THE POWER OF ART

Richard Lewis • Susan I. Lewis

REVISED THIRD EDITION

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at New Paltz

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***The Power of Art*: Revised Third Edition**
Richard Lewis, Susan I. Lewis

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FOR OUR PARENTS

James Warren Ingalls

Flora Salvador Ingalls

Henry L. Lewis

and Joan Lewis

who first opened our eyes to the power of art

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PREFACE

Every two years in Venice, Italy, a sleepy park and an abandoned medieval shipyard come to life. Enormous luxury yachts crowd the famous lagoon; glamorous celebrities can be seen cruising up the Grand Canal in motorboats. Partygoers, some in gowns, others with backpacks, pour into the streets and galleries. The art world has returned to Venice.

Artists, art historians, collectors, critics, museum curators, gallery owners, and art lovers have come to see the oldest and most important exhibition of contemporary art—*La Biennale di Venezia*—or simply the Biennale. During its first week, crowds fill the many exhibition areas eager to get a look at what has been selected as the most exciting and important art of our time. A spirit of child-like delight fills even the most jaded of viewers, impatient to see what surprises are ahead.

At the 2015 Biennale, one artwork that surprised and delighted both critics and the public was Chiharu Shiota's magical installation for the Japanese Pavilion, *The Key in the Hand*. Visitors wandered through what looked like a red mist but was actually a dense web of yarn from which were suspended thousands of keys the artist had collected from people around the world. For her, keys not only protect what we care about, but are filled with "memories" from their daily use. Under the overhanging cloud of keys, the artist placed two old boats, which represented "life's journey," as well as hands catching recollections like falling rain. Shiota hoped to bring people together by mixing the memories in the keys with those who saw them at the Biennale. Viewers were free to consider the symbolic message of this piece, or simply become entranced by the play of intense color and a downpour of keys. Either way, Shiota aimed at a universal message using the language of art.

The Biennale began in 1895 as an event in the center of Venice at Caffè Florian, Europe's oldest coffee house and a meeting place of writers and artists. The café's first International Exhibition of Contemporary Art was an immediate success, with over 200,000 visitors. By 1909, the exhibition, already known as the Biennale, moved to its present location in the Giardini, a park constructed by Napoleon. A central exhibition hall was built, along with the first of the ultimately thirty permanent national pavilions. Interrupted only by the two World Wars, the Biennale

Gallery view, Venice Biennale.

has continued to grow and hold exhibitions every two years for over a century. In 1980, the gigantic Arsenale, once home to the huge shipyards that built Venice's fleets in Europe, became a second Biennale site, adding more than 50,000 square feet of exhibition space. Today, the Biennale regularly attracts 500,000 visitors during its six months. It has outgrown the Giardini and the Arsenale and includes exhibitions of artists and temporary national pavilions in palazzos and storefronts throughout the city and out into the islands of the lagoon.

The multiple artistic styles faced by Biennale visitors can result in a sense of confusion, not unlike the reaction of a student facing the rich, complex history of art for the first time. At the Biennale, as in this text, you can see the wide range of tools artists work with. Traditional media like painting, sculpture, drawing, and printmaking are well represented. But part of the excitement of art viewing today is to see new media—installations and animations, film and video, works made with thread, neon, feathers, and dozens of other unexpected materials.

It appears that every society in history has made and admired art of some kind. The creative urge itself seems to be primal and an essential part of being human. Recently, prehistoric cave art made by children over thirteen thousand years ago was discovered in caves in both Europe and Australia.

Whether prehistoric or twenty-first century, art's power continues to transcend time and geography. Why else would over a billion people each year visit museums across the globe? In the United States alone, 850 million people enter museums annually, many more than the 470 million who go to theme parks and all the major league sporting events combined.

The writing of this revised third edition is a good time to take stock of recent changes in the art world. We have made a special effort in this edition to reflect the increasing impact of women and non-Western painters, sculptors, architects, photographers, and designers in the art world today. We also wanted to present artists as real people, and have included a series of boxes called "Lives of the Artists" that will give you a peek behind the curtain so you can better understand the lives they lived. The exciting convergence of artistic media and cross-pollination of artists across the globe enabled by the internet, as described in previous editions, has only expanded. New technologies like three-dimensional printing have added even more tools to the deep toolbox of today's artists. Our access to information, images, videos, and sounds is unprecedented in human history, showering us with an embarrassment of riches. This text is designed to help you navigate this flood of imagery in a clear, understandable, and enjoyable way.

We do not expect that you will rush out to see each of the artworks you will be introduced to in this book. That is the project of a lifetime, not a semester. These works of art are held in museums and galleries across the globe. Our goal is to inspire you to look at art and to give you the tools to enjoy the experience. We hope to help you understand why the visual arts are treasured by people of widely diverse backgrounds. We also try to make sense of why so much money and effort has been spent (and will continue to be spent) to create, preserve, conserve, and protect the most famous works of art, so that the power of art can be enjoyed not only today, but tomorrow by your children and future generations.

Chiharu Shiota, *The Key in the Hand*, 2015. Japan Pavilion, Venice Biennale.

KEY CHANGES IN THE REVISED THIRD EDITION

The revised Third Edition of the POWER OF ART retains the new images of the original third edition, with further updates as noted below in **blue**. In this revision, we continue to strive for more geographic, cultural, racial, and gender diversity, as well as the inclusion of important recent works of art and contemporary artists who have gained reputation and popularity. Our updates are spread throughout the book in order to bring each section up-to-date.

An exciting new feature, "Timeless Links," has replaced the previous timelines as the introductions to all historical chapters (timelines have been moved online, to MindTap, where they include new interactive abilities). These Timeless Links explore the themes that have inspired artists for centuries and create links across space and time. For example, Chapter 13, *The Age of Faith*, links works where artists have portrayed heaven and hell; Chapter 18, *The Real World on Trial*, focuses on the long-standing importance of artist networks in the art world. These links open connections between the artists and art of different periods and cultures throughout the book

CHAPTER BY CHAPTER CHANGES

1: The Power of Art. New discussion of Paleolithic Australian cave painting. New art and artists: Vincent van Gogh, *Wheatfield with Crows*; Grandma Moses, *July Fourth*; and a new box on Joseph No Two Horns in "The Horse from the Battle of the Little Big Horn."

2: The Primary Elements. New discussion on the Hindu festival of Holi. New art and artists: Hokusai, *Boy Playing a Flute*; Calder, *Josephine Baker*; Olaf Eliasson, *The Weather Project* at the Tate Modern; and Lucia Koch, *Spaghetti* (2 windows).

3: The Principles of Design. New art and artists: Henri Matisse, *Jazz* (*The Burial of Pierrot*), paper cutouts; Gabriel Orozco, *La D.S.*, modified Citroen; Andrea Dezsö's tunnel book, *Gentle Beast Hiding Among Leaves*; and George Caleb Bingham, *Card Players*.

4: Drawing. New art and artists: Egon Schiele, *Self Portrait with Nude Model*, graphite; Odilon Redon, *Sita*, pastel; Rembrandt, *A Sleeping Woman*, ink.

5: Painting. New art and artists: Diego Rivera, *Detroit Industry*, fresco; John Singer Sargent, *Venice: La Salute*, watercolor; Jean Michel Basquiat, *Slave Auction*, collage and mixed media; and Wangechi Mutu, *One Hundred Lavish Months of Bushwack*, mixed media.

6: Printmaking. New art and artist: Betsabeé Romero, *Always finding another cage*. Box: "June Wayne—Artist, Printmaker, Catalyst."

7: Photography. New art and artists: Thomas Demand, *Backyard*; Nan Goldin, *Yogo Putting on Powder*; and Laila Essaydi, *La Femmes du Maroc: La Grande Odalisque*.

8: New Media:Time and Digital Arts. New art and artists: Bill Viola, *Martyrs*; Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, *Vietnam-A Memorial Work*; Nina Paley, *Sita Sings the Blues*; Cory Arcangel, *Super Mario Clouds* (modified videogame); and teamLab, *Life Survives by the Power of Life* (computer animated video).

9: Sculpture. New discussions on the digital technique of 3D printing and an explanation of patina. New art and artists include: Sarah Sze, *Corner Plot*; Marina Abramovic, *The Artist is Present*; Louise Nevelson, *Royal Tide IV*; and Stephanie Lampert, *Fly Away?,* 3D printed sculpture.

10: Architecture. New in-depth discussion of Frank Gehry, *Guggenheim Museum of Art*, Bilbao, Spain. New art and artists: Zaha Hadid, *Riverside Museum,* Glasgow, Scotland, and Thomas Heatherwick, *Seed Cathedral*, Shanghai, China.

11: Decorative Arts, Crafts, and Design. Section on Fashion Design added. New art and artists: Rei Kawakubo, *Blue Witch*, fashion design; George Nakashima, *Conoid Bench*, furniture design; Dale Chihuly, *Inside and Out*; Marian Bantjes, *Valentine*. Updated box: "Elsa Schiaparelli: Fashion as Art" with Elsa Schiaparelli, *Lobster Dress,* and Salvador Dali, *Lobster Telephone*.

12: Ancient Empires, Ancient Gods. New theme: "Timeless Links—The Test of Time." New art and artists: *Mask of Tutankhamen*; *Underwater Scene*, mosaic from Pompeii; Tschumi and Photiadas, *New Acropolis Museum*, Athens; Apollonius (attr.), *The Seated Boxer*; *Gardenscape* from the Villa of Prima Porta. Box: "The Elgin Marbles Controversy."

13: The Age of Faith. New theme: "Timeless Links—Heaven and Hell." New art and artists: Anthemius of Tralles and Isidorus of Miletus, Interior of Hagia Sophia and Kosho, *Portrait statue of the priest Kuya preaching*.

New box: "A Modern Cathedral is Born—La Sagrada Familia."

14: The Renaissance. New theme: "Timeless Links—Patronage and Power." New art and artist, Fra' Filippo Lippi, *Madonna with Child and Angels*.

15: Drama and Light: Mannerism, the Baroque, and Rococo. New theme: "Timeless Links—Love and Romance." New art and artists: Jacopo Pontormo, *Deposition from the Cross*; Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith Slaying Holofornes*, Uffizi; Jan Vermeer, *Girl with Pearl Earring*. Box: "Tumultuous and Tortured Lives: Caravaggio and Gentileschi."

16: Battle of the -isms: Classicism, Romanticism, and Realism. New theme: "Timeless Links—Exoticism." New section on Barbizon School. New art and artists: Francisco Goya, Saturn Devouring His Son; Charles-François Daubigny, The Creek; Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Christian Martyr's Last Prayer*. Box: "Turner, the Fire King."

17: Out of the Studio and into the Light: Impressionism and PostImpressionism. New theme: "Timeless Links—The Inspiration of Nature." New art and artists: Alexandre Cabanel, *The Birth of Venus*; Auguste Rodin, *The Kiss*.

18: The Real World on Trial: The Early Twentieth Century. New theme: "Timeless Links—Artist Networks." New art and artists: Andre Derain, *London Bridge*; Henri Matisse, *Purple Robe and Anemones*; Pablo Picasso, *The Dove* and *The Studio (Pigeons)*. New box: "The Dove: the Rivalry between Matisse and Picasso."

19: The Invisible Made Visible: Abstract and Non-Representational Art. New theme: "Timeless Links — The Art that Shocks." New section on Mondrian. New art and artists: Vasily Kandinsky, Panel for Edwin R. Campbell No. 1; Piet Mondrian, *The Gray Tree, Tableau 2, Broadway Boogie-Woogie*; Imogen Cunningham, *Leaf Pattern*; Mark di Suvero, *The A Train*.

20: A Storm of Images: Art in the Contemporary World. New theme: "Timeless Links – Protest and Revolution." New art and artists: Roy Lichtenstein, *Drowning Girl*; Ushio Shinohara, *Boxing Painting;* Ana Mendieta, *Tree of Life*; Perkins+Will, *Shanghai National Museum;* SANAA, Grace Farms, Connecticut; Julie Mehretu, *Stadia I*; Damián Ortega, *Cosmic Thing* (deconstructed Volkswagen Beetle); Petah Coyne, *Buddha Boy*; Damien Hirst, *For the Love of God* (diamond encrusted platinum skull); Banksy, *Cans Buffer* (street art); Ai Weiwei, *Leg Gun* (Instagram photograph); Yinka Shonibare, *The Swing (after Fragonard)*; El Anatsui, *Between Earth and Heaven*; and teamLab, *Universe of Water Particles* (interactive digital installation). Two boxes: "The Mud Angels (of the 1966 Florence flood)" and "British Bad Boys: Hirst and Banksy."

