

CH. 30

99

DATE DUE: _____

THEME: CLASS and SOCIETY

FOCUS: Lawrence's *Migration of the Negro* series, Wood's *American Gothic*, Hopper's *Nighthawks*, Lange's *Migrant Mother*

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:

http://www.phillipscollection.org/research/american_art/artwork/Lawrence-Migration_Series1.htm

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/american-regionalism-grant-woods-american-gothic.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/hoppers-nighthawks.html>

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 888-890, 894

POWERPOINT: CLASS and SOCIETY: EARLY TWENTIETH-

CENTURY AMERICAN ART (Lawrence, Wood, Hopper, and Lange)

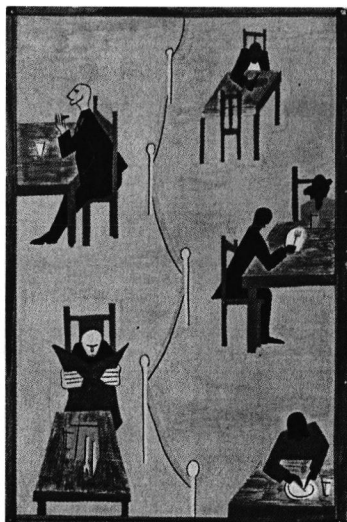
Analyze ways in which American artists addressed class and society from their own particular, individualized experiences in each of the following works produced during the first half of the twentieth-century. What historical factors also contributed to the creation of each of these works? Also, how does the visual treatment of the subject further reveal artistic intent?

Jacob Lawrence. Panels No. 3 (top) and 58 (below) from *The Migration of the Negro* series, 1940-41, tempera on hardboard

Depiction of class and/or society based on artist's own experiences:

Depiction of class and/or society based on historical context:

How visual treatment of the subject reveals artistic intent:



Jacob Lawrence. Panel No. 49 from *The Migration of the Negro* series, 1940-41, tempera on hardboard

Depiction of class and/or society based on artist's own experiences:

Depiction of class and/or society based on historical context:

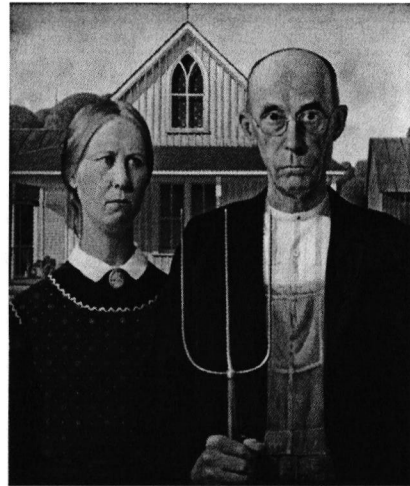
How visual treatment of the subject reveals artistic intent:

Grant Wood. *American Gothic*, 1930, oil on beaverboard

Depiction of class and/or society based on artist's own experiences:

Depiction of class and/or society based on historical context:

How visual treatment of the subject reveals artistic intent:

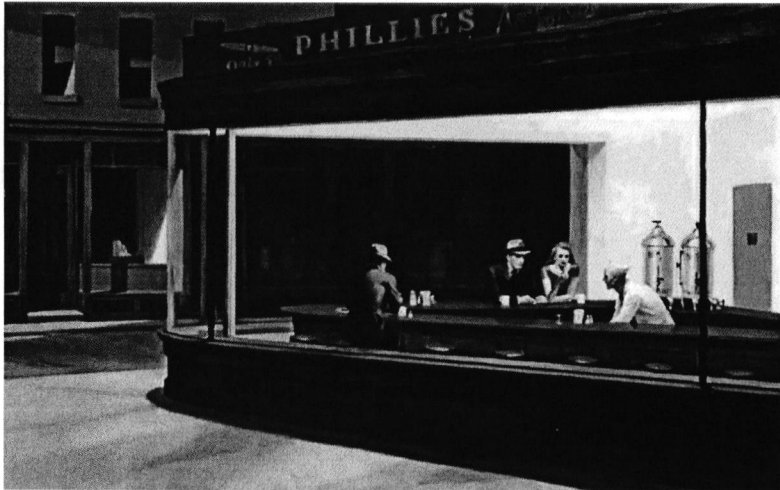


Edward Hopper. *Nighthawks*, 1942, oil on canvas

Depiction of class and/or society based on artist's own experiences:

Depiction of class and/or society based on historical context:

How visual treatment of the subject reveals artistic intent:

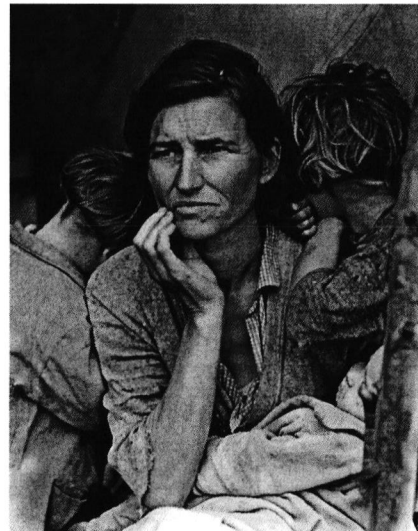


Dorothea Lange. *Migrant Mother*, Nipomo Valley, 1935, gelatin silver print

Depiction of class and/or society based on artist's own experiences:

Depiction of class and/or society based on historical context:

How visual treatment of the subject reveals artistic intent:



100

THEME: CHALLENGING TRADITION

FOCUS: Pollock's *Autumn Rhythm*, DeKooning's *Excavation*, DeKooning's *Woman I*, Rothko's *Seagram Murals*, Rothko's No. 14

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/abstract-expressionism.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/76244>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/willem-de-kooning.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:

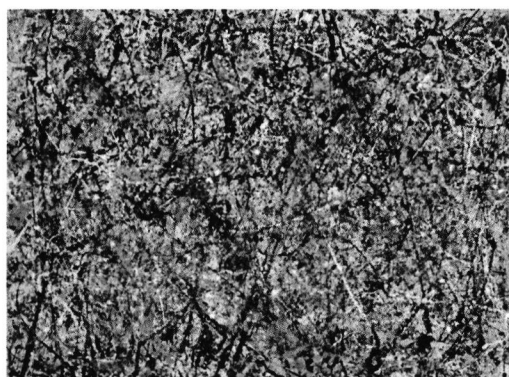
<http://www.theguardian.com/culture/2002/dec/07/artsfeatures>

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 902-907

POWERPOINT: CHALLENGING TRADITION: ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM (Pollock, DeKooning, and Rothko)

DATE DUE: _____

1. In the 1960s, the center of the Western art world shifted from Paris to _____ because of the devastation of World War II. It was at this time that the first major American avant-garde art movement – Abstract Expressionism- emerged. The most important champion of this new movement was the American art critic _____. He advocated a strict formalist approach, meaning that art should focus on its visual elements rather than its _____.
2. The artist whose work best exemplifies gestural abstraction was Jackson Pollock (1912-1956). His work consisted of rhythmic drips, splatters, and dribbles of paint on a _____- sized scale. Using sticks or brushes, Pollock flung, poured, and dripped paint onto a section of canvas that he simply unrolled across his studio _____. The art he created was spontaneous yet choreographed.
3. Art historians have linked Pollock's ideas about improvisation in the creative process to his interest in what psychiatrist _____ called the collective _____. The improvisational approach has parallels in the "psychic _____" of Surrealism and the work of Vassily Kandinsky.
4. *Excavation*, Willem de Kooning's largest painting up to 1950, exemplifies the artist's innovative style and expressive brushwork and distinctive organization of space into loose, sliding planes with open contours. Aptly titled, the composition reflects his technically masterful painting



_____ : an intensive building up of the surface and scraping down of its paint layers, often for months, until the desired effect was achieved.

5. DeKooning's *Woman I*, although rooted in figuration, displays the application of paint typical of gestural abstraction. Her toothy smile, inspired by an ad for



_____, seems to devolve into a grimace. Female models on advertising billboards partly inspired *Woman I*, one of a series of images of women, but DeKooning's female forms also suggest fertility

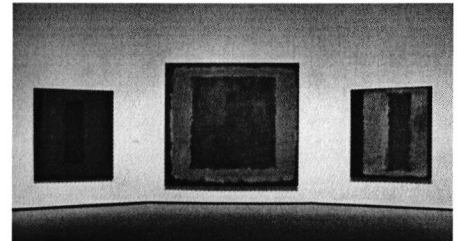
_____ and a satiric inversion of the traditional image of Venus, goddess of love.

6. In 1959, Mark Rothko suddenly decided to withdraw a series of paintings that were created for the



_____ in the Seagram Building. He saw these "Seagram Murals" as violent, even terrorist art, a savage aesthetic revenge. Why was his motivation subversive?

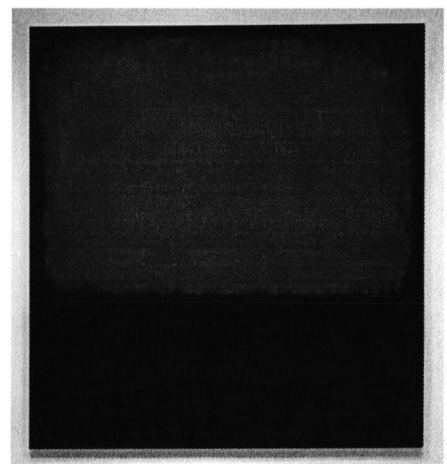
7. Rothko revealed that he sense a "deep affinity" between the Seagram murals and Roman wall paintings- "the same feeling, the same broad expanses of somber



_____." Rothko was deeply familiar with the Roman wall painting from Boscoreale in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,

and he studied closely _____'s *The Birth of Tragedy*, which contrasted the Apollonian and Dionysian principles. He wanted his art to be Dionysian, beyond reason.

