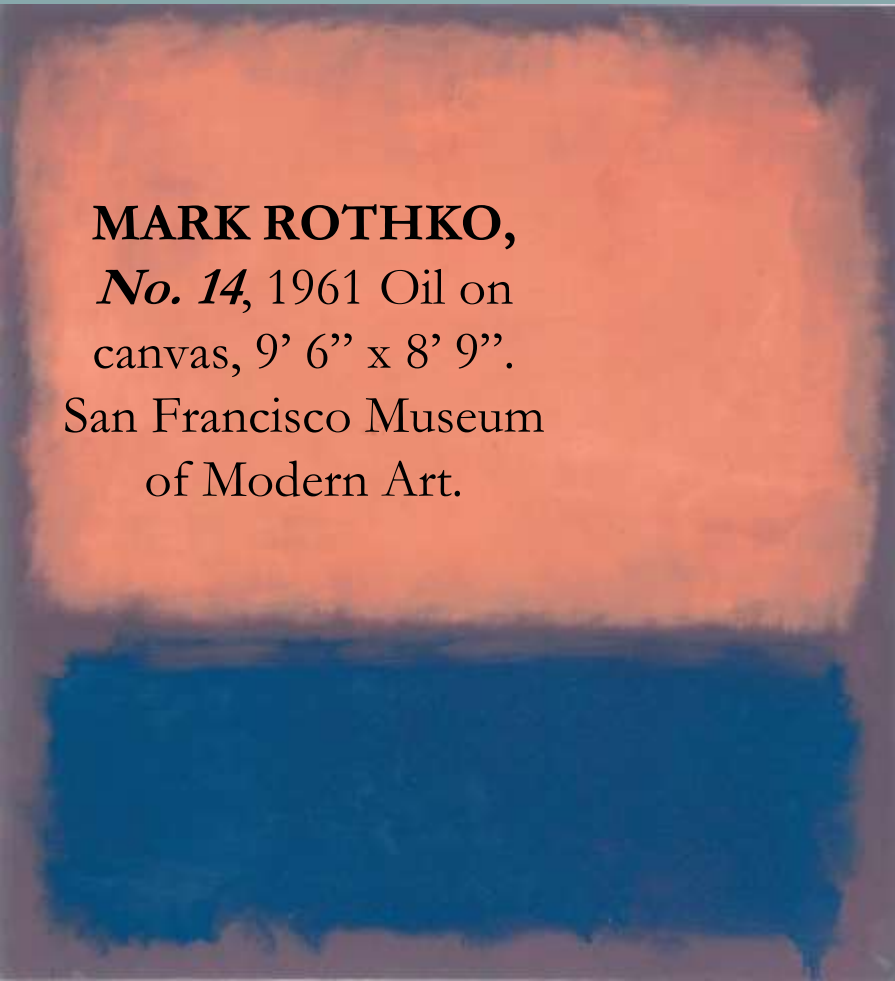
The works emphasized freedom of emotional expression, technique, and execution; they displayed a single unified, undifferentiated field in unstructured space; and the canvases were large, to enhance the visual effect and project monumentality and power.

There were two main branches of Abstract Expressionist paintings: **Gestural**, which was produced by artists such as Jackson Pollock and Willem De Kooning, and **Color Field**, whose chief practitioners were Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman.

MARK ROTHKO,

No. 14, 1961 Oil on
canvas, 9' 6" x 8' 9".

San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art.



Jackson Pollock.

Shimmering Substance

(Sounds in the Grass
Series). 1946. Oil on
Canvas, 30X24"



Clement Greenberg (1909 – 1994)

An influential American art critic whose writings helped define “Modernism.”

Greenberg argued that the essence of modern art, especially painting, lies in its purely visual content (formalist approach).

Greenberg promoted the work of Abstract Expressionists, arguing that these painters were moving towards greater emphasis on the 'flatness' of the picture plane.