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Like the art world, the publishing world is in the midst of both a Digital and Global Age. The way this text was produced reflects these important changes. The publishing team for Cengage is not located in one office building. It is spread across the United States and works with sources all over the world. Despite the distances, we always felt a part of a talented and dedicated team. We want to thank Marta Lee-Perriad, VP of Humanities, World Languages, and Curriculum Programmes; our dependable development editor, Sharon Adams Poore, who managed to be the voice of reason, encouragement, and faith in the long process of revision and production; our content project manager, Lianne Ames, who once again kept a steady hand on the steering wheel during the obstacle course that is publishing today; Cate Rickard Barr, our talented and resourceful art director; Jessica Badiner, content development manager; our content developer, Jacqueline Czel, who was our go-to person throughout the process and cheerfully handled all issues; and to Jillian Borden for her marketing support.

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Last, but certainly not least, we would like to express love and appreciation to our son, Rob, for putting up with constantly busy parents and a really messy house for his entire childhood. Someday, we hope you will think it was worth it.

Richard and Susan Lewis

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES

Powerlecture Flashdrive

This all-in-one presentation tool makes it easy to incorporate high-resolution digital images into your lectures. You can assemble, edit, and present customized lectures with the Digital Image Library that provides high resolution images—maps, diagrams, and fine art images from the text. Use the PowerPoint presentation format or individual file formats compatible with other image-viewing software programs and even add your own images. A zoom feature enables you to magnify selected portions of an image for more detailed display in class. PowerLecture also includes an Instructor's Manual and Educator's Guide.

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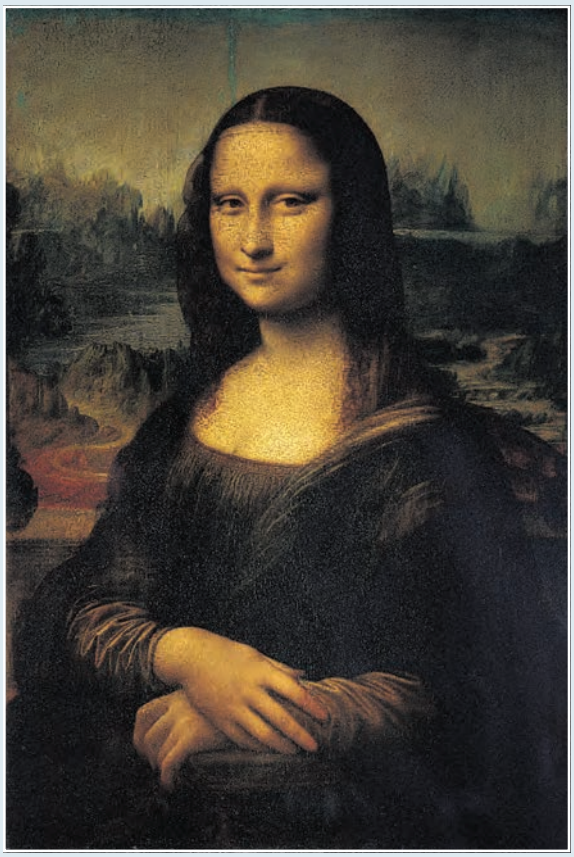
Create and manage your custom course website by providing virtual office hours, syllabi, threaded discussions and track student progress with the quizzing material, and much more. Student resources include access to an interactive eBook; image flashcards that are linked to interactive content so students can review related material and test themselves, Video Study Tools, Audio Study Tools, and ArtTours. In addition, students can access the "Compare/Contrast" feature with interactive quizzes, "Foundations" modules that demonstrate art concepts and ideas, "In the Studio" video footage of interviews discussing the art-making process, "A Closer Look" section that presents web links that expand on material in the book, and more.

STUDENT RESOURCES

THE POWER OF ART, Revised 3rd Edition, delivers a brief, yet comprehensive survey, demonstrating that art is everywhere and relevant to all students—no matter what their majors happen to be. The text incorporates global material to demonstrate cultural intersections and mutual influences. "Art News" boxes present real events that connect art to students' lives. "Timeless Links" explore themes that have inspired artists for centuries. In addition, this edition features a diverse mix of artists and spotlights the latest technologies used to create art. Available digital options include image flashcards, an interactive Foundations module, an interactive timeline, videos, quizzes, an interactive book, and more.

CHAPTER 1

THE POWER OF ART



1-1 LEONARDO DA VINCI, *Mona Lisa*, c. 1503–1505. Oil on wood, approximately 30" × 21". Louvre, Paris, France.

More than eight million people enter the Louvre Museum in Paris each year, making it the world's most visited museum. It is estimated that the museum generates the equivalent of nearly $1 billion in annual revenue for France. Although the huge palace contains hundreds of thousands of objects, many, if not most, visitors have come to see the most famous painting in the world, Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* (**1-1**). Signs are posted throughout the vast museum, marking the way to its legendary masterpiece. Outside the room where the painting hangs, there is often a long line just to enter and join the crush of the crowd. Inside, there are other paintings by some of the most talented artists in history, but viewers surround only one, jostling each other, pushing toward it to get a better look. Above the crowd, one can see arms lifting cell phones and cameras and flashes going off. Tourists treat the painting like a famous landmark, posing for their pictures beside it. Guards are always nearby, and wooden barriers keep viewers at a distance. Deep within a massive case of bulletproof glass that dwarfs the small painting, the same elegant woman who has captivated generations of art lovers regards them with her inscrutable smile.

ART NEWS

THE *MONA LISA* HAS BEEN STOLEN!

The *Mona Lisa was* actually stolen from the Louvre in 1911, causing a national scandal. Although the complete story will never be known, it is believed that the theft was an attempt to sell not only the original *Mona Lisa* but also many forged copies. The forger's plan was that upon the shocking announcement of the painting's theft, unscrupulous wealthy collectors around the world could be easily duped into buying his forgeries of the masterpiece.

The forger contacted a former employee of the Louvre, Vincenzo Peruggia, to arrange the theft. Peruggia and his accomplices, dressed as staff members, entered the museum as it closed on Sunday afternoon, August 20, 1911. The museum would not open again until Tuesday. The thieves hid in a broom closet and slept overnight in the museum. Early the next morning, they removed the painting from its frame and carried it through the many galleries, planning to tell anyone who saw them that they were bringing the *Mona Lisa* to the staff photography lab. The only one who did see them was a plumber, who helped them open a stuck door.

No one knew the painting was missing until the next day. As the word spread, art lovers flocked to the Louvre and left flowers where she had once hung. Investigators turned up few clues beyond the now-empty frame. In an ironic twist, Picasso, then a young, impoverished artist, became a suspect after two small statues from the Louvre were discovered in his studio. Meanwhile, Vincenzo Peruggia, still in Paris, hid the painting under a stove in his room.

1-2 French officials examine the *Mona Lisa* after its return.

Two years passed before Peruggia wrote to an antiques dealer in Florence, Italy, and offered the painting for sale. *Mona Lisa*'s homecoming to the city where she was painted was far from glorious. In December 1913, she traveled by train in a wooden trunk, under a false bottom, covered by old shoes and clothing. When Peruggia presented the missing masterpiece to the dealer and a museum director, he was promptly turned over to the authorities. At the trial, the thief, who was born in Italy, claimed that he had stolen Leonardo's masterpiece to return it to its rightful place in his own country. A sympathetic Italian jury sentenced Peruggia to only a few months in jail. After the trial, the *Mona Lisa* was displayed briefly in her birthplace and then was finally returned to the Louvre (1-2).

Painted at the height of the Italian Renaissance, this fascinating portrait of a woman has attracted attention for centuries. Poems and songs have been written, essays and scholarly works composed, about an oil painting that measures less than two feet by three feet. Even in our contemporary world awash in digital images, the power of da Vinci's portrait continues to transcend time. Legends have grown up around the picture—for instance, that the *Mona Lisa*'s eyes follow one around the room. Another legend suggests that the painting on display is no longer the genuine *Mona Lisa* (see "Art News" box).

What is it about this painting that has elevated it, not simply to the height of a masterpiece but to the symbolic pinnacle of Western art? How can a work of art become so valuable that it is seen as priceless? What gives the *Mona Lisa* its power over people from different centuries and cultures? Although many people have spoken of the air of mystery that surrounds the picture of the woman with the haunting smile, on first viewing it is common to find the picture a disappointment. The glass makes it difficult to see, and what we see is not exactly what Leonardo painted. The art historian Kenneth

Clark described the *Mona Lisa* as "the submarine goddess of the Louvre," a phrase that accurately reflects the dominant greenish tone of the painting as well as its aquarium-like casing. Yet the earliest known description of the portrait raves about the warmth of the colors, the rosy nostrils and red lips, as well as the overall tone of the face that "seemed not to be colored but to be living flesh." Not only has the color faded, but also at some point in its history the painting was made smaller, probably to fit into a frame, slicing off a pair of columns that once surrounded her.

LOOKING AT ART

LEARNING HOW TO SEE

Despite these ravages of time, it is possible to consider what makes the *Mona Lisa* a masterpiece. Whatever the type of art in question, the first step in learning to appreciate art is simply learning to *look.* This is more challenging than is usually believed. We often think of looking as a passive act, as in watching TV or clicking through pictures on a webpage. But studying the visual arts requires more than empty viewing; seeing can be *active* rather than passive. When primitive people looked at the world, they had to *observe* nature because they were hunters and gatherers; they depended on their eyes for survival. In their world, everything was natural and real; very little was made by humans. We, on the other hand, live among literally millions of images, not only in books or on a screen but also on almost everything we touch—from cereal boxes to printed T-shirts. As opposed to earlier periods, most of what we see and interact with is human-made. This constant bombardment by printed, video, and digital images has made us visually sophisticated, but it can also leave our eyes numb.

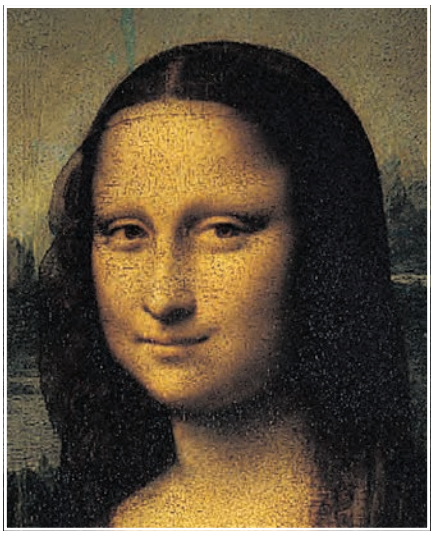
Artists often say that someone can really "see," as if most people cannot. What an artist means by **seeing** is difficult to explain, but it is something like the totally involved gaze of a newborn child, hungrily looking at everything as if it had never been seen before, not blinded by preconceptions. All of us like to see new things, but in the midst of a busy life our seeing becomes stale, our eyes jaded. Art can renew the pleasure of seeing and help us feel more alive. Many people have had the exhilarating experience after leaving a museum of noticing that the world outside looks much more interesting and beautiful.

Let's return to the *Mona Lisa* and look at her carefully. First, the image is beautiful. It is not simply that this is the portrait of an attractive woman—in fact, *La Gioconda* (Lisa del Giocondo) looks less than ideal to contemporary eyes. Although it is safe to assume that she was considered nice-looking by the standards of the sixteenth century, Leonardo did not give her face (see detail, 1-3) the same perfect beauty he gave to his drawings of angels, for example. But what makes a work of art famous is less the quality of the subject than the way it is interpreted by the artist. The *Mona Lisa* is beautifully and gracefully painted. Viewers are attracted to da Vinci's work through the power of his skill as a draftsman and painter and his remarkable ability to bring his subject to life.