8. Rothko's paintings became compositionally simple, and he increasingly focused on color as the primary conveyor of meaning. In works such as *No. 14*, Rothko created compelling visual experiences consisting of two or three large rectangles of pure



color with _____ edges that seem to float on the canvas surface, hovering in front of a colored background. He saw color as

a _____ to another reality, and insisted color could express "basic human emotions- tragedy, ecstasy, doom."

DATE DUE: _____

THEME: CHALLENGING TRADITION

FOCUS: Johns' *Flag*, Rauschenberg's *Bed*, Frankenthaler's *The Bay*, Judd's Untitled works, Hesse's *Hang-Up*

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/ny-school.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/rauschenbergs-bed.html>

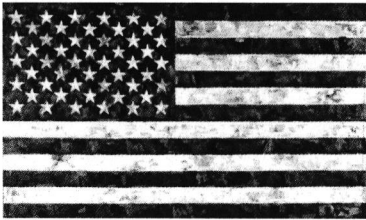
ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/frankenthaler-the-bay-1963.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/minimalismjudds-untitled.html>

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 908, 911, 913-915

POWERPOINT: CHALLENGING TRADITION: NEO-DADA, POST-PAINTERLY ABSTRACTION, and MINIMALISM (Johns, Rauschenberg, Frankenthaler, Judd, and Hesse)

Analyze ways in which the artists who created each of these works challenged traditional ideas about art in regard to (1) imagery and/or subject matter, (2) materials and/or processes, and, if applicable, (3) exhibition and/or display.

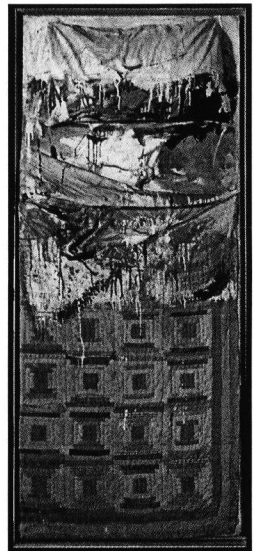


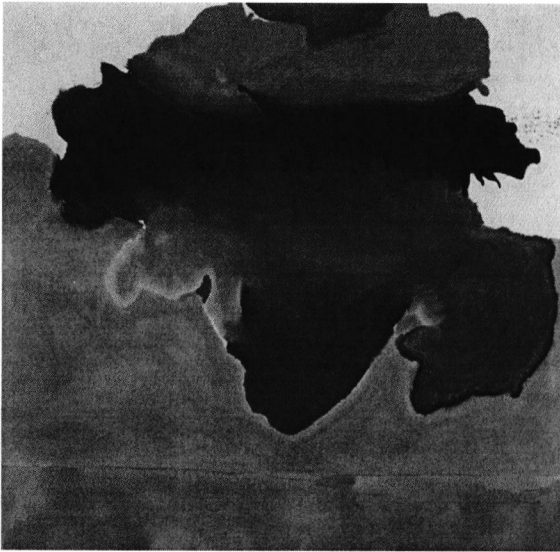
Jasper Johns. *Flag*, 1954-55, encaustic, oil, and collage on fabric mounted on plywood

- (1) Tradition challenged by means of imagery and/or subject matter
- (2) Tradition challenged by means of materials and/or processes
- (3) Tradition challenged by means of exhibition and/or display

Robert Rauschenberg. *Bed*, 1955, oil and pencil on pillow, quilt, and sheet on wood supports

- (1) Tradition challenged by means of imagery and/or subject matter
- (2) Tradition challenged by means of materials and/or processes
- (3) Tradition challenged by means of exhibition and/or display





Helen Frankenthaler. *The Bay*, 1963, acrylic on canvas

(1) Tradition challenged by means of imagery and/or subject matter

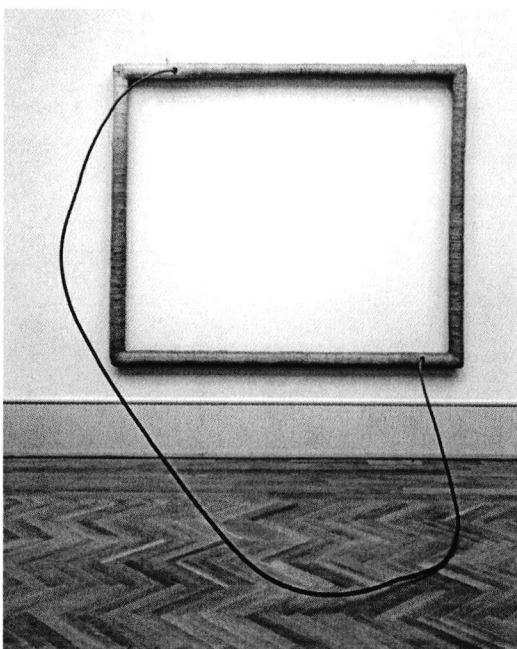
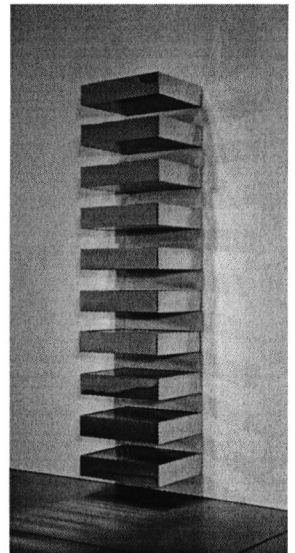
(2) Tradition challenged by means of materials and/or processes

Donald Judd, *Untitled*, 1969, brass and colored fluorescent Plexiglass on steel brackets

(1) Tradition challenged by means of imagery and/or subject matter

(2) Tradition challenged by means of materials and/or processes

(3) Tradition challenged by means of exhibition and/or display



Eva Hesse. *Hang-Up*, 1965-66, acrylic on cloth over wood and steel

(1) Tradition challenged by means of imagery and/or subject matter

(2) Tradition challenged by means of materials and/or processes

(3) Tradition challenged by means of exhibition and/or display

THEME: CHALLENGING TRADITION

FOCUS: Hamilton's *Just What is It That Makes Today's Homes so Different, So Appealing?* Warhol's *Campbell's Soup Cans*, Warhol's *Gold Marilyn*, Warhol's *Marilyn Diptych*, Oldenburg's *Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks*

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/campbells-soup-cans.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/pop-art.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/warhol-marilyn-diptych-to3093/text-illustrated-companion>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://www.yale.edu/publicart/lipstick.html>

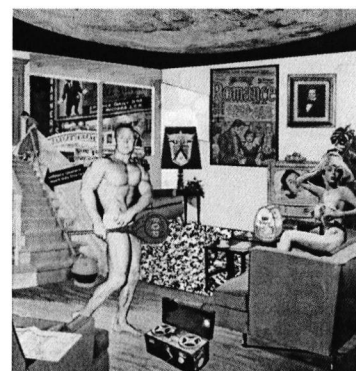
READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 898-890, 916-917

POWERPOINT: CHALLENGING TRADITION: POP ART (Hamilton, Warhol, and Oldenburg)

DATE DUE: _____

1. A reaction to pure formalism in painting and sculpture set in as the artists of the Pop Art Movement reintroduced all of the devices the postwar abstractionists had purged from their artworks. The name "Pop Art" is credited to a British art critic

_____ (1926-1990); it referred to the popular _____ culture and familiar imagery of the contemporary urban environment.



2. In 1956, a member of the Independent Group at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London, Richard Hamilton, made a small collage which exemplifies British Pop Art. He created it for the poster and catalog of one section of an exhibition titled _____, which included images from Hollywood cinema, science fiction, and the mass media.
3. The fantasy interior of the collage reflects the values of the mid-20th-century consumer culture through figures and objects cut from glossy magazines. It includes references to mass media to advertising. What particular elements in the collage comment on society's values?

4. The quintessential American Pop artist was Andy Warhol. (1928-1987). Warhol used a _____ technique to print images of soup cans and Coke bottles endlessly (although he varied each bottle slightly). Before using this process though, Warhol painted a series of soup cans by hand.



When it came to painting the fleur-de-lis pattern at the bottom of each soup can, however, he used a

_____ to speed up the process.

5. By relocating mundane images of soup cans in a gallery or museum, he focuses less on the making of something and more on the ideas behind that creation. This approach recalls the work of the earlier

Dada artist _____. Warhol reminds us that almost everything that we surround ourselves with was made in a

_____. In other words, everything around us is mass-produced.

6. Andy Warhol's *Gold Marilyn Monroe* (1962) clearly reflects this inherent irony of Pop. The central image on a gold background evokes a religious tradition of

painted _____, transforming the Hollywood starlet into a Byzantine Madonna that reflects our obsession with celebrity. Notably, Warhol's spiritual reference was especially poignant given Monroe's suicide a few months earlier.

7. In the right panel of Warhol's *Marilyn Diptych* he has produced effects of blurring and fading strongly suggestive of the star's demise. The actress died from an

_____ in August of 1962. The contrast of this panel, printed in black, with the brilliant colors of the other, also implies a _____ between life and death.

