

Let's explore the great periods of Western art, from prehistory to the present day. You will see how artistic styles changed over time as religion, technology and artists' lives also changed. In addition, you'll see examples of art from other parts of the world like Africa, Asia, or Australia during these periods.

As you read on, you may be unfamiliar with certain words and expressions. We hope this will inspire you to find out more about what you've learned!

Look carefully...

In each section of this book, you'll find a big picture that includes five details (people, objects or artworks) that can also be found on the previous pages of that section.

Try to find all five details in each picture!

MY BIG BOOK OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST ART

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TEXT BY LAETITIA LE MOINE
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PRESTEL
Munich · London · New York

PREHISTORY

(CA. 30,000–2000 BC)



Lascaux cave (France)



Mammoth tusks



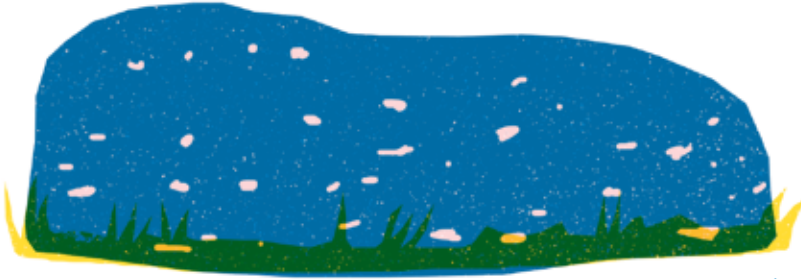
Black charcoal paint



Torch



Statuette of a cat-headed figure



Rock used as a seat



Outline of a hand and a handprint



Celtic bracelet



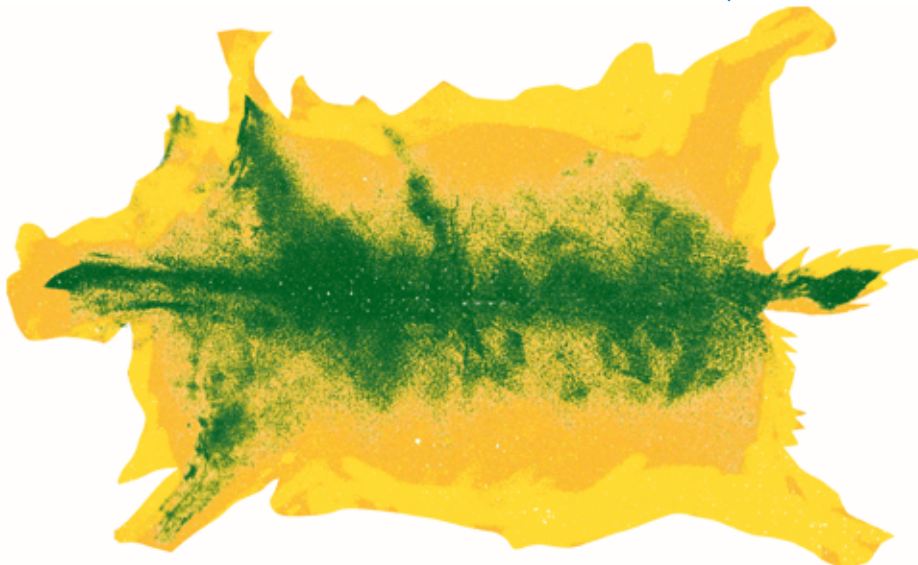
Sculptor



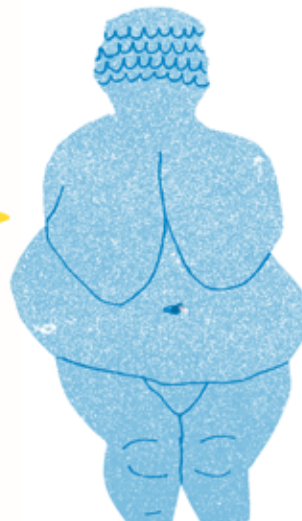
Japanese Jōmon pottery



Cave drawing of a reindeer



Animal skin garment



"Venus of Willendorf"
stone carving



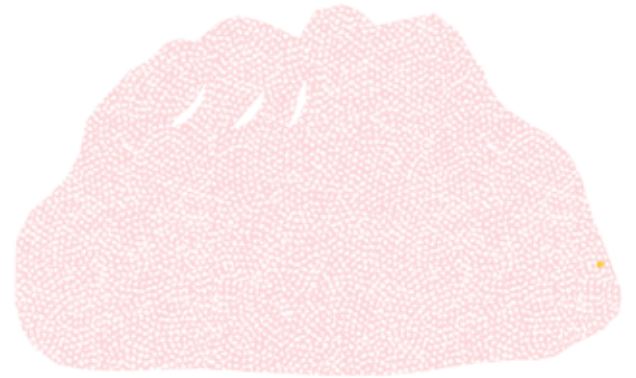
Menhir
(stone monument)



"Venus of Brassempouy"
ivory carving