This lifelike quality made the *Mona Lisa* famous in its own time. According to the painter Giorgio Vasari, Leonardo's contemporary:

> Altogether this picture was painted in a manner to make the most confident artists—no matter who—despair and lose heart . . . in this painting of Leonardo's there was a smile so pleasing that it seemed divine rather than human; and those who saw it were amazed to find that it was as alive as the original.

As Vasari recognized, the *Mona Lisa* revolutionized the art of portraiture, adding movement and life in a way never seen before.



1-3 Detail of figure 1-1: face of *Mona Lisa*.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Leonardo wrote in his notebooks, "moderated light will add charm to every face," as anyone who has been on a date in a candle-lit restaurant knows. Leonardo used oil paint to recreate this effect, which he called **sfumato lighting** (in Italian, "the soft mist of a fountain"), a soft light that dissolved edges and made details unclear. The *Mona Lisa*'s eyes and mouth were bathed in sfumato light by Leonardo because he knew those are the two most important areas we look at on a face. Because they are left unclear, our imagination fills them in; the lips seem to move and give the *Mona Lisa* life. Leonardo's use of sfumato lighting is responsible for the legends surrounding this painting—her inscrutable smile and the eyes that look at you and then away.

Leonardo generated a sense of movement in another way. Notice how the background does not line up on either side of the *Mona Lisa*'s shoulders. This was intentional: Leonardo wanted to create the illusion that his subject is shifting her shoulder while we are looking at her. Leonardo understood how people *see*, perhaps better than anyone who had ever lived, and he used this knowledge in subtle ways to create the illusion that his *Mona Lisa* was a real person. In fact, this is how viewers have always responded to her.

PLACING ART AND ARTIST IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Great art reveals the spirit of the age that produced it. Therefore, we need to know when and who made a work of art so we can begin to consider how this affected its form. The grace and beauty of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*, for example, reflects the value placed on these qualities during the Italian Renaissance. She also illustrates the highly prized attribute of aloofness—what the Italians called *sprezzatura*, a kind of aristocratic refinement and calm.

The life of Leonardo da Vinci represents many other Renaissance values as well. Leonardo was an independent thinker, a scientific observer of nature, an imaginative inventor, and a delightful conversationalist, as well as a talented artist. He filled many notebooks (1-4) with his observations, drawings, poems, and philosophical theories. Above all, he exemplifies a crucial Renaissance idea credited with giving birth to the modern age—*individualism*. Renaissance thinkers conceived of human beings as potentially godlike creatures with immense physical, intellectual, and creative powers. Part of the mystique of Leonardo's art is that it was done by one of the first individuals to be considered a creative genius in the modern sense.

1-4 LEONARDO DA VINCI, *Drawing of Flowers and Diagrams*. Study from the notebooks, c. 1490–1519. Black chalk and ink, 9⅛" × 6½". Institut de France.

No one can really be sure why Leonardo painted this portrait of twenty-four-year-old Lisa del Giocondo, the wife of an important Florentine merchant, at the same time when the artist was refusing paid commissions from more notable persons. We do know that Leonardo worked on the *Mona Lisa* for decades and never considered it finished. Because he reworked the image over and over, carrying it with him on his travels, the painting must have exerted the same endless fascination over the artist as it has over its viewers. Leonardo died of a stroke in France, the guest of King Francis I (who moved his mother and sisters out of a chateau so da Vinci could take up residence there), so the *Mona Lisa* became part of the royal art collection. That is how it came to be in the Louvre Museum in Paris, and why it eventually became identified as not only a part of Italian culture but French culture as well.

ART AND CULTURE

Western cultures are not the only ones to see works of art as priceless. The Japanese, for example, have an elaborate system of rating works of art and their value to national heritage. The most valuable artworks are designated as Japanese **National Treasures**, while other significant works of art are categorized as Important Cultural Properties. Because of their historic and aesthetic importance, National Treasures (ranging from huge statues and painted screens to fragile decorated boxes and ceramic vessels, such as teacups) cannot be sold or taken out of the country. In Japan, even people—such as the most famous and accomplished living artists—can be given the official title of National Treasure.

One of the works of art designated as a Japanese National Treasure is the wooden statue of the *Amida Buddha* (the Buddha of the West, 1-5), carved by the sculptor Jocho in the eleventh century. This statue is part of an entire sculptured environment, a grouping of many gilded wooden figures that decorate the central hall of a Buddhist temple designed for an aristocratic family of the period. Because of their great age and the high quality of their design and carving, all of the figures in this sculptural group qualify as National Treasures, which are considered as valuable to Japanese heritage as the Statue of Liberty is to Americans.

1-5 Interior of the Ho-o-do or Phoenix Hall with *Amida Buddha* by JOCHO, 1053. Gilded wood, 9' 4" high. Byodo-in Temple at Uji, Japan.

Even if we know little about Buddhism, we can be impressed by the elaborate carving and huge scale of this sculptural group. Just a few feet inside the tall central doors, one comes face to face with the towering *Amida Buddha* on his lotus flower throne. Nearly twelve feet high, covered with gold leaf, he is surrounded by dozens of music-making angels that hang on the walls. One is also impressed by the excellent preservation of statues that will soon be a thousand years old. But try to imagine it as it first was, when all the angelic bodhisattvas were painted in bright colors, with white shrouds, blue hair, gold instruments, colorful tiaras, and necklaces. The Central Hall was painted in vivid colors—too-bright red vermillion with bits of mirrors and mother of pearl to reflect light—showing souls being welcomed to paradise. Imagine how powerful this vision of paradise must have seemed to the followers of the Pure Land Buddhist sect, who believed that when they died, their God would descend and lead their souls to a blissful paradise. It is this very descent, the floating of the Amida to earth, and the celestial paradise of dancing and music-making angels, that Jocho brought to life.

Just as the *Mona Lisa* reflects the ideals of Renaissance Italy, this Japanese sculptural group reflects the taste and beliefs of the world in which it was created. Eleventh-century Japan was dominated by a ruling class that valued elegance and courtly manners above all. The Amida cult appealed particularly to the upper classes because its promised paradise resembled a continuation of the luxurious life of beauty and ease they knew on earth. The Buddha, as seen by Jocho, is as refined and aloof as a prince who looks down graciously at his worshippers; the dancing angels are like so many well-bred royal attendants. The slimness and delicacy of the carvings, the richness of the bright colors and shimmering gold with which they were painted (now except for a few restored ones, see detail, 1-6, worn off), were perfectly in tune with both the subject they represented and the

1-6 Angel on clouds with restored colors from Phoenix Hall.

patrons for whom they were made. Yet even today, in a completely changed world, embracing different religious beliefs, brought up in a different culture, we can appreciate the skill and genius that make Jocho's sculptural grouping a great work of art.

THE POWERS OF ART: BRINGING FAITH TO LIFE

Through art, the deepest and most intangible beliefs of a culture can be translated into powerful images that communicate specific spiritual messages to the people who view them as part of their religious rituals. From the beginning of humanity, people have expressed their beliefs in material form. They pictured their gods and goddesses in statues and paintings; they built places for worship and religious rites. The *Amida Buddha* is an excellent example of how art brings religious beliefs to life. In some periods, such as the Middle Ages in the Western world, most art was religious in character. So much visual art is related to human beliefs and rituals of worship that it would be easy to fill an entire library with books exploring the relationship between art and faith in different cultures.

PREHISTORIC ART AND MAGICAL POWERS

Art need not be as beautiful as the *Mona Lisa* or as elegant and sophisticated as Japanese sculpture to be considered great art. Some of the most powerful art ever made was done more than ten thousand years ago by the prehistoric hunting tribes who inhabited Europe before and during the last Ice Age. One of the very earliest known artworks of this period is a tiny (4⅛ inch) carved stone figurine known as the *Venus of Willendorf* (1-7): *Venus* because it is obviously female, *Willendorf* after the town in Austria where it was found. Although its exact purpose and meaning remain shrouded in the mists of time, scholars have surmised that this female fertility figure was used as some kind of magical charm. With her exaggerated breasts, belly, and buttocks, this faceless Stone-Age Venus provides a powerful visual image of the life-giving earth mother. Such fertility symbols were repeated in many different materials and locations throughout Europe and were probably connected with rituals that associated human fertility with the survival of the Ice-Age clan or tribe. For the Stone-Age people who made and used them, these were not works of art in the same sense that we understand the term. These amulets were made to be touched, held, carried, stroked, and worshipped—not to be viewed as beautiful objects in a glass cabinet, or admired as the works of individual artists.

As old as the Venus is, we now know that artmaking is much older. In 2011, a 100,000-year-old art workshop

1-7 *Nude Woman (Venus of Willendorf)*, c. 30,000–25,000 BCE. Limestone, 4⅛" high. Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria.

1-8 Paleolithic bulls and other animals crowd calcite walls, Lascaux, France.

was discovered in a South African cave. Inside were grinding tools, paint pots, and even traces of yellow, reddish ocher, and black charcoal pigments. Evidence revealed that the pigments were mixed with fat to make paint. Although no paintings survived, handmade beads were also found. These art materials are at least sixty thousand years older than the first-known examples of cave painting and sculpture.

Also in 2011, prehistoric art by preschool-age artists was discovered in a series of caves in France. Apparently while sitting on the shoulders of their parents, young artists made thousands of decorative **flutings**, or scraped finger tracings on the soft stone ceilings. By the size of the marks, we know some artists were as young as three years of age. The most flutings were done by a five-year-old, believed to be a girl. Wider marks reveal that the adults also joined in.

1-9 *Scene of the Hunt*. Prehistoric Cave Painting, Lascaux Caves, Perigord, Dordogne, France.

Other creations of Ice-Age tribes living in what is now France and also Spain include the earliest surviving paintings (1-8). Popularly known as cave paintings, these dramatic prehistoric pictures were done around 15,000 BCE. When the decorated caves at Lascaux, France, were discovered (accidentally in 1940 by some boys looking for an underground entrance to an old chateau), they caused a sensation throughout the worlds of history, archeology, and art. On these rocky walls, viewers can gaze back at the handiwork of peoples whose culture remains shrouded in mystery. Entering into the eerie, dark caves, viewers find pictures of huge Ice-Age beasts. The primary subjects of these early cave paintings are animals—most often bulls, horses, and bison, sometimes mammoths and woolly rhinoceroses. Humans were rarely shown. The depiction of these wild animals was not simplified or awkward; the cave paintings do not resemble the art of children. They are *naturalistic*, because the animals were drawn in motion, as if they were alive. Even without photographic details, contemporary viewers have no problem telling that one form is a horse, another a bull (1-9).

Were these images meant as records of successful hunts, or were they part of magical rituals meant to ensure success for future hunting parties? We cannot be absolutely sure of their purpose, but the most common explanation for the cave paintings is that they were used by their creators in magical rites. It is certainly unlikely

that these pictures were simply decoration for people's living quarters. Most are painted in dark, difficult-to-reach parts of the caves, portions that show no archeological evidence of having been lived in. We do know that the artists came to these special caves to paint on scaffolds by the light of oil lamps; remnants of the lamps and their palettes, along with the holes for their scaffolds, have been found. After the paintings were completed, the caves and their images seem to have been used in ceremonies for thousands of years.

Prehistoric **rock art** was not simply a European phenomenon. Paintings and carvings on rocks can be found in the Americas, Asia, and across Africa. These sites reveal that art played a vital role in the rituals of tribal peoples for tens of thousands of years. In Northwestern Australia, rock paintings known as Gwion Gwion art by the indigenous peoples (or as "Bradshaw paintings" after the man who first publicized them), show human silhouettes that seem to sway in a graceful dance (1-10). According to Aboriginal explanations, these elegant figures—pictured wearing elaborate headdresses and tassels—represent spirits associated with their creation story. The dating of these paintings remains controversial, with estimates ranging from 50,000 to 3000 BCE. New examples of Australian rock paintings are still being discovered, while the culture that produced these sophisticated images remains mysterious.

1-10 Paleolithic Australian cave painting. *Gwion Gwion (Bradshaw) Figures*, rock paintings, Kimberly, Australia. c. 15,000–3,000 BCE.