8. Swedish-born conceptual artist Claes Oldenburg began proposing large-scale sculptures of

_____ objects in the 1960s in the spirit of Andy Warhol's tongue-in-cheek pop art tributes

to American consumer culture. Amidst nationwide free speech and anti-_____ protests, a group of Yale School of Architecture students and faculty, dubbing themselves the Colossal Keepsake Corporation of Connecticut, envisioned the creation of one of these monuments on campus as a revolutionary aesthetic and political statement.

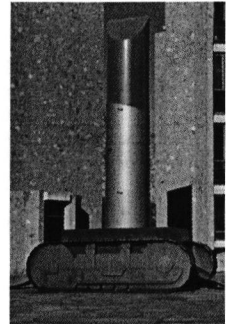
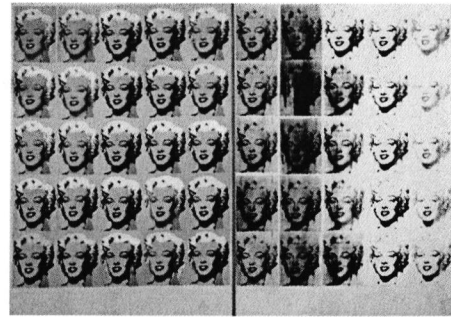
9. A rally celebrated the *Lipstick's* first installation on Beinecke Plaza in 1969, where its aggressive presence

disrupted the public space. Intended as a platform for _____, the sculpture was made of inexpensive materials: plywood tracks and a red vinyl balloon tip, meant to be inflated for visibility.

Vandalism and deterioration led to the work's removal; it was ultimately refurbished in _____ steel, aluminum, and fiberglass and installed at Morse College in 1974.

10. How and why did Oldenburg incorporate humor into his *Caterpillar* sculpture?

Produced by Douglas Darracott of PLANO WEST SENIOR HIGH – Not to be used for copying or reproducing for other schools or school districts.



DATE DUE: _____

THEME: CHALLENGING TRADITION**FOCUS:** Kusama's *Narcissus Garden*, Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *The Gates***ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:**http://www.publicartfund.org/view/exhibitions/5654_whitney_biennial_2004_-_narcissus_garden**ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:** <http://www.nyc.gov/html/thegates/html/qanda.html>**ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:** <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/christo-and-jeanne-claude-the-gates-1979-2005.html>**READING ASSIGNMENT:** KLEINER, p. 968 and *SEE BELOW***POWERPOINT:** CHALLENGING TRADITION: INSTALLATION ART (Kusama, Christo, and Jeanne-Claude)

READ the FOLLOWING

Yayoi Kusama. *Narcissus Garden*, Original installation and performance, 1966, mirror balls

1. "From the beginning of her career Kusama had carefully stage-managed her own image. After her arrival in New York she regularly arranged for professional photographs to be taken of her with her work. Numerous images exist documenting the artist at work in her studio. More significantly, from the late 1950s she frequently posed in her exhibitions, wearing outfits that matched or complemented her paintings and sculptures. Soon after she began exploring the medium of collage in the early 1960s, Kusama started integrating photographs of herself at the center of her artistic universe, the key protagonist in a world populated by proliferating forms, endless nets and infinite polka dots. This strategy of self-depiction has remained an important part of the artist's marketing approach" (Morris 109). "Kusama's promotional talent and flair were demonstrated in June 1966, when she staged a site-specific *coup de theatre* at the 33rd Venice Biennale. In the Giardini, the park housing the permanent national pavilions where the Biennale's art exhibitions are staged, she created her *Narcissus Garden*, a sea of 1,500 polished, reflective plastic balls, each 200 millimeters in diameter. These mirror balls reflected the viewer, the surrounding environment and each other, creating the illusion of an infinitely multiplied reality. The artist stood in her installation wearing a gold kimono and red obi, handing out copies of a statement written by British art critic Herbert Read praising her 'original talent'. In a series of iconic images she was also photographed in a red cat suit lying amidst the mirrored balls. Kusama offered the *Narcissus Garden* balls for sale at 1,200 lire or \$2 a piece, luring passersby with a sign offering 'Your narcissism for sale.' This gesture was partly a practical attempt to recoup some of the costs of manufacturing the work, but Kusama also meant the action as a protest against the commercialization of the art world. Biennale authorities were unimpressed, and summarily stopped the performance, objecting to 'sell[ing] art like hot dogs or ice cream cones'" (190).

2. "For a Japanese artist in the late 1950s to journey to the US was not an unprecedented act, but it was unusual, and especially so for a young female artist from the provinces. Neither exile nor émigré, Yayoi Kusama's adventure was nomadic, her residence in America punctuated by extended visits to Europe over the course of a decade. Her return in 1973 to Japan, where she has remained to this day, marks Kusama's experience as fundamentally different to the majority of her contemporaries in Europe and America. Many of the great artists we associate with the flowering of American art gave their careers to the histories of their adopted homeland. Not so Kusama who briefly, if brilliantly, lent her name to American art for a decade, during which time she evolved for herself a singular position on the New York alternative scene. This was, however, already a second chapter in a long career: Japan- New York- Japan. The division of her creative life into three distinct phases has naturally encourage a compartmentalized thinking about her history that tends to overlook important questions about how individual creative identities are formed and reformed by different contexts over time. Rebuilding this narrative highlights the shifts that characterized Kusama's development, while also signaling the continuities that underpin her multifaceted history" (11). "The narrative of Kusama's career is of necessity, therefore, one of ebb and flow between east and west, of dialogue, exchange and rupture. The artist was schooled in the traditional manner of Japanese *Nihonga* painting- itself a blend of east and west. She then, as Midori Yamamura argues in her catalogue essay, rejected a tradition tainted by association with Nationalist rule- *Nihonga* realism was the preferred style of the wartime dictatorship- and began avidly to absorb the influence of 'Western' cubism and surrealism, through magazines and especially through her friendship with the Japanese surrealist poet and critic Takiguchi Shuzo, who also wrote about her work at the time" (11).

3. "In just one decade, from 1958 to 1968, she moved from painting to sculpture and collage and on to installations, films, performances, and 'happenings', political actions and counter-cultural events; she extended her practice through published magazines and newspapers, design clothes and ran a boutique" (12). "She was not alone at the time in moving her forum from studio

and gallery to street and newspaper, but even amongst those seeking a wider and more expansive *modus operandi*, few experimented over such a wide stage and only Andy Warhol comes close to Kusama in his expansive and totalizing practice, his disregard for distinctions between high and low art. In today's more diversified cultural context, with the erasure of borders between private and public, commercial and independent, and the near universal access to technology, the selection of a particular medium, technique, and audience is, for artists, rarely a commitment for life; it is rather the result of strategic decision-making over time" (12). "Half a century before websites and blogs were available, she had taken on the business of exhibiting, advertising and documenting her own work; she was an avid self-publicist, writer of manifestos and frequent correspondent to the papers" (13). "To visit Kusama in her Tokyo studio today is to visit an artist in full control of her world and emphatically living in the present. She presides, by day, over a team of dedicated assistants, conceiving and direction site-specific installations and major public sculptures for institutions and individuals across the world" (13).

4. "For Kusama, who herself suffered from an obsessive-compulsive disorder and various other minor psychological conditions, art production was connected to living itself. The obsessive act of materializing through manual labor the fear she experienced in her hallucinations- a world overrun by polka dots and nets- enabled her to preserve her own psychological balance and maintain a relationship with the world. The dots and nets she wove everywhere were part of an attempt to establish a 'distance' between herself and the world by creating a 'surface' between the two" (Hasegawa and Miki 47-48). "Kusama uses the term 'self-obliteration' to refer ironically to her efforts to stave off her own obliteration, and does so by stamping her mark on every moment of life, facing her fears of being engulfed by the world around her. The overflowing surfaces Kusama creates are a metaphor for overpopulation, contamination, and illness. At the heart of the concept of self-obliteration is the notion that reduction of everything to polka dots or atoms, accumulation and collage are methods by which we can reunite our two separated selves (our physical reality and our virtual reality). Although the results may be unstable, the aim of this reduction and accumulation is in fact a new kind of integration" (50).

Works Cited:

Hasegawa, Yuko, and Pamela Miki. "The Spell to Re-integrate the Self: The Significance of the Work of Yayoi Kusama in the New Era." *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*, Issue 13 (Spring/Summer 2006), University of Chicago Press, pp. 46-53.

Morris, Frances, ed. *Yayoi Kusama*. London: Tate Publishing, 2012.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude. *The Gates*, 1979-2005 CE, mixed-media installation in New York City

1. "The most visible site-specific artists in America were Christo Javacheff (b. 1935) and Jeanne-Claude de Guillebon (1935-2009), who embarked on vast projects (both rural and urban) that sometimes took many years of planning to realize. In 1958, Christo emigrated from Bulgaria to Paris, where he met Jeanne-Claude; they moved to New York together in 1964. Their work was political and interventionist, frequently commenting on capitalism and consumer culture by wrapping and packaging buildings or large swatches of land in fabric: They 'wrapped' the Reichstag in Berlin and 1 million square feet of the Australian coastline, for instance. In each case the process of planning and battling bureaucracies was part of the art, frequently taking years to complete. By contrast, the wrapping itself usually took only a few weeks and the completed project was in place for even less time. Christo and Jeanne-Claude funded each new project from the sale of books, Christo's original artworks (like drawings and collages), and other ephemera relating to the preceding projects" (Stokstad and Cothren 1103). "In February 2005, Christo and Jeanne-Claude installed *The Gates*, Central Park, New York, a project that took 26 years to realize, during which time the artists battled their way through various New York bureaucracies, meeting many obstacles and making changes to the work along the way. They finally installed 7,503 saffron-colored nylon panels on 'gates' along 23 miles of pathways in Central Park. The brightly colored flapping panels enlivened the frigid February landscape and were an enormous public success. The installation lasted for only 16 days" (1103).