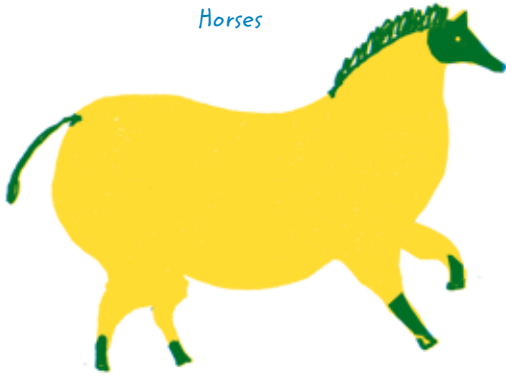
"Cave of Hands" (Argentina)



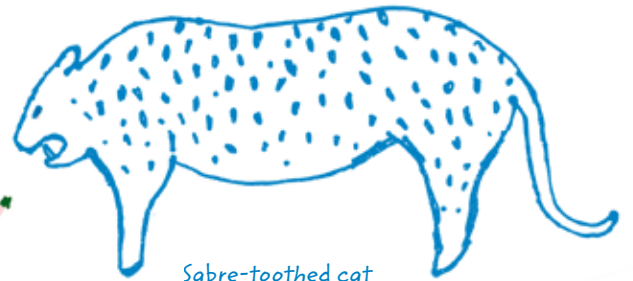
Modeling clay



Horses



Artist



Sabre-toothed cat



Flint club



Engraved staff



Ancient chariot



Tomahawk



Hunting scene



Mortar



Stonehenge monument (United Kingdom)

PREHISTORY

Galloping horses, reindeer and stags – what a scene! Prehistoric artists begin drawing these animals on cave walls more than 30,000 years ago. As hunters, they know the animals' anatomy inside out, which is why they can depict them so realistically. Prehistoric artists draw with their bare hands or use sticks as brushes. Loam and charcoal are ground into a mortar to create paint. The artists sometimes use their own hands to make handprints.

Today, scientists are still working to understand the art that our ancestors left on cave walls so long ago.





MIDDLE AGES I

While Mayans in Central America and Buddhists in Asia produce their own great art, Christianity becomes the dominant religion in Europe. Roman temples are replaced with large basilica churches to get the faithful together. Pictures of saints adorn the buildings, as do shimmering golden mosaics that depict the life of Jesus Christ. These pictures enable everyone, even those who cannot read, to learn about Christian stories. Sumptuously painted manuscripts are developed in monasteries. Later on, Europeans build even larger structures – castles, monasteries and cathedrals – in the Romanesque style, with rounded arches, stone vaults and columns decorated by carved capitals.