THE POWER OF ART FOR TRIBAL PEOPLES

Tribal art is the art of any area of the world where people lived or still live in a preindustrial state—generally without permanent buildings, written language, or modern technology. Such art is what art historians once called primitive art, considered crude and uncivilized by Europeans and Americans. Around the year 1900, their attitudes changed. Tribal art was seen as new and exotic, valued by collectors and artists for its immediacy and impact. More recently, there has been an attempt to appreciate and understand the arts of tribal peoples living around the world as an expression of the cultures and beliefs that produced them.

For instance, African masks have been popular with European and American art collectors for more than a century and had a dramatic impact on the development of modern art. In museums, these sculptural masks are displayed as isolated art objects. Masks exhibited in this static way retain their visual power, but the power of their original meaning has been lost. Within the culture and religion for which they were created, masks convey a variety of complex messages that are unknown to most museum viewers and are often obscure even to the collectors who purchase them.

Masks are meant to be worn in association with elaborate costumes, during ceremonies where traditional songs and dances are performed (1-11). Within these ceremonies, which are scheduled according to the agricultural calendar and can last for several days, the masks have magical functions. For instance, some masks are supposed to transmit the spirits of the gods or ancestors

1-11 Ceremony in Dogon village of Tiogoï Republic, Mali, West Africa.

A GLOBAL VIEW

THE HORSE FROM THE BATTLE OF LITTLE BIG HORN

Lakota artist Joseph No Two Horns carved *Horse Effigy* (1-12) as a portrait of a beloved horse—one he rode to victory four years earlier in the Battle of the Little Big Horn, popularly known as Custer's Last Stand.

In 1876, No Two Horns (He Nupa Wanica), was a young Hunkpapa warrior following his cousin, Sitting Bull, into the most famous battle of the Great Sioux War, known to the Lakota as the Battle of Greasy Grass. In it, No Two Horns's blue roan suffered seven bullet wounds before collapsing when it was over. His horse's death haunted the artist and he portrayed this event in drawings, paintings, and sculptures for the rest of his life.

Horse Effigy shows his galloping horse in the midst of battle. It stretches and strains, fighting to keep moving as death nears. The eyes are brass tacks, the leather ears are pulled back. Bullet wounds run red across his body. Red-dyed horse hair dangles to represent blood running from his mouth.

The love of horses is an important part of Plains' culture; one of the atrocities of General Custer's Seventh Army was their systematic slaughter of Indian ponies. *Horse Effigy* is a Dance Stick, used by the Lakotas in ceremonies and dances to prepare for battle or celebrate victories.

Though a veteran of more than forty battles, Joseph No Two Horns did not brag about his exploits. During ceremonies honoring the Battle of the Little Big Horn's 50th anniversary, he said he danced for the "soldiers who were so brave and foolish."

1-12 JOSEPH NO TWO HORNS, HE NUPA WANICA (Hunkpapa Lakota), *Horse Effigy*, c. 1880. Wood (possibly cottonwood), pigment, commercial and native-tanned leather, rawhide, horsehair, brass, iron, and bird quill. Length: 38½" South Dakota State Historical Society, Pierre.

they represent to the dancers, enabling them to dance for hours (see "A Global View" box).

The magical powers attributed to art by prehistoric peoples and "primitive" tribes are not generally accepted in our modern scientific and industrialized world. Still, even if we do not believe that works of art can cure sickness, placate dead spirits, assist us in predicting and controlling the future, or put us in direct touch with supernatural forces, we are not totally immune to the magical power in art. Imagine how you would feel if you discovered that someone had poked holes in a photograph of your grandmother's face. Would you calmly reflect that it was only a damaged piece of paper? Or would you consider it an unjustifiable attack on a dearly loved person?

Another sign that forces once called primitive are still alive today is the recent return of a prehistoric tribal art to high fashion. **Tattoo**, the marking of skin with designs, is an art that has been practiced around the world for thousands of years. Its name originated in Polynesia and is from the Tahitian word *tatau*. A tattoo is made by inserting permanent pigment into the skin by a variety of means, most commonly needles. Although a tattoo can still be controversial in twenty-first-century America, it is just the opposite for the Maori tribes of New Zealand. Its creation is a sacred act, and the tattoo artist is considered a holy person. Their traditional method utilizes very sharp bone chisels to cut lines into the skin. Next, a chisel is dipped into natural pigments such as charcoal or dried caterpillars, which are shaken into the wounds to add colors. Tattooing was a coming-of-age rite for young men and women that demonstrated an adolescent's strength and courage. It was a matter of pride to never make a sound as the cuts were made. Because the chisels left grooves, a long, painful healing process followed. While the recently tattooed young people rested and fasted afterward, they were soothed by sweet flute music and numbing leaves applied to their swollen skin.

The most important Maori tattoo is the *Ta-Moko*, or facial tattoo (1-13). Although it is a mix of many traditional patterns, the design of curves and spirals for each person's ta-moko is unique. The markings are

a coded map that can be understood by other Maori and explain the status and genealogy of its wearer. For example, the sides of the face reveal one's ancestry, a father's on one side, a mother's on the other. A person's rank can be read by reading the designs on the forehead. Only Maoris of the lowest status would not have a ta-moko. One's tattoo is one's *taonga* or treasure. It is also your identity. When their signature was required on important documents, tribal chiefs would draw a picture of their ta-moko.

THE POWER OF RELIGIOUS ART

Religious art gives visual expression to inner belief and has the ability to raise people's spirits above the problems of daily life. For centuries, humans have created special places to worship with art. Such temples or churches are designed to convey particular religious messages and spiritual values. These places of devotion often share some of the magical quality of prehistoric caves. Both magical and religious art express human belief in a spiritual world. Magical art, however, supposes that images have a living power, while religious art is more often simply the visual expression of an inner belief.

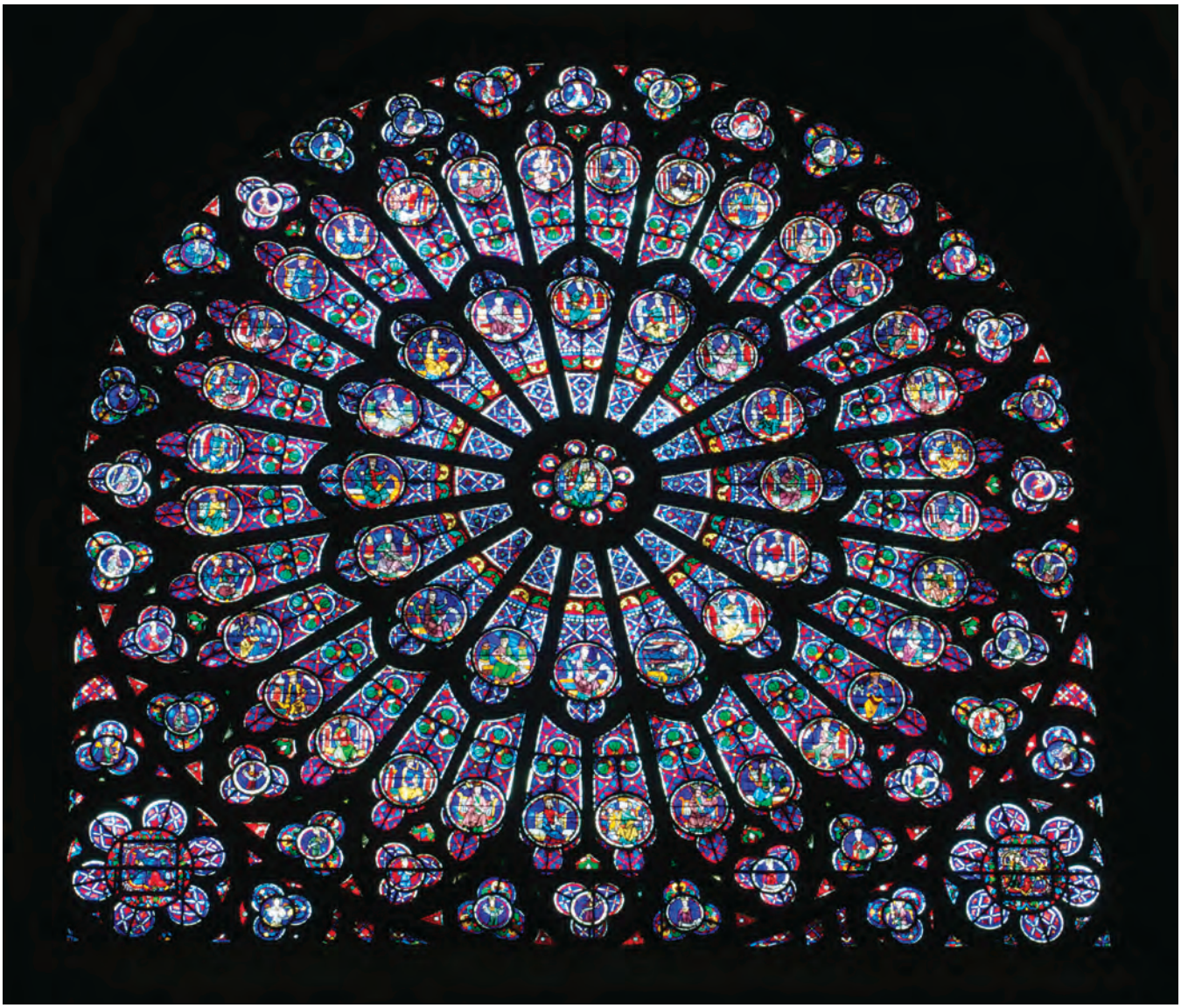
Just as the Amida Buddha (1-5) embodies the beliefs of Japanese Buddhism, the Gothic cathedral of *Notre Dame* (1-14) in Paris is a visual expression of the Christian faith of the medieval era. With its soaring vertical lines, the cathedral seems to lift the soul heavenward, toward God. Its stained-glass windows tell biblical stories (1-15); its paintings and statues can instruct and even inspire the viewer. By transforming a material as dense and heavy as stone into a structure of such grace, the cathedral becomes a visual representation of the Christian belief in a spiritual existence beyond and above the limitations of physical reality. This heavenly realm is visually symbolized as the viewer's eye is drawn up the soaring lines of the gothic arches to the very top of the pointed vaults and into a space bathed in colored light. Within *Notre Dame* cathedral, we can experience the power of art to transform the physical act of viewing into the spiritual act of worshipping.

ART REPRESENTS IDEALS

Statues of gods and goddesses also have the power to express the ideals of a particular culture in physical form. The art of classical Greece, for example, expresses

1-13 Traditional Moko tattoo.

1-14 Looking up into the nave vaults of Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, France, begun 1163, modified 1225–1250.



1-15 JEAN DE CHELLES, rose window of the north transept, Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, France, 1240–1250. Stained glass, iron, and lead stone-bar tracery, diameter 43'.

the Greeks' cultural ideals of physical beauty and athletic strength, as in the statue *Hermes with the Infant Dionysus* by the great sculptor Praxiteles (1-16). For the Greeks, a strong and healthy body was extremely important, because physical development was considered equally as important as mental and spiritual growth. They sought a perfect balance between body and mind, a natural harmony between muscular prowess, grace, mental vigor, and physical beauty.

Greek art also aspired to another balance—between realism and idealism. Greek statues are immediately recognizable as lifelike, accurate representations of the human form. Yet, as in the figure of *Hermes* illustrated here, they idealize the human body, making it more graceful and perfect than any real person could be. Greek sculptures are not portraits of individuals but ideal types. The Western conception of great art as a fusion of the real, or truthful, with the ideal, or beautiful, is descended from the aesthetics of ancient Greece. This philosophy was expressed succinctly by the English Romantic poet John Keats in these famous lines from *Ode on a Grecian Urn*:

> Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

1-16 Roman copy of PRAXITELES, *Hermes with the Infant Dionysus* (detail), from Olympia, c. 340 BCE (?). Marble, approximately 7' high. Archeological Museum, Olympia, Greece.