2. "As is often the case, the project initially met with vigorous local resistance. A 185-page report by the Parks Department rejected the idea. Eventually, however, New York's Mayor Bloomberg supported the project, which became a reality in February 2005. Christo and Jeanne-Claude envisioned steel gates with rectangles of saffron fabric extending from the top of each gate to some 6 feet over the ground. In 1979, the first drawing was entitled *Ten Thousand Gates*; in 2005, there were 7,500 gates. The gates were 12 feet tall in 1979; they were 16 feet tall in 2005. In 1979, the thin steel poles were considered only as a means of suspending fabric panels, while in 2005 the poles were made of a thick saffron-colored vinyl and had a commanding profile, 5 inches x 5 inches. They were no longer simply structural, but an important part of the sculpture. The top of the fabric panel in 1979 was attached by loops to a horizontal steel cable; in 2005, the upper parts of the fabric panels were secured inside the bottom part of the horizontal pole in a 'sail tunnel' " (Adams 973). The wind creates "a variety of shapes and rhythms in the flowing fabric. There is also variety in the color- ranging from orange and saffron to yellow, depending on the light. The movement of the *Gates* is repeated in the visitors strolling through the walkways, whereas the skyscrapers surrounding the park create a backdrop of patterned, static vertical stone" (973).

3. "Their desire to create a major work in New York, however, spans their entire career in the city, to which they emigrated from Europe with their four-year-old son Cyril in 1964. 'I lived eighteen years in New York City,' Christo told an audience there in 1982, 'and always tried to do a project in New York City. Of course the first thing that impressed us in 1964 was the skyline.' They made their first attempt to create a large public work of art in New York that same year, in 1964, with a plan that involved wrapping two buildings in lower Manhattan. The building owners refused permission for the project in 1966, and all that remains of it are some drawings, photomontages, and scale models" (Fineberg 3). "There is also a bodily corollary in all of the artists' projects and objects. 'Fabric is like a second skin; it is very related to human existence,' Christo says. 'That fabric will move with the wind, the water, with the natural elements... The fabric is moving, like breathing... It's so incredibly present.' Frederick Law Olmsted described the artistry of his park as aspiring 'not simply to give the people of the city an opportunity for getting fresh air and exercise ... It is not simply to make a place of amusement or for the gratification of curiosity or for gaining knowledge. The main object and justification is simply to produce a certain influence on the minds of people and through this to make life in the city healthier and happier. The character of this influence is a poetic one and it is to be produced by means of scenes, through observation of which the mind may be more or less lifted out of moods, and habits into which it is, under the ordinary conditions of life in the city, likely to fall.' It should also be noted that the inspiration for the title of Christo and Jeanne-Claude's works for Central Park comes from Olmsted. The continuous stone wall enclosing the entire park periodically opens to create entrances to the green space from the surrounding city; Olmsted called these openings 'gates' " (53).

4. "In turning down the project in 1981- though he is now a great supporter of it- Gordon Davis, then commissioner of parks and recreation for New York, nevertheless expressed similar thoughts to Olmsted, "Over and over we have observed that the work of contemporary artists in a park setting, the creative intellect let loose in a public open space, presents a unique challenge. It forces us- the 'public' in all its variety- to see not just the work of art, but also to see that space in extraordinarily different ways and exciting new alignments' "(53-54). "The Gates in Central Park is bound to bring ... the idea that we live in an increasingly constructed landscape, in every realm of our lives. In television, films, even in the national parks, our experience of 'nature' is so carefully managed and yet the management is kept out of sight. The media interpret nature to us as we become more and more accustomed to accept a blurring of the boundary between nature and culture, between 'manufactured' news and real events. If you look at a map of Manhattan, Central Park is a perfect rectangle cut out of a solid grid of streets and buildings' the shape of the individual gates that Christo and Jeanne-Claude have designed for the park consciously alludes to that man-made rectangle on the map and the forms of the surrounding buildings. The fabric hanging from the horizontal poles will catch the light, pick up the memory of the colors of the fall leaves, move organically in the wind – in all providing a rich evocation of nature. But the form of the individual gates is also a metaphor for encapsulating unpredictable nature inside the controlled framework of the part" (54).

5. "While some works commemorate great events, others are great events. This was certainly the case for *The Gates*, which took the couple twenty-six years, \$21 million and four successive mayors to realize. When pressed to explain the symbolic significance of the ambitious work, the artists insisted it was never intended to represent or commemorate anything in particular, but to be merely a source of beauty and joy- a gift to the city, an occasion for celebration in and of itself. Some visitors refused to accept that the project had no hidden meaning and attempted to decipher anything that could be interpreted as code. Perhaps, some speculated, the nearly one hundred thousand square meters of saffron fabric was a clue. Was the billowing bright color intended to echo the robes of Buddhist monks, who dye their garments in tumeric and jackfruit? Others saw in the door frames a resemblance with the vermilion torii gates that lead to Shinto shrines in Japan, reinforcing the suspicion that the project was secretly laced with Eastern significance" (Grovier 78). "But for most, the quiet philosophy of the humble gate was sufficient to pass through again and again against a white-out of snow, leaving and re-entering one's life every few strides. Never the destination itself, a gate stands between here and there, now and then. Once erected on the perimeters of ancient cities, gates have a way of surviving, however ruinously, even when the structures and civilizations to which they were designed to offer entrance or enforce expulsion have long since dissolved and blown away. Though Christo and Jeanne-Claude's gates only existed for sixteen days, for those who reveled in their fleeting existence, the posters implanted themselves onto the blueprints of their mind, demarcating the invisible passageways we forever take into and out of ourselves" (78).

Works Cited:

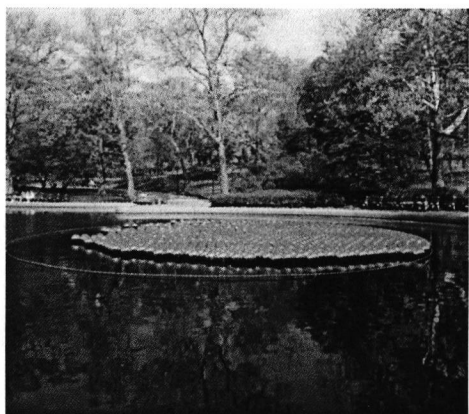
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Both of these works, *Narcissus Garden* and *The Gates* were once exhibited in New York's Central Park. Today these works are remembered as much as "events" as "art exhibitions". Analyze how each work relates to the themes, topics, or issues listed below.

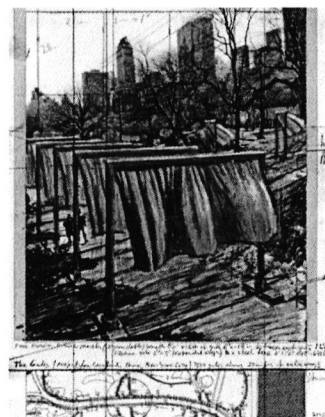


Yayoi Kusama. *Narcissus Garden*. Original installation at Venice Biennale in 1966; New York Central Park installation in 2004; mirror balls

- (1) Use of and reference to site or location
- (2) Mechanically made objects or structures replicated in large numbers
- (3) Artistic self-promotion
- (4) Consumerist culture
- (5) Engagement or interaction with viewers

Christo and Jeanne-Claude. *The Gates*, mixed media installation in New York Central Park, 1979-2005

- (1) Use of and reference to site or location
- (2) Mechanically made objects or structures replicated in large numbers
- (3) Artistic self-promotion
- (4) Consumerist culture
- (5) Engagement or interaction with viewers



THEME: MAN and the NATURAL WORLDFOCUS: Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, Lin's *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/earth-artsmithsons-spiral-jetty.html>ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/maya-lins-vietnam-veterans-memorial.html>READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 932-933, 964-965 and *SEE BELOW*

POWERPOINT: MAN and the NATURAL WORLD: EARTH ART and MINIMALISM (Robert Smithson and Maya Lin)

DATE DUE: _____

READ the FOLLOWING

Robert Smithson. *Spiral Jetty*, Great Salt Lake, Utah, 1970, earthwork

1. "Robert Smithson (1938-1973) sought to illustrate what he called the 'ongoing dialectic' in nature between the constructive forces that build and shape form, and the destructive forces that destroy it. *Spiral Jetty* of 1970, a 1,500-foot stone and earth platform spiraling into the Great Salt Lake in Utah, reflects these ideas. To Smithson, the salty water and algae of the lake suggested both the primordial ocean where life began and a dead sea that killed it. The abandoned oil rigs dotting the lake's shore brought to mind dinosaur skeletons and the remains of vanished civilizations. Smithson used the spiral because it is an archetypal shape that appears in nature- from galaxies to seashells- and has been used in human art for millennia. Unlike Modernist squares and circles, it is a 'dialectical' shape, that opens and closes, curls and uncurls endlessly, suggesting growth and decay, creation and destruction, or in Smithson's words, the perpetual 'coming and going of things.' He ordered that no maintenance be done on *Spiral Jetty* so that the work would be governed by the natural elements over time. It is now covered with crystallized salt but remains visible, as can be seen on Google Earth" (Stokstad and Cothren 1102).