CONTEMPORARY ART

(CA. 1945–1990)



Compressed car body
(César Baldaccini)



Motor car



Spray paint can



Pop art



"Monsieur Hulot" of Jaques Tati



Suit by Yves
Saint Laurent



International Klein Blue
(Yves Klein)



Andy Warhol



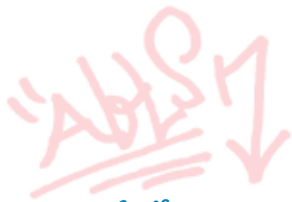
Daniel Buren



Drip painting



"The Kiss by the City Hall"
by Robert Doisneau



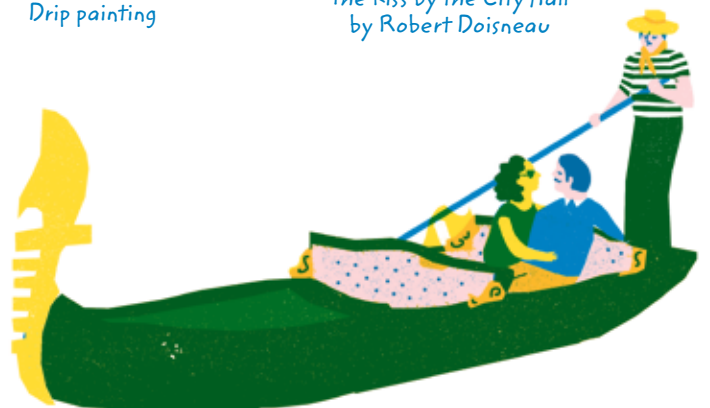
Graffiti



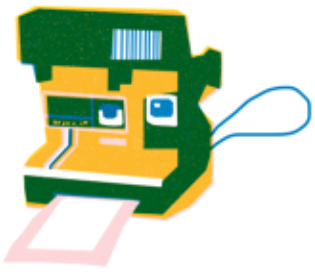
"Egg Chair" by Arne Jacobsen



Acrylic art



Venice Biennale



Polaroid camera

think

Neon art



Globalization of art



New York, the new capital city of art



Marilyn Monroe



Keith Haring



Art photography



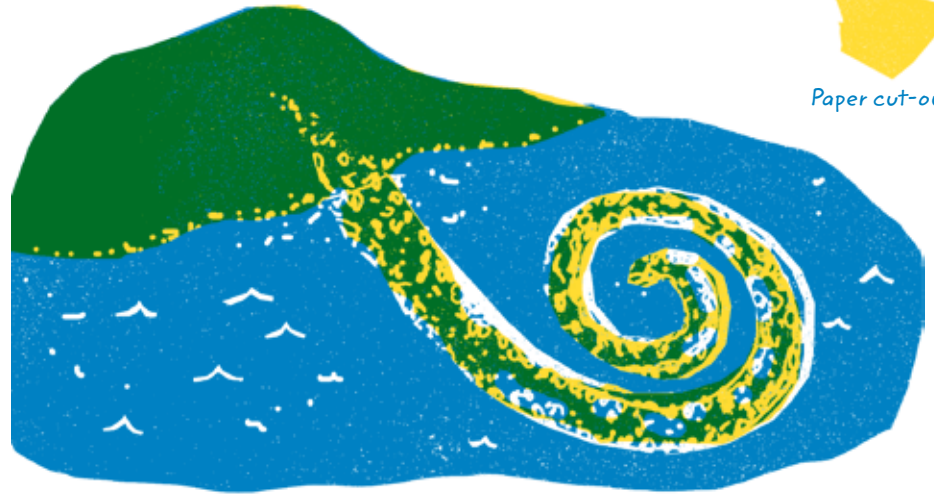
Pop art



Paper cut-outs



Hyperrealism



Earth art



Comic book drawing



Sydney Opera House



Alfred Hitchcock



think

ACRYLIC PAINT



CONTEMPORARY ART

Artists now begin to take inspiration from new sources. Advertising, movie stars and comic book heroes provide "pop artists" like Andy Warhol with new models. Daily activities and everyday language are absorbed into art, as well as an ever increasing number of industrially produced tools and materials – acrylic paints, neon tubes, cement. The art world now addresses a wider public and becomes democratized, with artists using galleries and the walls of buildings to make their masterpieces.

Art has truly invaded our everyday lives!