Gestural Painting

Jackson Pollock, 1912-56,
American Abstract Expressionist
painter (b. Cody, Wyo. Grew up in
Arizona and California)

Famous for his "drip" technique, in
which he energetically "dripped"
complicated linear rhythms onto
enormous canvases, which were often
placed flat on the floor.

He sometimes applied paint directly
from the tube, and at times also used
aluminum paint to achieve a glittery
effect.

He died at the age of 44 in an alcohol-
related car crash.

[4:02](#)

http://youtu.be/o1arL-L7_O4

Photo of Jackson Pollock painting.



Jackson Pollock.
Shimmering Substance
(Sounds in the Grass
Series). 1946. Oil on
Canvas, 30X24"

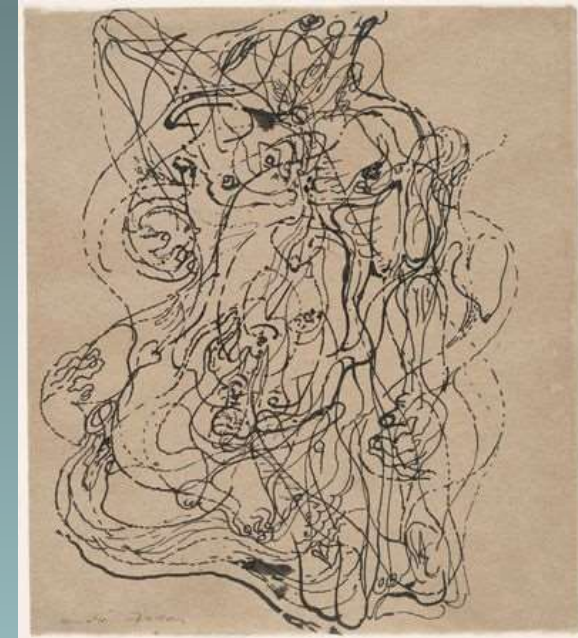




JACKSON POLLOCK, *Number 1*, 1950 (Lavender Mist), 1950. Oil, enamel, and aluminum paint on canvas, 7' 3" x 9' 10". National Gallery of Art, Washington



JACKSON POLLOCK, *Number 1*, 1950
(Lavender Mist), 1950. Oil, enamel, and
aluminum paint on canvas, 7' 3" x 9' 10".



**André Masson. Automatic
Drawing.** (1924). Ink on paper



André Masson, *The Blood of the Birds*,
1925-1926. Tempera, sand, and feathers on
canvas, 29 1/2" x 29 1/2".

“The gesture on the canvas was a gesture of liberation, from Value – political, aesthetic, moral”

-- Harold Rosenberg (art critic who coined the term “action painting”)



JACKSON POLLOCK, *Number 1*, 1950 (Lavender Mist), 1950. Oil, enamel, and aluminum paint on canvas



**GRANT WOOD
(Regionalist)**

American Gothic (Depict an Iowa farmer and his daughter) 1930.



Boris Vladimirski, *Roses for Stalin*. 1949. Oil on canvas, 100.5 x 141 cm. (Socialist Realism – official style in the Soviet Union, not to be confused with Social Realism)

Jackson Pollock, *Number 1, 1950* (*Lavender Mist*), 1950. Oil, enamel, and aluminum paint on canvas, 7' 3" x 9' 10". (Abstract Expressionism)





WILLEM DE KOONING

(Dutch-born American painter

1904-1997) , *Woman I*, 1950–1952.

Oil on canvas, 6' 3 7/8" x 4' 10".

Museum of Modern Art, New

York.



Willem de Kooning,
Woman IV, 1952-1953.

Oil, enamel, and
charcoal on canvas, 59"
x 46 1/4". The Nelson-
Atkins Museum of Art,
Kansas City, Missouri.



Willem de Kooning, *Woman III*, 1953 –
Sold for \$137.5 million



Jackson Pollock, *No. 5*, 1948
According to the *NY Times* it was
sold for \$140 million in 2006

Color Field Painting

Color Field painting is characterized primarily by large fields of flat, solid color spread across the canvas; creating areas of unbroken surface and a flat picture plane. The movement places less emphasis on gesture, brushstrokes and action in favor of an overall consistency of form and process.