2. "Robert Smithson called his new form of art 'Earthworks,' a name taken from Brian Aldiss' novel *Earthworks*, which tells of a world destroyed by a man-made ecological catastrophe. In 1968, Smithson organized an exhibition entitled 'Earthworks' at the Dwan Gallery in New York, and a new movement was born (also known as Land, or Earth, art). The exhibition included projects by nine artists: a 'non-site' by Smithson; a pile of earth and debris by Robert Morris; photo documentation of Michael Heizer's trenches in the desert floor- the artist having determined the rough layout of the trenches by dropping matchsticks; a proposal by Dennis Oppenheim to reconstruct an Ecuadorian volcano in an Iowa wheat field at the geographic center of the United States..." (Phillips 202). "Earth art yielded some spectacular monumental works. Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*- a giant spiral of black basalt rock and earth in the Great Salt Lake, in Utah- was inspired by mythology: the lake had come into existence, it was believed, from a whirlpool fed by a direct water link to the Pacific Ocean. Smithson's 6,000-ton spiral of earth referred to prehistoric mounds, ancient configurations found primarily in the Mississippi and Ohio valleys, of which the most famous is the Serpent Mound in southern Ohio. But *Spiral Jetty* also reflected the forces of entropy that fascinated Smithson. In time, nature reclaimed the jetty- the red lake waters rose, covering the work, then receded to reveal white salt crystals, and then rose again, so that the work was invisible for a number of years. Recently, the waters have receded again and the outlines of the jetty can be seen once more" (202, 205).

3. "Up to the time he began to work on it, in 1969, Smithson had been preoccupied with entropy: 'evolution in reverse,' the decline of systems, enforced by the second law of thermodynamics, under which energy dissipates and all distinct form blurs and disintegrates across the span of geologic time. He made rather opaque and theoretical indoor works to illustrate this point, but his great success was a work which virtually no one in the art world ever saw except in the art magazines. This was the *Spiral Jetty*. In 1969 Smithson took out a twenty-year lease on an abandoned lakeside industrial site. The water was red from saline algae and fouled with chemicals and tailings; the shore, littered with obsolete machinery. The whole place looked like a ruined moonscape, which suited him perfectly, since Smithson's imagination had a strong component of the higher sort of science fiction, such as the apocalyptic, time-drenched landscapes of J.G. Ballard, whom the artist read avidly and admired" (Hughes 572). "Into the water Smithson dumped some seven thousand tons of rock, to make his *Spiral Jetty*: a counterclockwise coil fifteen hundred feet long and fifteen wide, built with aged Caterpillars and dump trucks. The spiral form, of course, was so organic and archaic that it could have been associated with almost anything, and was: from viruses and spiral salt-crystal deposits, to legends about mysterious whirlpools forming and vanishing in the Great Salt Lake, to archetypal serpents and snail shells, scrolls and - seen from the air- nebulae in outer space. That is could attract such a traffic jam of symbolic references was, of course, part of Smithson's design. The *Spiral Jetty* remained visible for two years, until the waters of the lake rose and covered it. It is still there, under the reddish muck" (572-573). "Perhaps the most monumental type of total art is earth sculpture, a kind of sculpture that takes the natural landscape as both its medium and its subject. Earth

sculptures are usually colossal, heroic, and temporary. Among the most impressive examples of this genre was the piece called *Spiral Jetty*, built in 1970 by Robert Smithson at the edge of the Great Salt Lake in Utah. Smithson's spiral- the snail-like symbol of eternity in ancient art- was 1,500 feet wide and consisted of over 6,000 tons of black basalt, limestone, and earth- materials which are virtually identical to the surrounding area. A conscious reference to ancient earthworks, such as those found among the Native American cultures of South America, Smithson's project brought attention to the role of the artist in reconstructing the environment and its ecology. Earthworks like *Spiral Jetty*, however, which moved art out of the gallery and into nature, were often best appreciated from the air. Tragically, it was in the crash of a plane surveying one such sculpture that Smithson was killed. Smithson's heroic earthwork also disappeared; a part of nature, it fell subject to processes of dissolution and submersion beneath the waters of the Great Salt Lake. But Smithson's documentary drawings, photographs, and films of this and other earthworks have heightened public awareness of the fragile ecological balance between culture and nature" (Fiero 155-156).

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Maya Ying Lin. *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, Washington, DC, 1981-1983, polished granite

1. "Maya Lin (b. 1959) was an architecture student at Yale University in 1981 when a jury of architects, landscape architects, and sculptors awarded her the commission for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial near the Mall in Washington, CC. Lin (one of 2,573 who submitted design proposals) envisioned a simple and dramatic memorial cut into the ground in a V-shape. Two highly polished black granite slabs reach out from deep in the earth at the center. Each of these arms is 247 feet long, and they meet at a 130-degree angle where the slabs are 10 feet tall. The names of 58,272 American soldiers killed or declared missing in action during the Vietnam War are listed chronologically, in the order they died or were lost, beginning in 1956 at the shallowest point to the left and climaxing in 1968 at the tallest part of the sculpture, representing the year of highest casualties. Since the polished granite reflects the faces of visitors, they read the names of the dead and missing with their own faces superimposed over them. The memorial, commissioned by Vietnam Veterans for Vietnam Veterans, serves both to commemorate the dead and missing and to provide a place where survivors can confront their own loss. This sculpture is one of the best-known works of public art in the United States and has transformed the way the nation mourns its dead. Visiting it is a powerful and profound experience" (Stokstad and Cothren 1115). "Yet, when it was first commissioned, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was the subject of intense debate. It was described as a 'black gash in the Mall,' its color contrasting with the pervasive white marble of the surrounding memorials. Lin was accused of creating a monument of shame, one critic going so far as to claim that black was the universal color of 'shame, sorrow, and degradation in all races, all societies.' Opposition to the sculpture was so intense in some quarters that, in 1983, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund commissioned a second, naturalistic sculpture showing three soldiers from Georgia-born Frederick Hart (1943-1999), placed 120 feet from the wall; in 1993, Texas sculptor Glenda Goodacre (b. 1939) created a comparable sculpture of three nurses, added 300 feet to the south to memorialize the contribution of women during the war" (1115-1116).

2. "Influenced by Earthworks and Serra's confrontational site-specific sculptures, *Tilted Arc* in particular, Lin cut a wedge shape into the ground and buttressed it with polished black granite walls. You descend down the wedge to its low point, then up the other side, all the while reading the names of the dead soldiers inscribed on the walls. One of the most powerful public sculptures in America, the memorial is an enveloping tombstone and wailing wall that allows for private mourning in a public space. When it was installed, however, some Vietnam veterans groups objected to the abstraction of its conception. Why, they wondered, could there not be a representation of the heroism of the soldiers? Their lobbying efforts were successful, and a figurative tableau by Frederick Hart now stands in proximity to Lin's work" (Phillips 330). "Lin herself, however, described the wall as follows, 'The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is not an object inserted into the earth but a work formed from the act of cutting open the earth and polishing the earth's surface- dematerializing the stone to bare surface, creating an interface between the world of the light and the quieter world beyond the names'" (Kleiner 965). "Yet the most popular and socially charged public sculpture of the late seventies was a stylistic clone of Serra's work, designed by a young art student named Maya Lin: the black V of polished marble walls descending into the ground in Washington, which with elegance and gravity commemorated the Americans killed in Vietnam, whose 57,939 names were incised in the slabs. But here the materials were fine, the mood elegiac, the content fraught with intense emotion, and the artist's ego recessive; not even the addition of a banal bronze figure-group by another artist as a sop to conservative critics could damage its effectiveness as a war memorial" (Hughes *Shock of the New* 369). "She had no consensus to work with, as the designers of war memorials in the 1920s did. Half of America believed the war had been a moral tragedy, and all America knew it had been lost. But

even those who had opposed the war felt that the soldiers were not to be blamed for it, while the vets themselves were angry at the raw deal American civilians had given them. Maya Lin was faced, as she put it, with the problem of designing a memorial that would not 'tell you what to think' about Vietnam. She came up with a design that would not try to resolve conflicting emotions over the war—which for most historically conscious people may never be resolved- but would reawaken the intensity of each buddy's or brother's or parent's feelings through a single memorial device: the names of the dead on the black walls, in whose polished surfaces the living see themselves visually united with the dead. They take rubbings; they leave flowers; they kiss the names of those they have lost" (Hughes *American Visions* 570). "The very simplicity of the architectural form and its setting are disarming. By comparison, all other war memorials of recent times seem trite and needlessly complex, especially those incorporating realistic figures. It evokes a solemn mood without the inflated rhetoric that mars most memorials. The triangular shape, although embedded in tradition and rich in historical connotations, permits viewers to form their own associations because of its abstractness. Moreover, the reflective quality of the polished granite draws the viewer into the work" (Janson 853).