ART AS A DECLARATION OF POWER

Besides expressing spiritual beliefs or cultural ideals, art from the earliest times has been used to declare the power of rulers. The pharaohs of Egypt erected huge structures to declare their strength; Roman emperors constructed triumphal arches in conquered territories. For thousands of years, artists served kings and queens. During the Renaissance, royal images were not just stylized versions of majesty (as seen in Egypt) but true portraits. One of the finest of the Renaissance court painters was Hans Holbein the Younger, and our image of *Henry VIII* (1-17) is forever that of an enormous, insatiable powerhouse because of Holbein's portraits. His *Henry VIII* stands before us seeming larger than life, almost bursting the edges of the picture frame. He is dressed in stunning garments, made of the finest materials sewn with golden embroidery and jewels. Another Holbein portrait (now lost) hung over the king's throne and, according to visitors, "abashed and annihilated" them when they stood before it. That was the purpose of all the king's portraits—to glorify a man who had supreme power.

Renato Bertelli's *Head of Mussolini* (1-18) is a modern approach to paying tribute to a ruler—in this case,

1-17 HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER, *Henry VIII*, 1540. Oil on panel, 32½" × 12½". Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Rome, Italy.

1-18 RENATO BERTELLI, *Head of Mussolini (Continuous Profile)*, 1933. Painted terracotta, 19" tall. Imperial War Museum, London, Great Britain.

1-19 BICHITR, *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings*, from the Leningrad Album, Mughal, India, early seventeenth century. Color and gold on paper, 10⅞" high. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Benito Mussolini, the Fascist dictator who led Italy during World War II. Bertelli's sculpture is infused with the spirit of *Futurism*, a movement that celebrated progress and called on Italians to embrace a fresh approach to art, unencumbered by the past. The Futurists called for art "enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed" (see Chapter 18). By rotating Mussolini's profile in 360 degrees, Bertelli's "continuous profile" is meant to show the dynamism and modernity of *Il Duce*—"the Leader."

Mussolini's rise to power in the 1920s was greeted with joy by Bertelli and his fellow Futurists. In return, the Italian dictator embraced Futurism's ideals and made it the official style of his regime. This sculpture was approved by the dictator, who ordered its mass production and distribution.

THE POWER TO CONVEY IMMORTALITY

Unlike Henry VIII or Mussolini, Jahangir, the emperor of India who ruled during the height of the Mughal dynasty in the 1600s, directed his artists to portray him as honestly as they could. Yet Jahangir did not totally renounce flattery. Although the faces are naturalistic in the painting *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings* (1-19), the setting and events are not. The Emperor Jahangir is the source of a brilliant light, too bright even for one of the cupids. Great men have come to pay homage to Jahangir: a wise old saint (who the emperor places above all other admirers), the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, King James I of England, and the artist Bichitr himself.

The Emperor Jahangir sits on a throne supported by an hourglass whose sand has almost run out. Yet, on the glass, cupids are painting a prayer that he might live for a thousand years. What could resolve this contradiction? It must be the act of painting itself, one of the great passions of the cultured emperor. There were many signs of Jahangir's special love during his reign. One of the greatest royal patrons of arts in history, he provided studios in the palace for his court artists and gave them the finest and most expensive materials to work with. The artists rewarded him with immortality.

THE POWER TO CHANGE OUR BELIEFS

Art also has the power to change the way we think, the way we understand the world around us. Many contemporary artists use their work to express political viewpoints, to lead their viewers to a moral lesson. In *The Liberation of Aunt Jemima* (1-20), Betye Saar comments on the stereotyping of African-American women in advertising and the media. Saar creates her work by incorporating so-called **found objects**, like the mammy doll and cutout pictures of Aunt Jemima from pancake packages. These are arranged inside a box as if the artist were creating a diorama; the doll holds a broom in one hand, and a small print of another happy mammy holding a wailing white baby is propped up in front of her. But the familiarity and friendliness of these images is radicalized by the incorporation of a black power fist in the foreground of the box, as well as a rifle and chrome pistol. Here Aunt Jemima seems to express some of the anger Saar felt, but never expressed, when she experienced discrimination as a young black woman growing up in California. (For instance, Saar won several prizes for her designs for floats in the Tournament of Roses parade before the judges realized she was an African American. After her race was disclosed, she was given only honorable mentions.) By using real mementos of contemporary culture like the advertising imagery of

1-20 BETYE SAAR, *The Liberation of Aunt Jemima*, 1972. Mixed media, 11¾" × 2¾". University Art Museum, University of California at Berkeley, California.

Aunt Jemima, Saar creates a visual satire that shows how photographic reproductions tend to reinforce racial stereotypes in our society.

THE POWER TO SHOCK

Related to art's power to change our point of view is its power to shock us. In the early twentieth century, many artists wanted to create works that would wake viewers up and shake them out of their preconceptions about art. One such artist was Marcel Duchamp, and one of his most disturbing pictures was *L.H.O.O.Q.* (1-21), a satire of Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa.* Duchamp chose to make fun of the *Mona Lisa*, especially because it was so beloved and had become almost like a sacred image to people who cared about art. He took a postcard reproduction of the painting, added a moustache, beard, and dark pupils in pencil, and then printed a few initials at the bottom. When pronounced in French, these initials sound out the vulgar phrase, "she has a hot ass."

Duchamp's parody was upsetting on several levels. First, he was making light of Leonardo's great masterpiece. Because the *Mona Lisa* had come to symbolize the best in Western art, he was symbolically rejecting centuries of tradition. Second, Duchamp was taking a reproduction of a painting by another artist, changing it slightly, and claiming that it was a new work of art that belonged to him—that is, he seemed to be stealing someone else's creative work and then (figuratively) spitting on it. A beautiful image was made ugly, even silly. A picture that had come to symbolize the mystery and ideal nature of all women was turned into a joke. Worst of all, he was suggesting that the *Mona Lisa* was "hot stuff."

The creation of artworks *meant* to upset the viewing public is a recent development in the history of art. In earlier times, the purpose of art was to please the person who commissioned and paid for it—the patron.

1-21 MARCEL DUCHAMP, *L.H.O.O.Q.*, 1919. Pencil on print, 7¾" × 4¾". Private collection. © 2012 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris/Succession Marcel Duchamp.

ART NEWS

CONTROVERSY OVER THE VIETNAM MEMORIAL

The *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* was commissioned in the 1980s by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), founded by an independent group of Vietnam veterans. Because money was raised by donations from people throughout the country, and the site on the mall in Washington, D.C., was contributed by the government of the United States, the patrons for this monument included all Vietnam veterans and in some sense all citizens of the country. The choice of the design was given to a jury of prominent artists, who looked at more than fourteen hundred entries (all reviewed anonymously, so the judges would not be influenced by the name or reputation of the artist). Surprisingly, their unanimous choice was the submission of a young architecture student, Maya Ying Lin.

Although the selection generated little negative comment at first, problems began to develop as the groundbreaking ceremony neared. Many Americans expected a realistic monument like ones seen in parks and town greens around the United States and were shocked by a design that was highly abstract. Some veterans and prominent contributors united to mount a political campaign against the monument, which was described as a "black gash of shame." A lively, and even bitter, debate developed in the press and the halls of Congress. The official patrons—the VVMF—began to fear that the memorial would never be built at all. In the end, the detractors of Lin's winning entry managed to block government approval for a building permit unless the memorial included a realistic statue (1-22) and a flag.

1-22 FREDERICK HART, *Statue for Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, Washington, D.C., 1984. Bronze, life-size.

Maya Lin was disillusioned by the pressure for these additions, which she felt would ruin the simplicity of her design and compromise the purity of the site. However, although she was the artist, because the patrons had purchased her design, she had no further control over it. Interestingly, Lin compared the addition of a traditional statue to her monument with the disrespectful way Duchamp treated the *Mona Lisa* in *L.H.O.O.Q.*: "I can't see how anyone of integrity can go around drawing mustaches on other people's portraits," she said. To her, to place a realistic statue in the center of the wall would be a mustache, a desecration of her work. She described the statue as "trite." Frederick Hart, the sculptor of the realistic statue, showed as little respect for her memorial design, comparing it to a "blank canvas," claiming that it was "intentionally not meaningful" and "contemptuous of life."

Eventually a compromise was reached; the statue was erected in an entrance plaza a little distance away from the wall, not in front of it. For her design, Maya Lin had won $20,000 and national fame; she had also experienced criticism, rejection, and a loss of control over her own work. Frederick Hart, a professional sculptor, was paid ten times as much for his statue.

The erection of Hart's statue did not end the controversy over "The Wall's" abstract nature, however. Since then other veterans groups have lobbied for representation at the site. In 1993, a statue honoring the service of women in the Vietnam War was added. It depicts three women in uniform, one a nurse caring for a wounded soldier. Recently, after another long battle, plans were approved for a large underground Vietnam Wall Memorial Center, designed to provide pictures and films to put the war in historical context.

Despite the continuing public debate, the memorial has become one of the most popular attractions in the nation's capital. In the process, it has more than satisfied the original goals of its patrons, which were to list the name of every soldier lost in Vietnam, to honor those who fought there, to make no political statement for or against the war, and to promote reconciliation.

THE POWER TO TOUCH OUR EMOTIONS

Art can also profoundly touch the emotions of the viewer. The *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (1-23) in Washington, D.C., was designed especially to reach out to the American people and assist in healing the wounds left by the Vietnam War. The architecture student who designed it, Maya Ying Lin, called her concept "a visual poem." When asked what effect the memorial would have on the public, she thought to herself, "They'll cry" (although she didn't say this out loud until after the project was finished). And visitors do cry at the wall, even those who did not personally know any of the soldiers whose names are listed among the dead and missing in action. No one can doubt that the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* is the most moving monument on the mall in Washington, D.C., and perhaps the most moving war memorial ever built. What makes it so effective?

The memorial interacts with the site in a unique and powerful way. Instead of building a structure on top of the land, Maya Lin cut into it and edged the slice with a V-shaped black granite wall—one arm pointing toward the Washington Monument, the other toward the Lincoln Memorial. Into this wall more than fifty-five thousand names of all Americans who died during the Vietnam War or remain missing are incised in date order, as if on a mass gravestone. The black granite is polished to reflect its surroundings: the sky, clouds, trees, and land, as well as each person who has come to remember (see "Art News" box).

The Vietnam Memorial is the most popular site on the Mall in Washington, with nearly four million visitors visiting it each year. Many are looking for the names of specific loved ones; others are there simply to pay tribute to all of those who lost their lives. From the first, visitors have interacted with the memorial in unique ways. People reach up to touch the names and make rubbings to carry home as souvenirs. Others leave flowers, photographs, letters, and memorabilia. The memorial is a place for surviving veterans to be reunited with friends, for friends to remember the classmates who never returned, for family members to "meet" the dead father, brother, sister, or cousin who they do not remember, or perhaps never met. Lin's memorial seems to allow people to experience their loss, while comforting them at the same time. The *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* is a superb example of the power of art (even when very abstract) to reach out to the public.

1-23 MAYA YING LIN, *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, Washington, D.C., 1981–1983. Marble, each wing 246' long.

THE POWER TO AWAKEN OUR SENSES

Contemporary life is lived at a fast pace, and it is easy to miss what is going on around us, to have our senses dulled by overstimulation, and to literally lose focus. The great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy warned us of this danger, when he wrote "In the name of God, stop a moment, cease your work, look around you." Art has the power to awaken us to realities that we may not have recognized before, to truly open our eyes. In the modern world, the art of photography has become a medium for this kind of artistic revelation—to slow us down, to make us stop and really look.

Ansel Adams hoped his pictures would reveal eternal truths. His majestic landscape *Clearing Winter Storm* (1-24) is a superb example of the images that speak to the richness of nature or what Adams called "an austere and blazing poetry of the real." Adams was born in San Francisco and experienced its famous and terrible earthquake in the early 1900s. A weak student, he found meaning in his life when he first began hiking in Yosemite as a teenager, carrying one of the early Kodak cameras. He would explore that wilderness into his eighties and become its foremost photographer. Throughout his life, he was not only an artist, but also an important spokesperson for the environment and a leader of the Sierra Club. His images of Yosemite were meant not only to open our eyes, but also to convince us of the importance

1-24 ANSEL ADAMS, *Clearing Winter Storm*, Yosemite National Park, 1944. Photograph.

of preserving the wilderness in this great park. The rich range of tones and textures in *Clearing Winter Storm* testify to his technical mastery (he was the author of ten books on photographic techniques), but his skills in the darkroom were always in the service of his vision—the spirituality, beauty, and grandeur of the natural world.