“We assert that the subject
is crucial and only that
subject matter is valid which
is tragic and timeless.”

-- Mark Rothko

**Mark Rothko, *Yellow, Red,
Red*, 1954. Oil on canvas**



Rothko's paintings juxtapose large areas of melting colors that seemingly float parallel to the picture plane in an indeterminate, atmospheric space.

**Mark Rothko - *Orange
and Yellow*, 1956**

Oil on canvas

Albright-Knox Art

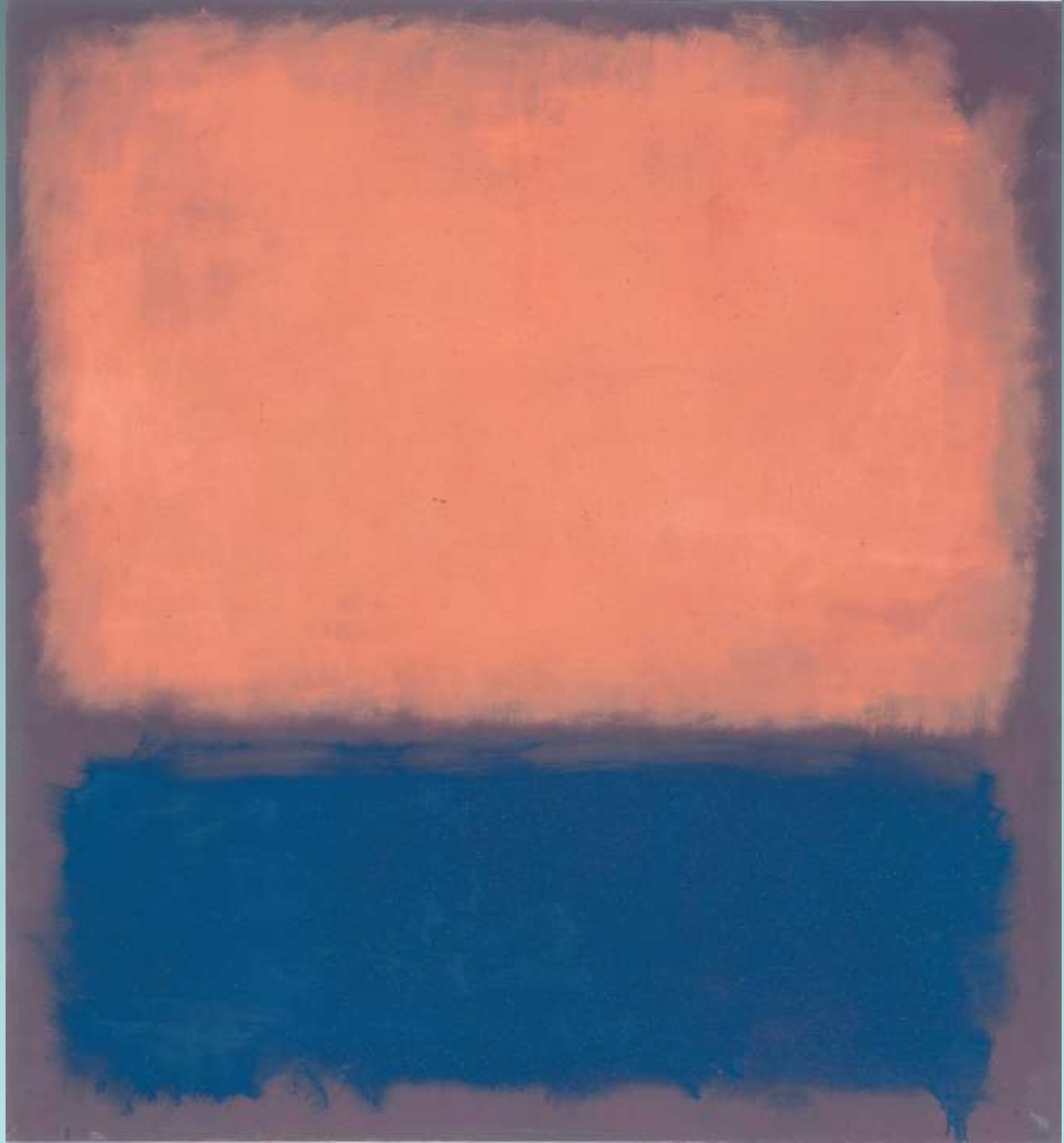
Gallery, Buffalo,

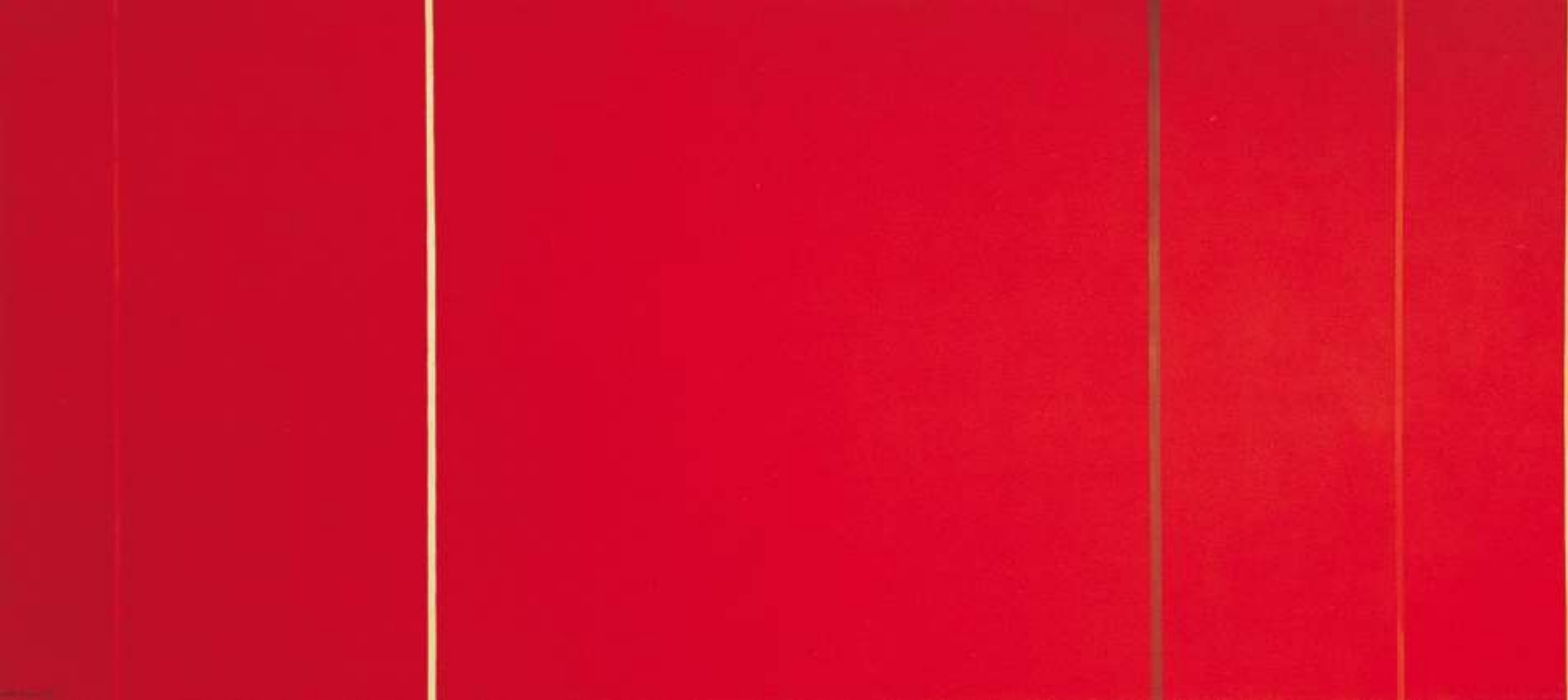
N.Y. 231 × 180 cm.