3. "I made a conscious decision not to do any specific research on the Vietnam War and the political turmoil surrounding it. I felt that the politics had eclipsed the veterans, their service, and their lives. I wanted to create a memorial that everyone would be able to respond to, regardless of whether one thought our country should or should not have participated in the war. The power of a name was very much with me at the time, partly because of the Memorial Rotunda at Yale. In Woolsey Hall, the walls are inscribed with the names of all the Yale alumni who have been killed in wars. I had never been able to resist touching the names cut into these marble walls, and no matter how busy or crowded the place is, a sense of quiet, a reverence, always surrounds those names. Throughout my freshman and sophomore years, the stonecutters were carving in by hand the names of those killed in the Vietnam War, and I think it left a lasting impression on me...the sense of the power of a name" (Lin "Making the Memorial"). I remember at the very first press conference a reporter asking me if I did not find it ironic that the memorial was for the Vietnam War and that I was of Asian descent. I was righteous in my response that my race was completely irrelevant. It took me almost nine months to ask the VVMF, in charge of building the memorial, if my race was at all an issue. It had never occurred to me that it would be, and I think they had taken all the measures they could to shield me from such comments about a "gook" designing the memorial. I remember reading the article that appeared in *The Washington Post* referring to "An Asian Memorial for an Asian War" and I knew we were in trouble. The controversy exploded in Washington after that article. Ironically, one side attacked the design for being "too Asian," while others saw its simplicity and understatement, not as an intention to create a more Eastern, meditative space, but as a minimalist statement which they interpreted as being non-referential and disconnected from human experience. This left the opinion in many that the piece emanated from a series of intellectualized aesthetic decisions, which automatically pitted artist against veterans. The fact that I was from an Ivy League college and had hair down to my knees further fueled this distrust of the design and suspicions of a hippie college liberal or aesthetic elitist forcing her art and commentary upon them. Perhaps it was an empathetic response to the idea about war that had led me to cut open the earth—an initial violence that heals in time but leaves a memory, like a scar. But this imagery, which some detractors would later describe as "a black gash of shame and sorrow" in which the color black was called the "universal color of shame and dishonor," would prove incredibly difficult to defend. The misreading of the design as a negative political statement that in some way was meant to reflect upon the service of the veterans was in part fueled by a cultural prejudice against the color black as well as by the misreading or misinformation that led some veterans to imagine the design as a ditch or a hole. It took a prominent four-star general, Brigadier General George Price, who happened to be black, testifying before one of the countless subcommittee hearings and defending the color black, before the design could move forward" (Lin "Making the Memorial").

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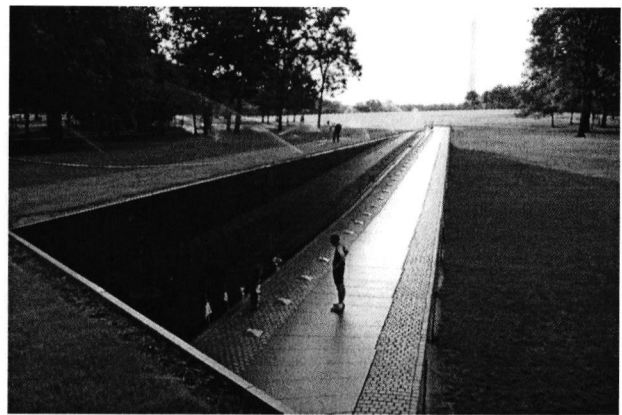
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COMPARE and CONTRAST these two "earthworks" in terms of the following:

SIMILARITIES

Design:

Function or Meaning:

Use of Materials or Techniques:

Choice of Location or Setting:

DIFFERENCES

Design:

Function or Meaning:

Use of Materials or Techniques:

Choice of Location or Setting:

DATE DUE: _____

THEME: INVESTIGATING IDENTITY

FOCUS: Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills*, Sherman's *History Portraits* series, Morimura's *Portrait (Futago)*, Neshat's *Women of Allah* series

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org/cindy-sherman.html>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: http://academinist.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/010112Wagner_Yasumasa.pdf

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 922-923, 952, and *SEE BELOW*

POWERPOINT: INVESTIGATING IDENTITY: GLOBAL ART since 1980 (Sherman, Morimura, and Neshat)

READ the FOLLOWING

Cindy Sherman. *Untitled (#228)* from the *History Portraits* series, 1990, photograph

1. "Photography, performance art, and video are especially popular practices among artists who are interested in constructed, unfixed identities. Cindy Sherman, who became well known, starting the 1980s, for using herself as model in staged photographs exploring female identity, has made many series that deconstruct stereotyped images that are presented in the fashion world, advertising, movies, pornography, and other mass-media sources. Sherman is never an unchanging, unchangeable self in her photographs; she assumes a different identity in each one, reinforcing the idea that identity is artificially constructed and transformable. In her series *Historical Portraits* (1989), Sherman posed in female and male costumes and used makeup and fake body parts to parody the figures in historical paintings. The series demonstrates how photographs, like other images, offer compelling role models for building identity, but models that do not apply in all times and places. Identity is always transformable" (Robertson and McDaniel 55).

2. "Uncannily, she doesn't resemble any of her own pictures, not even the ones that seem fairly straightforward. She is, at 41, handsome, thin, with cropped brown hair that falls in bangs. She can remind you of Jean Seberg. Considering that she has become, through no effort of her own, a darling of academics and has inspired reams of arcane post-modernist criticism, it's also pleasing to discover how plain-spoken, unpretentious and down-to-earth she is. Like many artists, Ms. Sherman tends to talk about her own work when she looks at the works of others in the museum. She reacts enthusiastically to what's on view, but art history per se doesn't interest her much. She has an omnivorous appetite for images and sure instincts for adapting them to her own purposes, but she isn't concerned about their past. She once said her goal was an art that was accessible, "not one that you felt you had to read a book about" to understand. Her work is intuitive and improvisational, as well as intelligent, and it is prompted as much by the props she has bought at flea markets and through medical-supply catalogues as by the works of art she has seen in museums and reproductions. 'Even when I was doing those history pictures,' she says of a touted series of photographs she loosely derived from Old Master paintings, 'I was living in Rome but never went to the churches and museums there. I worked out of books, with reproductions. It's an aspect of photography I appreciate, conceptually: the idea that images can be reproduced and seen anytime, anywhere, by anyone' " (Kimmelman).

3. "Ms. Sherman said some of her pictures take a day or two to finish; others can take weeks to set up and photograph. 'I never know what I want at the beginning,' she said. Sometimes she will start with a body part like a fake nose and play with it,' she said. 'Then I'll see what costumes work with it. The makeup comes after' " (Collins). "Is it difficult to engage viewers these days? 'It's challenging,' she answered, 'trying to reach a jaded public seeing God-knows-what in movies and television. We've become more callous to things than ever before.' How can art compete with television and movie images? 'It can't,' she said. 'It should incorporate it -use imagery as if from those things.' In this era, are any new images possible? 'Not really,' she said. 'Anyone who thinks they've come up with new images - they're fooling themselves. That's why I'm not a painter. There's nothing that can be done that hasn't been done before, in paint. Can you imagine me doing this whole show in paint and canvas?' 'In college,' she said, referring to the State University College at Buffalo, from which she graduated in 1976, 'I painted superrealistically. It was boring for me because I didn't know what I wanted to say with it. I began using the camera. But I think of myself as an artist, not really a photographer. At least, I don't think people who consider themselves real photographers would want to call me a photographer.' 'In a way, I'm a performance artist,' she said. 'I was influenced more by performance art than photography or art. The picture is my own performance. And I'm documenting myself' " (Collins).

4. "These artists, raised on television, understood the power of pictures. Yet, as witnesses to the Vietnam War and the Watergate

scandal, they also evinced a healthy skepticism about the truth of received images and considered the issue of representation to be a crucial problem" (Phillips 275). "This questioning of photographic representation constituted a rite of passage for a whole generation of artists- Barbara Kruger, Sherrie Levine, Cindy Sherman, ... These artists were media literate, both addicted to and aware of the media's capacity for celebrity making, violence mongering, and sensationalism, its ideological power and seductive materialism. Pictures shaped their visual and critical viewpoints. Some, like the Pop artists before them, were employed by media companies" (275). "In her *Untitled Film Stills* Cindy Sherman took active control of her own image as she directed herself performing a series of prototypical film noir characters and codified images of femininity for the camera. By using herself as a model to replicate other models, she forces us to consider our conditioning, to deflect our gaze away from the female as the object of (male) desire and toward representation itself. Part performance artist, part photographer, Sherman is both subject and object, image and author. Her women and her work project a vague anxiety readable as a mixture of desire, anticipation, and victimization" (278).

5. "Sherman's paradigm shift was one step ahead of technology. Her kaleidoscopic investigation of the essence of her own—and, by extension, society's—identity complex has relied on ingenuity, not gigabytes. Thanks to today's digital hegemony, the notion of fluidity—for Sherman an intellectual and artistic ploy—is now not just *de rigueur* but *de facto*. Polymorphously perverse has become pervasive. The implicit has become increasingly explicit. Artistic personae can not only be instantly created but also instantly animated and disseminated. Art via avatar" (Hoban). "By deconstructing and reinventing portraiture, which in itself was something of a dead genre when she arrived on the scene, Sherman influenced not only photographers but also painters and performance and video artists. And by limiting her subject matter strictly to herself, while at the same time excavating countless permutations, she inspired a generation of younger artists to explore their own identities across a range of mediums. 'What she does is within a very narrow set of parameters that she's been able to mine brilliantly for the last 35 years,' says Respini" (Hoban). "Sherman's dazzling skill as a perpetual shape-shifter is perhaps her major contribution to contemporary art. A less conspicuous but equally important legacy involves the way her work has permanently blurred the line between fine art and photography. Sherman's oeuvre, from her first solo show, in 1981, helped bring about a seismic shift in the curatorial and art-historical debate about photography as high art. Although there are many famously innovative photographers who came before her, from Man Ray to Diane Arbus, all of them were considered first and foremost photographers. Thanks in part to Sherman, since the early '80s photography has been considered on a par with painting" (Hoban). " 'I think I was part of a movement, a generation, and maybe the most popular one of that movement at the time, but it probably would have happened without me,' says Sherman. 'The art world was ready for something new, something beyond painting. A group of mostly women happened to be the ones to sort of take that on, partly because they felt excluded from the rest of the [male] art world, and thought, 'Nobody is playing with photography. Let's take that as our tool'" (Hoban). True to form, Sherman's approach remains modestly low tech. Although her most recent work relies on Photoshop to subtly alter her face, provide intricate backgrounds, or even clone similar personae within a single piece, 'I still like the idea of challenging myself through the more hands-on methods, only because I think it's more challenging when you are limited,' Sherman says. 'With Photoshop anything goes, and I don't want to make easy crazy characters just because I can. I think there are some artists who are fine without any boundaries. It somehow frees them. But I really need certain limitations to know how far I can go and work within that.' Few current artists have gone as far" (Hoban).