THE POWER TO TRANSFORM THE ORDINARY

One pleasure of looking at art is enjoying a feeling of amazement that an artist has magically transformed ordinary materials into a marvelous work of imagination. When one enters the room that houses the contemporary Chinese artist Zhan Wang's *Urban Landscape* (1-25), one is first struck by the sheer beauty of a shining, fabulous city. Viewers tower above it, as if seeing the glittering metropolis from a low-flying jet. But once our eyes adjust to the glare, we can see that the city was not built with brick, glass, or mortar. It was constructed with highly polished equipment from a restaurant's kitchen—the skyscrapers are stacked colanders, stainless steel pots and pans, and the boats in the river are forks, knives, and spoons.

Ultimately, Zhan hopes the viewers of his city will move beyond its visual brilliance. The artist, who was trained in traditional techniques at an academy, wants us to think about the impact that urbanization has had on Chinese culture. The sparkling, commercial environment of the modern Chinese city is also cold and mechanical, disconnected from age-old customs and nature. Even the

1-25 ZHAN WANG, *Urban Landscape*, 2003. Stainless steel, garden rocks, pots, pans, eating utensils, and mirror. Hayward Gallery, 2006. Photo by Stephen White, Pekin Fine Arts Co. Ltd. © Zhan Wang

1-26 VINCENT VAN GOGH, *Wheatfield with Crows,* July 1890. Oil on canvas, 19⅞" × 39⅛". Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam.

mountains that surround *Urban Landscape* are made of stainless steel, like much of modern architecture. The rapid Westernization of cities, like Zhan's native Beijing, has had spectacular results but also has meant that much has been lost.

THE POWER OF ART FOR THE ARTIST

While we have been exploring the many powerful ways that art can affect and benefit us, we have yet to consider why someone would choose to make art. A cynical observer might say artists make art to make money, but those who are knowledgeable about art know (despite the headlines about the high prices being paid for certain artworks) that few of the millions of artists at work today will ever make a living strictly from sales of their art. The satisfactions of such a difficult and often painful occupation, then, must be more substantial than dreams of wealth.

SELF-EXPRESSION

Vincent van Gogh's lack of financial success is legendary. Despite the fabulous prices paid for his work today, he only sold one painting in his lifetime. Yet his pictures exemplify one of the most important reasons artists make art—the need for self-expression. Through art, painters, sculptors, architects, photographers, printmakers, designers, and craftspeople are able to express their personal visions. Van Gogh's ability to use art to reveal his inner life gives it tremendous impact.

Wheatfield with Crows (1-26) was one of his last paintings. At the time, he was nearing the end of a long struggle with mental illness, having recently been discharged from an asylum with the help of his brother, Theo. The picture is a view of a farmer's field beneath what he called "troubled skies." Rough, agitated strokes of paint cover the canvas. One can imagine the loud caws of the crows as they take flight. Before us, three paths seem to lead nowhere. Does this reflect the artist's mental state? That same month, describing these wheatfields to Theo, he said, "… I did not need to go out of my way to try to express sadness and extreme loneliness."

THE ARTIST AT PLAY

Visual art has often been used to record personal and artistic suffering, yet it can be an equally effective record of the artist's joy, such as the simple joy of being creative. A sense of spontaneous playfulness can be felt in the shaped canvasses of Elizabeth Murray. *Kitchen Painting* (1-27) is actually made from two separate pieces that project into three-dimensional space. Nearly seven feet tall, the canvasses have been shaped and beveled to

1-27 ELIZABETH MURRAY, *Kitchen Painting*, 1985. Oil on two canvases, 58" × 81" × 14". Private Collection, New York. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery. © 2012 The Murray-Holman Family Trust/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

1-28 MARC CHAGALL, *I and the Village*, 1911. Oil on canvas, 21¾" × 18¼". Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia (given by Mr. and Mrs. Rodolphe M. de Schauensee). © 2012 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris.

fit the image of a green chair on which a thin black line represents a human figure attempting to grasp an enormous pink spoon. Once the viewer deciphers the image, the visual effect is surprising and amusing. The spoon protrudes like an enormous pink tongue, the top of the green chair breaks out of the top of the painting, and the figure's arms circle like planets in the solar system. Yet, although the image is a bit nonsensical, even bizarre, the colors and shapes convey a feeling of fun rather than unease. We sense that Murray enjoyed the activity of creating this image and confusing expectations. Speaking for many artists, she said her goal in making art was to simply "respond to being alive."

THE ARTIST'S MEMORY

Visual art can also provide a vehicle for memory, a means of recording past experiences. One of the best-known artists to use art as a way of reliving the past was the Russian-born painter Marc Chagall. Chagall was influenced by the most advanced art movements of the twentieth century. As an impoverished young art student, he traveled to Paris and met daring artists like Pablo Picasso, who were experimenting with new ideas. Refusing to be bound by the limits of visual reality, artists at this time wanted to reach beyond what they saw to paint what they felt, and beyond that to what they dreamed. Yet, even though his style is modern, the work of Chagall is filled with a love for the rural scenes of his childhood in Russia.

In his pictures, time and gravity have no power; people and animals whirl through the heavens regardless of the rules of nature. Looking at *I and the Village* (1-28), we see a friendly cow and a man holding a flowering twig in his fingers, looking face to face, united visually by a red disc. The huge cow seems benign and almost as if it is about to speak to the green man, or kiss him. Smaller figures also appear: a young woman milking, a man with a scythe walking to the harvest, a woman placed upside down who seems to be gesturing him forward, a child's face peeking over the edge of a hill behind which the tiny buildings of the village appear both right-side up and upside down.

Throughout his long career (he lived to be ninety-six), Chagall used art to create a magical land of love and wonder—remarkable for a man whose life encompassed two world wars, the Russian Revolution, and the Holocaust (in the 1940s, Chagall, who was Jewish, was forced to flee from his home in France to the United States). In this sense, Chagall's work is a tribute to the power of art to transcend political realities and allow the artist to regain a lost world with memory and imagination.

1-29 *Night Shining White*, attributed to HAN KAN, 740–756. Album leaf, ink on paper, 11¾" high. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

DEFINING ART

The source of the term *art* is the Latin word *ars*, which meant "skill." Although this is the oldest meaning of **art**, it is no longer the most common meaning. For us, the realm of the arts suggests *creative* endeavors and includes an entire range of activities classified as *cultural*. These creative arts are often subdivided into the broad categories of the *performing arts* (such as theatre, music, and dance), the *literary arts* (such as poetry, essays, and novels), and the *visual arts*.

In everyday conversation, however, most people assume art means visual art, art that we experience primarily through our sense of sight. Saying that someone is an artist usually suggests that he or she draws, paints, sculpts, or designs. This is the meaning of art that this book will be using. We define the visual arts to include the artistic media of painting, sculpture, and architecture, as well as outstanding examples of drawing, printmaking, photography, design, digital art, decorative arts, and crafts. They are usually subdivided into the **fine arts** (such as painting, printmaking, and sculpture) and the **applied arts** (such as architecture and design). For centuries, in Western art, paintings and sculptures have usually been seen as a higher form of artistic production than *applied* (or useful) arts, such as book illustration or wallpaper. However, for the last one hundred years or so, this distinction has not been as important. In Eastern art, there has never been such a division. For example, in the Chinese master Han Kan's *Night Shining White* from the eighth century (1-29), the calligraphy on the scroll was considered just as expressive and as much pure art as the painting of the horse.

A work of fine art is usually an original, or one-of-a-kind, creation. Each work of art is the result of the artist's personal effort, the touch of his or her hands, the fresh invention of the artist's mind, spirit, and talent. There are exceptions to this rule. Prints, whether traditional or digital, for instance, are produced in a series from an original "plate" or digital image designed by the artist. Photographs, which were once thought of as mere mechanical reproductions of reality, have also been elevated to the status of fine art. Although their artistic merit has been recognized, however, prints and photographs are usually less valued (and less expensive) than drawings, paintings, or sculptures by the same artists.

1-30 Anna Mary Roberston ("Grandma") Moses. July Fourth. 1951. Oil on pressed wood. 23 7/8" × 30" (60.6 × 76.2 cm). Gifted to The White House, Washington, D.C., by Galerie St. Etienne founder Otto Kallir in 1952.

This reflects the fact that the work is not unique; it has been duplicated. A black-and-white print by a great photographer, however, is far more valuable than the painting of a mediocre artist.

FOLK ART

Art is generally considered to be **folk art** rather than fine art when it is the work of untrained artists working in rural areas. Folk art includes painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts, but where a fine art chest may be made of ebony inlaid with ivory, the folk chest will be a simple wood box painted in bright colors. American folk art has become very popular in recent years and commands high prices in antique stores; whole museums and galleries are devoted to folk art collections.

A good example of a folk (sometimes called "naive") artist is Grandma Moses, who was born on a farm in New York State in 1860 but did not really begin painting until the 1930s, when she was almost eighty. Although she had no formal training, her pictures became so popular that by the time she died in 1961, she was a household name in the United States, and her scenes were reproduced on everything from greeting cards to kitchen curtains. Her painting of the Fourth of July (1-30) even hung in the White House. Although she is not as well known today as she was at the height of her popularity in the 1950s, Grandma Moses's talent transformed an elderly farm widow into a nationally famous personality.

The power of her art lies in its freshness and vitality. Through her pictures, Anna Mary Robertson Moses had the chance not only to recreate and in a sense relive her own past but also to share that world with her viewers. Her most popular subjects included scenes of old-fashioned farm life, celebrations of holidays, and the seasons. As she concludes in her autobiography:

> In my childhood days life was different, in many ways, we were slower, still we had a good and happy life, I think, people enjoyed life more in their way, at least they happier, they don't take the time to be happy nowadays.

CRAFT AND DECORATIVE ART

When artists create useful or functional objects, such as ceramic pots, glass vases, silver bowls, woven rugs, and even wooden chairs, these are typically put in the category of *crafts* or *decorative arts*.

NICK CAVE: THE WORLD IS HIS PALETTE

1-31 Nick Cave with Soundsuit.

We live in an era where the old distinctions between art and craft, high and low art appear to have finally dissolved. The art world freely consumes mixtures made from various times, cultures, and media. Nick Cave's *Soundsuits* (1-31) epitomize this new spirit. A soundsuit can be six or more feet tall, seen in a gallery or video, worn or danced in. Usually displayed in groups, they are not only visually exciting and surprising but also meant to make distinctive shapes and sounds as they move. Cave constructs each soundsuit from what is at hand in his workshop. One might be made entirely of discarded knitted doilies. Others have been constructed from a remarkable array of buttons (detail, 1-32), beads, yarn, twigs, feathers, sequins, old sweaters, wire, crocheted hats and bags, synthetic hair, plastic tubes, vintage toys, masks, or even Barbie dolls. The end result is an extravagant mix of textures, colors, patterns, and sounds. One can see the influence of African ceremonies and rituals, New Orleans Mardi Gras costumes, traditional handwork, and high fashion. To reach a wider audience, Cave opened a Soundsuit Shop (www.soundsuitshop.com) in Chicago and also designed men and women's clothing lines. He says, "I love the fact that sculpture, performance, video—all of these things are layered together in my work."

Raised in the 1960s in a small Missouri town, by a single mother with six other sons, everything Cave had as a child was a hand-me-down. So he used his imagination to transform them into his own, leading him to a life in art and design. As a young student, he couldn't afford art supplies. So he made art from what he found, finding a rich source from what was discarded or discovered. Even today, his home is a rich palette of bits and pieces found in American thrift shops, along with African statues, Asian masks, and colorful Australian fabrics from his travels. As Cave says, "I want to wake up every morning and be visually excited with every turn of my head."

In college, his imagination was not constrained by the requirements of a major. He studied art, fashion, and dance. After graduate school, he made his first soundsuit. Initially, it was meant to be a sculpture of branches and twigs, but then he wondered whether he could turn it into something that could be worn. Putting it on, he realized that his identity had been erased. Almost magically, he

1-32 NICK CAVE, *Soundsuit*, 2008. Mixed media, Jack Shainman Gallery, New York.