MARK ROTHKO,
No. 14, 1961 Oil on
canvas, 9' 6" x 8' 9".

San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art.

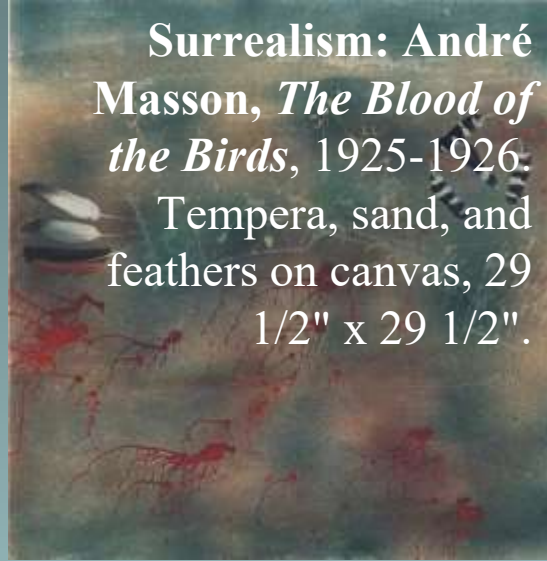




BARNETT NEWMAN, *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* ("Man, heroic and sublime"), 1950–1951. Oil on canvas, 7' 11 3/8" x 17' 9 1/4". Museum of Modern Art, New York



German Expressionism:
Vasily Kandinsky,
Composition VII, 1913, oil
on canvas 200 x 300 cm
(78.75 x 119.125 in)

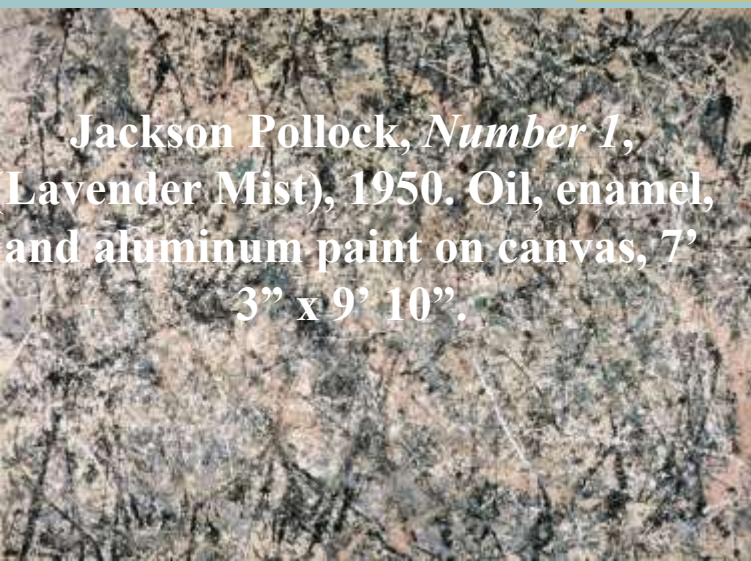


Surrealism: André
Masson, *The Blood of
the Birds*, 1925-1926.
Tempera, sand, and
feathers on canvas, 29
1/2" x 29 1/2".



Surrealism: Joan Miro,
Painting, 1933. 5' 8" x
6' 5".

**What did the American Abstract
Expressionists learn from the
German Expressionists and the
Surrealists? How are they
different?**



Jackson Pollock, *Number 1,
Lavender Mist*, 1950. Oil, enamel,
and aluminum paint on canvas, 7'
3" x 9' 10".

Mark Rothko, *No. 14*,
1961 Oil on canvas, 9' 6"
x 8' 9". San Francisco
Museum of Modern Art.