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Shirin Neshat. *Rebellious Silence* from her *Women of Allah* series, photo by Cynthia Preston, 1994, ink on photograph

1. "With increasing migration and the expansion of global communications and economies, questions of personal, political, cultural, and national identity also emerged in the 1990s. Postcolonial artists began to address issues of contested identity and the identity struggle of postcolonial peoples, and to investigate the dissonance produced by transnational (mis)communication between colonizers and the postcolonized. Many of these artists, such as Shirin Neshat and Rasheed Araeen, speak with unfamiliar but forthright and significant new artistic voices. In *Rebellious Silence* from her 1994 "Women of Allah" series of photographs, Shirin Neshat (b. 1957) explores how Iranian women are stereotyped in the West, claiming that their Islamic identities are more varied and complex than is frequently perceived. Each of Neshat's "Women of Allah" photographs portrays both a part of an Iranian woman's body- such as her hands or her feet- overwritten with Farsi text and a weapon. In *Rebellious Silence*, the woman wears the traditional

chador but her face is exposed, overwritten with calligraphy and bisected by a rifle barrel. Both calligraphy and rifle seem to protect her from the viewer, but they also create a sense of incomprehensibility or foreignness that prompts us to try to categorize her. Likewise, although the woman wears a chador, she looks directly and defiantly out of the photograph at us, meeting and returning our gaze. She challenges us to acknowledge her as an individual- in this case a strong and beautiful woman- but simultaneously and paradoxically prompts us to see her as a stereotypical Iranian woman in a chador. Neshat confronts our prejudices while also raising questions about the position of women in contemporary Iran" (Stokstad and Cothren 1124).

2. "Born in Iran in 1957, Neshat moved to the United States in 1973 to study art in Los Angeles. When she was growing up, her homeland was under the leadership of the shah, who supported a liberalization of social behavior and economic changes modeled after the West. In 1979, however, while Neshat was still in America, Iran underwent a cataclysmic transformation: an Islamic revolution overthrew the shah, and in its aftermath the new regime of the fundamentalist Ayatollah Khomeini reasserted control over public and private behavior" (Robertson and McDaniel 65). "Returning for a visit to Iran in 1990 after a twelve-year absence, Neshat was stunned by the magnitude of the change, which left her own cultural identity in a state of limbo: She had not adopted a fully westernized identity, yet she no longer felt anchored to the culture of her homeland. The shock inspired her to try to understand and express what had happened to Iranian national identity, particularly as it concerned women" (65). "In her first mature body of work, a provocative series of photographs called *Women of Allah* (1993-1997), Neshat explores the ideology of Iranian women who are caught up in the revolution, even to the point of being willing to die as martyrs. Within each photograph, Neshat layers Farsi (modern Persian) calligraphy, the image of a gun, and the black veil, challenging 'the western stereotype of the eastern Muslim woman as weak and subordinate.' The writing adorns those specific female body parts that remain visible in a fundamentalist Islamic land: the eyes, face, hands, and feet. The failure of cross-culture communication is embodied in Neshat's use of writing that is illegible to most Western readers. Westerners recognize the beauty of the calligraphy but don't recognize it as poetry that is considered radical in Iran because individual poems offer different views on the value of wearing the chador" (65).

3. "The 'Women of Allah', as this series of photographs was called, was shown at Annina Nosei Gallery in 1995, and they were widely admired, though there was naturally a certain criticism. One critic, whom I generally respect, wrote 'Radical chic comes back, in her pictures, as radical sheik.' That points to a general problem with art criticism today. The critic rarely looks into the actual background of the work, and the opportunity to make a diminishing pun is rarely resisted. I did not write about the 'Women of Allah,' but I had reservations. I was prepared by the work of Cindy Sherman (which I had written about) for a photographer to picture herself in an alien costume. I knew that Neshat was involved with the Storefront, but I had no idea what the revolution in Iran meant to her. So I wrongly felt that she had not earned the right to picture herself as a revolutionary. I was convinced that Sherman did not especially identify with the women she portrayed herself as, but it was quite clear that Neshat did identify herself as a 'Woman of Allah,' prepared for martyrdom, though I think that she had mixed feelings about martyrdom as such, which was very much a component in the resurgent fundamentalism that detonated and shaped the revolution" (Danto 13). "Neshat herself came to feel restless with the still pictures, with the repetitive message of the single bold female figure, shawled and armed, and perhaps her fervor for the revolution itself cooled as well. She was eager for a medium that enabled her to tell, and not just imply, a narrative: 'I had an immense desire to learn how to tell stories to my audience.' Since the comparison with Cindy Sherman has been raised, Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills* always tell a story: she stopped making them, she told me, when she 'ran out of cliches.' But the 'Women of Allah' photographs always told much the same story, though of course without Sherman's irony" (13).

4. "Western obsession with the figure of the veiled Muslim women has been foundational to orientalism since at least the nineteenth century, but the veiled figure was characterized earlier by passive eroticism. Although the visual correlation between terrorism and the covered female Muslim body was explored in films such as *The Battle of Algiers* (1966), it was brought to mass attention of the Western public in the wake of the Islamic revolution in Iran. Media and photojournalists from the late 1970s onward have frequently depicted endless masses of Iranian women, covered in black chador, participating in the revolution. With the advent of the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, images of Iranian women armed with rifles in regimented formations also became prevalent, including in Iranian propaganda publications. The crisis in which American hostages were held by Iranians for 444 days during the period 1979-81 was given prominent play in U.S. media. Indeed, Melani McAlister has argued that the media reception of developments in Iran between 1979 and 1989 decisively transformed popular understanding of the Middle East and its relationship to terrorism: "'Islam' became highlighted as the dominant signifier of the region, rather than oil wealth, Arabs, or Christian Holy Lands. None of these other constructs disappeared, of course, but they were augmented and transformed by a reframing of the entire region in terms of proximity to or distance from 'Islam,' which became conflated with 'terrorism'" (Dadi 125-127). "Rather than seeing Neshat's photographs as simply engaging with orientalist fictional depictions of harem interiors and veiled women or as documentary portrayals of actual conditions of Iranian or Muslim women, one can more productively understand them as being allegorical. The allegorical mode is profoundly ambivalent and complex, and it mediates meaning between realism and fiction in a manner analogous to the effect that the calligraphic screen in Neshat's photographs creates between the work and the observer. This is strikingly evident in *Rebellious Silence*. Indeed, in this figure, the calligraphic text creates a *niqab* (a face veil covering the lower part of the face) by covering up precisely the parts of the face that remain exposed by the chador. Such a reading of Neshat's photographs allows one to venture beyond the purely Iranian referent, in favor of an unlocatable yet immanent site. Neshat's work also refuses to choose

between the subject positions supposedly available to the modern Muslim woman—either traditional (subjugated) or Westernized (liberated)—and instead marks Muslim women’s instability, untranslatability, and incommensurability in the representational media strategies of the contemporary world”(Dadi 128-129).

5. “By seeming to strictly conform to Islamic-Iranian codes of public conduct, Neshat denies the viewer an immediate and simplistic reading of equating freedom with unveiling. The West as such figures nowhere as an overt subject of Neshat’s photographs. However, the audience of Neshat’s photographs was, and has remained, primarily the Western art world. Her remarkable success is due to her promotion by European and American critics, curators, galleries, and museums. Neshat has arguably come to occupy the position of the most significant visual interpreter of the status of Muslim women universally. Rather than simply providing realist windows into the sociological reality of Muslim women, Neshat’s photographs, while relying upon portrait and photojournalistic genres, subtly alter them, orienting them toward an allegorical reading. Contingent props and temporal elements are carefully absent from the minimalist photographic frames, allowing for a fruitful ambiguity in interpreting her works. Two other important aspects of the photographs produce a further distancing effect. The first is the calligraphic and ornamental screen that is overlaid upon the exposed body parts of the majority of these photographs. The second is the removal of the woman figure from being an anonymous element in a mass public to its individualized placement in a new frame” (129-130). “The veil identifies the problem of identity and difference as an intimate, lived, bodily relationship marked by the figure of woman. Yet that figure’s subject position cannot be resolved either as a fully autonomous self or as an anonymous subjugated figure in a premodern or mass collective. Instead it is detached from geographic and temporal referents, now suspended in menacing and immediate space-time proximity”(136).