NICK CAVE: THE WORLD IS HIS PALETTE

had left himself behind. No one knew whether he was a man or woman, black or white, gay or straight. In a costume of his imagination, he could become anyone or anything.

Since then, Cave has made hundreds, perhaps thousands, of soundsuits, some meant to be shown in galleries, others designed for dancing. They can be appreciated in a performance piece, in photographs, or as video art. A single performance can include as many as ninety soundsuits at a time. He says, "Something inexplicable happens when the suits are in motion; the sounds they make give them a magical life of their own. I would love it if everyone could put one on and feel the thrill that happens." Cave believes he has a responsibility to make the most of the transformative power of art:

> *The arts are our salvation—the only thing that allows us to heal and also helps us dream about what will make the world a better place. . . . I don't see myself as an artist but as a humanitarian using art to create change. If I can create an opportunity to bring people of all creeds, identities, and interests together, then I am doing my work.*

A good example is a Navaho "eye-dazzler" rug (1-33). Woven and designed by Native American women in the late nineteenth century, these blankets have a strong visual impact because of their bold use of color and simple geometric designs. These weavings were named "eye-dazzlers" because of their use of new, brighter yarn that became available to the Native Americans during this period. Although purists and collectors tended to prefer blankets made with native vegetable dyes, the weavers embraced the new colors. It is not surprising that modern artists in search of a purely visual art have been inspired by these blankets and other decorative arts, such as quilts. The decoration of useful objects has been a source of visual pleasure for viewers in many ages and cultures.

1-33 Germantown "eye-dazzler" rug, Navajo, 1880–1890. Split wool yarn, 2-, 3-, and 4-ply, 72" × 50". Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff.

The term *crafts* is also often used to describe contemporary objects that are handmade. Craft art is perhaps the most popular way of appreciating and practicing art in our society. Many people who would be afraid to invest in an original sculpture are perfectly comfortable buying a hand-thrown pot, while individuals who insist that they "can't draw a straight line" enjoy classes on weaving or wood carving. Although some art historians and critics still think that such things as jewelry should not be considered art at all, attitudes are changing. Imaginative metal, fiber, and woodwork are now generally included in international surveys of art and design (see "Lives of the Artists" box).

DESIGN

What about functional items that are mass produced? Are they part of the world of visual arts? A broad definition of art would certainly include manufactured objects that are well designed—in fact, the Museum of Modern Art in New York devotes an entire section to outstanding examples of such objects as telephones, typewriters, and even helicopters. This field of art is known as **industrial design**.

An industrial designer must understand both art and engineering. Industrial design is the aesthetic refinement of products, making functional engineering solutions easy to use and understand, and attractive. The phrase "user-friendly" neatly conveys the goal of all industrial designers.

One of the most successful containers ever designed is the Coca-Cola bottle (1-34), recognized around the world and used with only modest modification for nearly a century. The bottle must not only hold soda but also dispense it easily and only on demand. The narrow opening provides a continuous but not choking flow. The wide bottom makes sure it rests easily on a table without spilling. The bottle's curvaceous shape allows it to fit comfortably in one hand, the pattern of ribs ensuring that a cold, wet piece of glass does not slip and cheat us of our refreshment.

The name "Coca-Cola" is, of course, featured prominently on the bottle. In fact, the ribs on the bottle subtly lead our eyes to the smooth center where it is displayed. This *logo* or trademark was the work of a *graphic designer*. **Graphic design**, sometimes called *commercial art*, includes two-dimensional designs that are mass-produced, such as logos, magazine layouts, decorative posters, and the cover of this book. Much thought and effort goes into every aspect of a logo, because it represents the company. The script Coca-Cola logo implies a product that has been tested by time, but the more modern typefaces that surround it make sure we know it is meant for young and old alike.

While representing a company is certainly important, graphic designers who design currency have the challenge of representing an entire nation and its people. For the arrival of a new millennium in 2000, a team of designers in New Zealand was given the task of designing a special commemorative $10 bill (1-35). Their mission was to represent the country's past and future and to

1-34 Coca-Cola.

1-35 New Zealand $10 bill, front and reverse.

1-36 PIERRE-AUGUSTE RENOIR, *La Loge*, 1874. Oil on canvas, 31" × 25". Courtauld Institute Galleries, London, Great Britain.

capture the "kiwi spirit." In addition, they needed to integrate security measures that are essential elements in contemporary banknotes. Naturally, the bill also needed to be clear, attractive, and functional.

The designers succeeded brilliantly and in a fashion quite unlike the stale approach of many other nations. Although patterns are used in almost all currency to make counterfeiting difficult, the flowing decorations on the front of the bill are attractive and significant. They are a mix of traditional Maori art (**see 1-13**), Pacific shell patterns, and digital numbers symbolizing new technologies. At the center, a Maori war canoe plunges toward us—the boat that brought the first settlers to New Zealand. At the right, a satellite dish represents the latest communication media. The reverse of the bill is meant to symbolize the Kiwi spirit of adventure. Surfers, skiers, kayakers, and skydivers surround children at the center. The bill is made of polymer and incorporates the most advanced security features available. As in all aspects of the millennium note's design, this function is joined seamlessly with meaning and aesthetics. The silver ferns in the transparent window at the corner reflect rainbow light when shifted. Within the "0" of the number 10 is a watermark of a sacred Maori head that symbolizes ancestral figures and heaven.

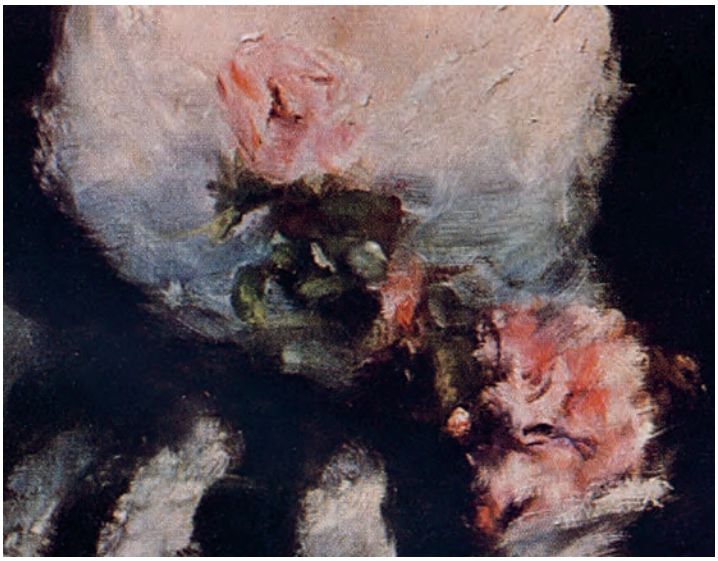
ART IS BEAUTY

Many people think art must be beautiful to qualify as great art. For them, the primary power of visual art is its ability to delight the eye. Art that is visually pleasing seems to justify itself and needs no other reason to exist. "A feast for the eyes" is one way to describe this type of artwork. This *was* the chief criteria for fine art over several centuries, but it is no longer accepted as the only or even a vital issue today. As we begin our study of art, it is also important to keep in mind that standards of beauty are not universal. Aesthetic taste can vary with different cultures and time periods.

For example, when the **Impressionists** first exhibited their work in late-nineteenth-century Paris, it was rejected as hideously ugly. In fact, one critic accused them of "making war on beauty!" To the ordinary viewer of 1874, pictures like Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *La Loge* (**1-36**) seemed unfinished and crude. Today people flock to see the same work, which looks to the modern eye not only beautiful but also impossibly sweet, romantically ideal.

1-37 WILLEM DE KOONING, *Woman and Bicycle*, 1952–1953. Oil on canvas, 6' 4½" × 4' 1". Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. © 2012 The Willem de Kooning Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Although many people assume that visual art should be beautiful, or at least realistic (and preferably both), you will find many artworks in museums that do not fit this mold. Some great works of art get their power from the depiction of "ugly" subjects or the distortion of forms. The subjects are not beautiful or realistically portrayed. Willem de Kooning's *Woman and Bicycle* (**1-37**) is a good example of the kind of painting that upsets some people today as much as the work of the Impressionists did a hundred years ago. "My child (or dog) could do a better job" is not an uncommon reaction to this type of artwork. Viewers are often upset by what they consider the gratuitous ugliness of such modern art.



1-38 Detail of figure 1-36.

1-39 Detail of figure 1-37.

As different as they appear at first glance, upon reflection Renoir's and de Kooning's pictures of women do share certain attitudes about art. Both are committed to loose, expressive brushstrokes (details, 1-38, 1-39). Neither artist feels it is necessary to be absolutely precise and descriptive; they feel that art can hint rather than be dogmatic. Both believe in the use of colors to communicate emotion. Even though they are painting eighty years apart, the artists share a philosophy of art that stresses expressiveness. De Kooning's paintings can be seen as a more radical development of the ideas that made Renoir's approach seem unique in the nineteenth century.

ART IS ORIGINALITY AND CREATIVITY

The pictures of Renoir and de Kooning share a belief not only in expressiveness but also a belief in the value of originality. It is often said that the one thing that sets great art apart is its originality. The accepted idea is that a work of art should be a unique creation, the expression of the individuality of the artist. Those artists whom we consider greatest, like Pablo Picasso (1-40), kept developing from one successful style to another, always searching for a new mode of visual expression. The photograph (page 29) shows him experimenting with drawing with light, something only possible to see in a photograph. He is in his pottery studio, ceramics being only one of the many media he explored. This constant striving for newness and originality sets him apart from the artists of the cave paintings and the Ancient Egyptians, who repeated a similar style for centuries according to a strict set of rules or artistic formulas.

Generally, since the beginning of the twentieth century, the word imitation is usually associated with unoriginality rather than superior art. But in the last fifty years, even the idea of originality has been challenged by contemporary artists. As aware residents in a world of mass production, mass consumption, and mass media, some artists have created a kind of mass-produced art. Andy Warhol, for instance, became famous for his multiplication of images, as in 30 Are Better Than One (Mona Lisa) (1-41). Using a stenciling technique, Warhol appropriated someone else's design—in this case Leonardo's Mona Lisa—and repeated it to create a new work of art. He created similar pictures using such popular images as Campbell's soup cans and identical photographs of Marilyn Monroe. It is rather amusing to see art collectors today attempting to sort out the "genuine" Warhols from the work of his followers and fakes. This is especially difficult since Warhol's work was created in his studio, known as "The Factory," where assistants often made art while Warhol acted out his role as a famous artist, going to parties and talking to the press.

WAYS TO UNDERSTAND ART

If our goal is to achieve a fuller knowledge and appreciation of art, we should avoid utilizing only one theory and excluding much of what might be relevant to a work of art. We have already seen that art has a variety of purposes and aspects. No single theory has yet been able to encompass them all in a useful way. To try to fence art in for the sake of any theory seems senseless. No one can determine in advance which questions or information

1-40 GJON MILI, *Pablo Picasso drawing a centaur with light*, 1950.

1-41 ANDY WARHOL, *30 Are Better Than One (Mona Lisa)*, 1963. Silkscreen ink on synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 9' 2" × 7' 10½". © 1993 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. © 2012 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

might increase our understanding of a particular work of art. To understand art, our primary question should be, *Why does it look this way?*

The viewer begins with the object itself. The main function of any work of art is to provoke aesthetic interest, but art should also be intelligible to the viewer. Integral to its success are formal concerns: its design and composition. In Chapters 2 and 3, we will study the elements of art and design to understand the structural language of art objects. Examination of the work of art should yield a sense of the artist's mastery of design principles like harmony, balance, rhythm, and pattern. No one element is essential, but if one is missing, its neglect must be justified by a special reason. For example, a chaotic effect might be explained by the artist's desire to reflect the frenzy of modern life. Or it could simply be a lack of the skill necessary to organize the subject matter. In Chapters 4 through 11, the materials and techniques used by artists are studied. One generally expects an artist to control the necessary means to reach his or her goal. However, skillful handling of materials is what a philosopher would call "a necessary but not sufficient condition." In other words, the presence of technical skills does not necessarily create a work of art, but its absence would require an explanation, such as "I am rejecting traditional concepts of skill, which I associate with a dead tradition." As we will see, it is common in the Western art of the last 150 years for artists to invent new techniques rather than follow past practices.