6. “It is important to note that Neshat herself did not shoot any of the photographs in the series but that she collaborated with a number of photographers in realizing the images. However, she did inscribe the painstaking calligraphy and ornamental patterns inspired by South Asian and North African henna and tattoo practices” (136-137). “Neshat’s calligraphy, while carefully done, compares unfavorably with the work of master calligraphers of Arabic and Persia. Similarly, the ornamental patterns are beautifully drawn but do not stand up to some of the intricate accomplishments of henna artists” (137). “With their juxtaposition of mechanical reproduction overlaid with painstaking ornamental and textual handwork, the photographs also index the condition of commodity production in contemporary globalization that relies increasingly on the skills of female workers in the informal sector. And, because the veiled woman is increasingly also visible in the West and a source of contention in its public sphere, the spatial allegorization of this terrorist difference is now freed from its geographic moorings and reenacted immanently at dispersed sites throughout the global public space” (146-147). “The stereotypical image of the covered Muslim woman corresponds to several subtypes. Arguably, the most often-represented one is the passive, repressed woman, whose conservative fatalism prevents her from attempting to change her lot. We also know of other Muslim women, who can be more active, such as the young intellectual, often educated in the West, who accepts Islam as a basis for a different modern identity. It is, however, implied in the Western media that, in her search for a non-Western modern identity, she is dangerous. Embracing conservative and fundamentalist forces, she may become a religious fanatic, the media construction of a Jihad, a terrorist and revolutionary obsessed with Holy War against non-Muslim cultures, and ready to sacrifice her own life and the lives of others” (Zabel 17-18).

7. “Neshat’s aim is not to dispose of media clichés, but to recompose and reorganize them in ways that produce more flexible and complex readings. Without claiming to present truth, her images correspond to the images and ideals that determine Iranian society itself” (18, 22). “Neshat’s images are provocative because they seem to lack a distinct ‘moral’ stance. They would probably not be so provocative if they could be taken as a clear statement for or against Islamic fundamentalism. One could reduce them to a critical presentation of how media functions, or how Western culture constructs the Orient as its own phantasmic Other in a world where ideas of ‘multiculturalism’ have become official ideologies. Nevertheless, they maintain a certain ambiguity and distance that has to do with the artist’s own physical presence in her work. She engages these stereotypes by playing the role of ‘fundamentalist’ and even ‘terrorist’. While such role-playing may indicate a hidden identification with the role, I do not mean to read the artist psychoanalytically, but rather to explore the effect of her works, which I am tempted to call ‘paranoid constructions.’ While we may be rationally aware that the works deal only with the problem of media stereotypes, we may have the feeling that the artist is deadly serious in turning her guns on us. We are caught in the tension between knowledge and belief, as it is described in psychoanalytical theory: we know that this is just an image, but we do not quite believe it” (22). “The double meaning of Neshat’s work is at once the result of a divided world, partitioned by closed, often hostile, cultural boundaries, and an analysis of those divisive mechanisms. By including Farsi calligraphy written over the images, Neshat creates a pure, sensual, visual presence, and a material ornament that indicates meaning but hides it from most Western audiences who will, in most cases, be unable to read or understand it. It is the emptiness of meaning that makes room for stereotypes. In a 1997 interview, Neshat observed that she is often asked if the inscriptions are taken from the Qur’an. This seems a natural question, given the prevalence of stereotypes about Islamic fundamentalism, in which the Qur’an is the compulsory- the only possible- text. That the answer is not available within the works to viewers who know no Farsi underscores Neshat’s point” (22, 25). “When I first saw Neshat’s photographs,... I ‘knew’ I was looking at an Islamic terrorist. But an essential part of the first reaction was a feeling of a gap, an inconsistency. Because of this gap, I was able to distance myself from my first impressions and recognize in them a mixture of old and more recent stereotypes and preconstructed ideas about the ‘Orient,’ the Middle East, and the Muslim world. The phantasmic mixture of spirituality, poetry, fanaticism, and

violence did not, however, disappear after this insight. Rather, it changed its role. The divided world in which we live is not a fiction; representational stereotypes that function as divisive mechanism cannot simply be dismissed. An important effect of Neshat's photographs is that they prompt us to rethink our own positions in this divided world and our relationship to Others" (25).

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The following photographic works were made with the artist using herself/himself as the model. Explore issues of identity raised by doing so each of these works.



Yasumasa Morimura. *Portrait (Futago)*, 1988, chromogenic print with acrylic paint and gel medium

1. How does the artist Yasumasa Morimura photograph himself?

2. How does the work raise issues regarding cultural identity?

3. How does the work raise issues regarding artistic identity?

4. How does the work raise issues regarding gender identity?

DATE DUE: _____

THEME: INVESTIGATING IDENTITY

FOCUS: Abakanowicz's *Androgyne III*, Abakanowicz's *80 Backs*, Kiki Smith's *Lying with the Wolf*, Kiki Smith's *Rapture*

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/484422>

ONLINE ASSIGNMENT: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/global-culture/identity-body/identity-body-united-states/a/kiki-smith-lying-with-the-wolf>

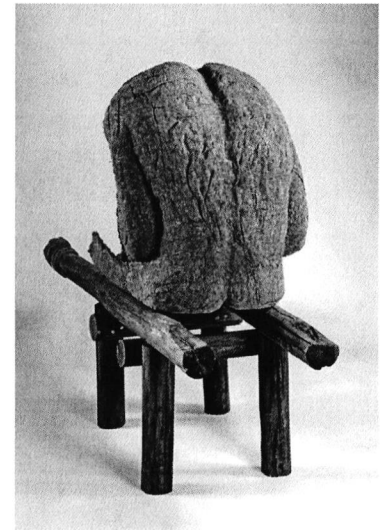
ONLINE ASSIGNMENT:

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/17/arts/design/17kiki.html?pagewanted=print&_r=0

READING ASSIGNMENT: KLEINER, pp. 924-925, 958

POWERPOINT: INVESTIGATING IDENTITY: GLOBAL ART since 1980 (Magdalena Abakanowicz and Kiki Smith)

- In the 1960s, the artist Magdalena Abakanowicz (from the country of _____) received international acclaim for her large and imaginative abstract woven hangings called _____, made of various ropes and fibers. Abakanowicz's sculptures are to a great degree reflections of her early life experiences as a member of an _____ family disturbed by the dislocations of World War II and its aftermath.
- She began to make freestanding sculptures in the early 1970s from similar materials, particularly burlap, string and cotton gauze. Her work since 1974 has featured _____ human figures- faces without skulls, bodies without heads, and torsos without legs.
- The creases, ridges, and veins of the hardened-fiber surface assume organic characteristics, reminiscent of the earth's rough _____ or the cellular composition of human _____.
_____.
- Androgyne III* of 1985 utilizes the same molded-torso shell that Abakanowicz used in sculpture series _____, begun in 1976. Unlike the earlier pieces, however, which sat directly on the floor, the *Androgyne* torsos are perched on low _____ of wooden log, the long poles filling in for lost legs. Through these provocative images, the artist expresses the physical and spiritual _____ of mankind. As she says, they are "about existence in general."
- The repeated poses of *80 Backs* suggest meditation, submission, and anticipation. Although made



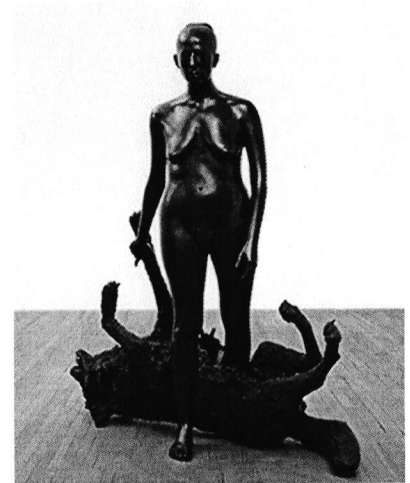
from a single _____, the figures achieve a touching sense of individuality because each assumed a slightly different _____ as the material dried and because the artist imprinted a different _____ of fiber texture on each.

6. Kiki Smith once stated, "Our culture seems to believe that it's entertaining to teach women to be _____. " This statement suggests an unfortunate lack of respect towards women. In her bronze sculpture *Rapture*, the woman has overcome her attacker and is emerging from the _____.

7. *Lying with the Wolf* is one of a short series of works executed between 2000 and 2002 that illustrates women's relationships with animals, drawing from representations found in visual, literary, and oral _____. Smith is most interested in _____ that speak to collectively shared mythologies; these include folk tales, biblical stories, and Victorian literature.



8. Unlike *Rapture*, the pair as depicted in *Lying with the Wolf* seems locked in a more intimate _____. The woman wraps herself around the animal's body in a gesture of _____, taming the wolf's wildness. Both figures seem to nurture one another, floating in space. Smith imbues a story that is normally quite violent with a kind of tenderness that is characteristic of her overall aesthetic.



9. As an investigation of the body in its capacity for fertility, reproduction, and nurturing, references to the natural world would eventually lead Smith to her interest in animals and our connections to them.

Lying with the Wolf is an extension of this _____ to connect the earthly with the spiritual and the personal with the collective.

10. *Lying with the Wolf* addresses the distinction between "predator" and " _____ " that may be thought of as a _____ for hierarchies of power in human relationships, which have traditionally been drawn along the lines of gender, race, and class. Because patriarchal societies typically grant more power to men, while requiring women to be submissive or dependent, we can think of this "overturning" in Smith's art as a _____ statement against such inequalities.