THE ARTIST AND THE ART

This textbook accepts the notion (not universally, but generally accepted) that the more we know about the conditions under which an artwork was produced, the better we will see it. This includes exploring aspects of an artist's biography that might be relevant. When was the artwork made? What were the artist's previous works? Can we see a progression? What ideas were current then? Was it left unfinished, or can we assume that it was meant to be seen this way? Can we determine the artist's intentions? What did the artist believe in? Even personal questions like "Who were the artist's friends and associates?" could have an impact on a particular work if some of an artwork's conception was influenced by other artists, writers, or performers.

Few artists' work has reflected their personal life more than that of the Mexican painter Frida Kahlo, who used self-portraits in the style of native folk art to

1-42 FRIDA KAHLO, *The Little Deer*, 1946. Oil on canvas, 8¾" 11¾". Collection of Carolyn Farb, Houston, Texas.

express her own suffering. When she was a child, she contracted polio, leaving one leg permanently thinner than the other. Then, as a teenager, she suffered a terrible injury when the bus she was riding in was smashed by a trolley. Her spine and pelvis were shattered, and she spent the rest of her life in constant pain, despite thirty-five operations. Kahlo also experienced a passionate, and stormy, relationship with muralist Diego Rivera (5-3), the most famous Mexican artist of his time. Rivera recognized her talent and also became her husband but not her only lover—they eventually divorced, then remarried. Kahlo was involved with both men and women, including the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky and the African-American performer Josephine Baker (2-5).

Kahlo was also a radical, and a strong promoter of indigenous Mexican art and culture, which influenced her own work. Many of her paintings were self-portraits, illustrating aspects of her life story. For instance, she painted a symbolic portrait of her miscarriage complete with a bloody hospital bed and a fetus hovering above her; another painting showed her with a necklace of thorns. Although claimed by the Surrealists (page 417), Kahlo insisted that she "painted her own reality." Her ability to expose her own pain while remaining courageous may explain her current appeal to art lovers around the world. In fact, Kahlo's art is now considered far more important and influential than during her lifetime and she has attained the status of a feminist icon.

In Kahlo's 1946 self-portrait, *The Wounded Deer* (1-42), the many insults to her body are displayed in fantastic imagery, yet there is great strength in her face. This painting was done after yet another unsuccessful operation that left her depressed and frustrated. Kahlo's willingness to use art to reveal her inner life gives her work a unique impact. For Kahlo, the act of creating such a picture must have had a cathartic, healing power.

ART AND ART HISTORY

The relationship of an artwork to art history can be a significant matter in determining whether an artwork is significant or inconsequential. Even an artist's rejection of tradition requires an understanding of the tradition—since the artist is still conducting a dialog with it. This is why an artist is often described as "naive" if he or she is unaware of art history. Like all of us, the artist is conditioned and affected by the past. This is no weakness

or sign of lack of originality. If there could ever be an entirely original artistic genius, this individual would most likely be a sad genius indeed. The art theorist R. G. Collingwood has written eloquently on why Modern Art's love of novelty is a mistake:

> If an artist may say nothing, except what he has invented with his own sole efforts, it stands to reason he will be poor in ideas. . . . If he could take what he wants wherever he could find it, as Euripides and Dante and Michelangelo and Shakespeare and Bach were free, his larder will always be full and his cookery . . . be worth tasting. . . . Let all artists . . . plagiarize each other's works like men . . . modern artists should treat each other as Greek dramatists or Renaissance painters or Elizabethan poets did. If anyone thinks that the law of copyright has fostered better art than those barbarian times could produce, I will not try to convert them.

1-43 MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, *Tomb of Giuliano de'Medici with Figures of Night and Day*, New Sacristy of the Medici Chapels, 1520–1533, Florence, Italy.

Despite Collingwood's justification, doesn't it diminish the reputation of the great Michelangelo Buonarroti when one learns he repeatedly based his work on the past? Isn't this a kind of visual theft? The Renaissance genius didn't think so. He considered it not only normal but a mark that he was well educated and understood proper artistic practice. When his patrons, the powerful Medici family of Florence, reached out to him in the 1520s to design a new family tomb, Michelangelo's thoughts turned to the past. Because the tomb was to be attached to the family chapel designed by Brunelleschi (see Chapter 14) a century earlier, Michelangelo decided to mirror its style. The basic plan and decoration pays homage to a great Florentine artist whom Michelangelo admired. Brunelleschi, a sculptor and architect, is best known for creating the most famous dome of the Early Renaissance, the Duomo of Florence (see 14-4). Yet when it came to the new chapel's dome, Michelangelo reached much further into the past. He modeled it on one of the greatest buildings of the ancient world, the famous Pantheon in Rome (see 12-28) from the year 120. Michelangelo had recently returned from Rome after finishing his paintings for the Sistine Ceiling (see 14-17).

The need for a new tomb came with the untimely deaths from illness of two young Medici princes, Giuliano and Lorenzo. Michelangelo was among the mourners because he knew them himself. As a young man, he had lived in the Medici palace while being educated and was treated almost like a member of the family. In his sculpture of Giuliano (1-43), we can see that his dome's

reference to Ancient Rome was no accident. Giuliano is dressed and posed as a Roman emperor and looks down as if all below are his subjects. The young prince, nearly the same age as Michelangelo, achieved no such majestic status in life but is given that in his death. Atop his tomb, no mere mortals grieve for him, but the ancient mythic figures of Night and Day.

The Roman Empire was the peak of human civilization for those who lived in the Renaissance. The meaning of the word is the rebirth of ideals and art of that ancient era. By designing the Medici tomb's dome like the Roman Pantheon's and by elevating its young prince, he honors the family and the man in the highest way he knows. The art historical references are not failures of imagination but essential to the meaning of the work. Just as Renaissance artists were inspired by ancient Roman art, so have artists been in every period since then. As the twentieth-century poet T. S. Eliot put it, "Artists are in a dialog with every other artist who ever lived."

However, as a portrait, the sculpture of Giuliano de'Medici can be considered a failure. His handsome, almost godlike face bears little resemblance to the young, bearded Italian seen in a painting by Raphael. When asked by a contemporary why the sculpture didn't look like Giuliano, Michelangelo's response demonstrated that he understood the power of art. He is reputed to have confidently answered, "Don't worry, it will."

WHEN WE KNOW MORE, WE SEE MORE

This chapter presents ways to better understand and judge art. It is important to remember that an artwork need not be perfect; even a great work of art can fail in some ways and still be a masterpiece. Understanding art is similar to understanding people; the process is never finished but continually deepens as more is discovered. This is part of the power of art. The serious viewer studies the background of a work, which is far more than the white walls and polished wood floor of a gallery. The background can include the artist's biography, inner psychology, and the traditions and society that influenced the artist. All of these elements can tell us why the artist chose to make the artwork look the way it does. No background is absolutely necessary (just as we can appreciate people without knowing everything about them), but the appreciation of a work of art is certainly increased by awareness of the context in which it was produced. It helps us see more than we could before.

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

As you begin your study of art, think of it as you would a trip to another country. Dedicate yourself to expanding your horizons and remaining open to the many things you will be introduced to in this course. This kind of openness may be difficult to maintain when you are confronted with a work of modern art for the first time. For many viewers who are not familiar with contemporary art, their negative response is probably based on an immediate gut reaction. Nothing is wrong with having a strong, personal reaction to visual art—in fact, modern artists hope to create such reactions; most would rather have people hate their work than be bored by it. But viewers who take a quick glance and react instantly (19 seconds being the average look), without really trying to understand an artwork, are missing a rich world of visual experience. All one needs to do is invest some time and thought, and keep one's eyes and ears open to surprises.

For example, most visitors walk right by a video installation as they approach the information desk of PS 1, a contemporary art museum in New York City. Pipilotti Rist's *Selfless in the Bath of Lava* (1-44) is easy to miss because *Selfless* is just a few inches in size and is not hung on a wall. A ticket buyer with sensitive ears might be distracted by the sound of a woman's faint but desperate cries and search for its source. The hunt leads downward. The cries come from a small, jagged hole in the wooden floorboards. Just beneath the hole is a three-inch video of a nude woman (the artist) that can only be seen by squatting down. She is trapped in glowing, fiery lava. Pale and white-haired, the damned woman reaches up and screams. Pleading, she yells in several languages, "You would have done everything better. Help me. Excuse me." The scale of the video transforms each viewer, making him or her into a giant, all-powerful being with the fate of this poor woman

1-44 PIPILOTTI RIST, *Selbstlos im Lavabad (Selfless in the Bath of Lava)*, 1994. Single-channel video installation, variable dimension. Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth, Zurich/London; © Pipilotti Rist.

apparently placed in their hands. Rist wants viewers to question their attitudes about art and to change their point of view. Another of her video installations can only be found inside a handbag.

During this course, you will be treated to many surprises. You will wander around the globe and discover art from many countries and continents. Time will be no barrier as we move across the centuries. We will explore many ways of looking at and understanding art. At our journey's end, when you finish this course, you will be in a better position to say whether you think the *Mona Lisa*'s reputation is deserved, whether de Kooning had any talent, or whether Duchamp should be considered an artist. And your decision will be based on knowledge rather than prejudice or gut feelings.

After the course is over, keep in mind that you have begun a lifelong journey, one in which you will never be alone. As the French novelist Marcel Proust wrote:

> Only through art can we get outside of ourselves and know another's view of the universe which is not the same as ours and see landscapes which would otherwise have remained unknown to us like the landscapes of the moon. Thanks to art, instead of seeing a single world, our own, we see it multiply until we have before us as many worlds as there are original artists.

That is the power of art.

CHAPTER 2

THE PRIMARY ELEMENTS

2-1 REMBRANDT VAN RIJN, *The Artist in His Studio*, c. 1628. Oil on panel, 9¾" × 12½". Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA (Zoe Oliver Sherman Collection).

For many viewers, one of the most frustrating aspects of art is trying to describe what they see. It is as if they were trying to explain something in a foreign language. This chapter introduces the vocabulary of the language of art, which revolves around the basic visual elements that all artists use: space, line, shape, light, texture, and color. With these elements, artists are able to create incredibly diverse images, from Egyptian pyramids to the *Mona Lisa*. The fundamentals of art and design provide a way to describe the various forms of art; they are the basis of the language in which all art is discussed.

SPACE

In the Old Testament we are told, "In the beginning . . . the earth was without form and void." Empty space is the most fundamental of the elements of art and design. Each artist has a profound sense of the void as he or she stares at the piece of paper, the canvas, the block of marble, or the empty site before beginning work. Space is the field of action on which all artists do battle. Many

artists feel as Rembrandt seems to in *The Artist in His Studio* (2-1), a little overwhelmed as they begin.

Artists work within two kinds of space. **Two-dimensional space** is flat and can only be viewed from one side. Anything that exists in this space, like the space itself, will have height and width but no real depth. However, two-dimensional art forms such as drawings or paintings often create the *illusion* of depth. **Three-dimensional space** contains objects that can be viewed from all sides, objects that have height, width, and depth. This is the kind of space we actually live in. Sculpture and architecture are examples of three-dimensional art forms.

Defining space and controlling it with the other visual elements is what making art is all about. The process begins with the artist choosing from the range of elements. In many cases, the first choice is the simplest—the line.

LINE

To a mathematician, a line is the shortest distance between two points. To an artist, a line is much more than that. It is an element of infinite potential, capable of conveying a wide variety of emotions and meanings. Vincent van Gogh's drawing *Fishing Boats at Sea* (2-2) shows the versatility of a line. By varying length and width, or by choosing various types of lines (straight, curved, or angular), the artist creates a seascape of great complexity, reflecting the many forms of nature.

All lines are the result of an artist's movement. When they particularly reveal the action of drawing, the motion of the hand and arm, they are described as *gestural*. Van Gogh's gestures are what make his drawing exciting. Notice how different kinds of lines convey

2-2 VINCENT VAN GOGH, *Fishing Boats at Sea*, 1889. Pencil, reed pen, and ink on wove paper, 9½" × 12⅝". Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Germany.