Art & Social Issues in American Culture

Art and Social Issues Timeline

1930s   Great Depression

    Rise of fascism in Germany, Spain, Italy, Japan

1931    Scottsboro Nine trial

1932    Franklin D. Roosevelt elected president

1933    Hitler’s rise to power, the Nazi party gains more control

1935    Dust Bowl, the Great Drought

    Social Security Act

    Spanish Civil War begins

Works Progress Administration

1939    World War II begins with Germany’s invasion of Poland

    United States comes out of the Great Depression

1942    The National Art Council for Defense and Artists Societies for Defense merge to form Artists for Victory

1943    Artists for Victory organizes the national print exhibition, America in the War

1947    The Secretary of State George C. Marshall cancels the exhibit, Advancing American Art, claiming that
    the contemporary art is “communistic”

    Marshall announces there will be “no more taxpayers’ money for modern art”

1874    First impressionist exhibit held

1875    Art Students League founded in New York City

1972    Photographer Nick Ut records US use of Napalm against Vietnamese citizens, his photograph later wins
    a Pulitzer Prize

1978    Cindy Sherman’s black and white Untitled Film Stills series

1960s   Rise of Pop art

1965    National Endowment for Arts and Humanities established

    Minimalism recognized
1910s  Picasso and Braque develop Cubism in Paris

Ashcan influence spreads, introduction of realism (early 1910s)

1911  First publication of The Masses

1913  New York Armory Show

1916  Dada movement begins in Switzerland, soon spreads to New York and Europe

1917  The Masses goes out of print

1870  15th amendment ratified, ensures the right to vote regardless of “race, color, or previous condition of servitude”

1875  Civil Rights Act passed, no citizen can be denied equal use of public facilities

1877  End of Reconstruction

American History

1860  Abraham Lincoln elected president of the United States

1861  American Civil War begins

1863  Abraham Lincoln delivers Emancipation Proclamation

1865  13th amendment ratified, slavery is outlawed

End of Civil War

Abraham Lincoln assassinated

1866  First Klu Klux Klan established in Tennessee

1867  First Reconstruction Act passed

1868  14th amendment ratified, grants citizenship to all people born in the United States

1869  First railroad connecting east and west completed

1880  States begin passing “Jim Crow” laws

1883  Brooklyn Bridge constructed

1885  First US skyscraper

1920  Société Anonyme founded

1924  The Surrealist Manifesto is published
1926    The New Masses is established
1929    John Reed Club founded by CPUSA in New York City

Art History

1890    Sherman Anti-trust Law
1896    Supreme Court rules that “separate but equal” segregation is legal in Plessy v. Ferguson
      Rise of “yellow journalism” (sensationalist news reporting)
1898    Spanish-American War
1901    First Trans Atlantic radio
1903    Wright brothers fly
1904    National Child Labor Committee formed
1906    Upton Sinclair publishes The Jungle, leading to the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act
1908    Henry Ford introduces the Ford Model T
1909    W.E.B DuBois founds the NAACP
1920s   Height of the KKK in the United States (4 million members, 5000 recorded lynchings)
1920    19th amendment passed, women are allowed to vote
1929    US stock market crashes, beginning of the Great Depression
1910    Beginning of
        President Theodore Roosevelt’s progressive movement
1912    The Titanic sinks
1914    World War I begins
1917    United States enters World War I
1918    World War I ends
        Influenza epidemic kills 30-40 million people worldwide
1919    18th amendment passed, prohibits the sale or consumption of alcohol
        Treaty of Versailles
        Communist Party formed in Chicago
1891  Robert Henri founds the Ashcan School
1933  First Federal Funding for Theatre and Arts

Public Works of Art Project

1934  The Unemployed Artist Group becomes the Artist’s Union with the publication Art Front
      Reeves Lewenthal founds Associated American Artists

1935  Federal Art Project (FAP) founded
      Works Progress Administration (WPA) art project founded
      The Farm Security Administration (FSA) hires photographers to record American poverty
      Two anti-lynching exhibits open in New York City, one sponsored by the NAACP and the other by the
      New York City John Reed Club

1936  A group of New York artists founds the American Artists’ Congress
      The Photo League is founded in New York
      Dorothea Lange takes the photograph Migrant Mother, Nipomo Valley

1937  The Nazi party organizes an exhibition of “degenerate art,” composed mainly of avant garde works
      Picasso paints Guernica, memorializing the Spanish town bombed by Germans

1950s  Abstract expressionism and color field painting become dominant art styles

1950  Société Anonyme officially closes

1951  The Photo League closes

1941  Pearl Harbor bombed, US enters World War II

1945  Harry S. Truman becomes president following FDR’s death
      Cold War begins
      United States drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki
      World War II ends
      United Nations organized

1946  First computer invented in Philadelphia

1948  Berlin divided due to Soviet blockades
Truman abolishes segregation in the armed forces

1960    John F. Kennedy elected president

1962    Michael Harrington publishes The Other America: Poverty in the United States

1963    John F. Kennedy assassinated

        MLK’s March on Washington

1964    The Civil Rights Bill passed

        Gulf of Tonkin resolution

        Vietnam War begins

        President Lyndon B. Johnson announces War on Poverty

1965    Voting Rights Bill passed

1968    MLK assassinated

        Democratic Convention in Chicago

        US has 543,000 troops in Vietnam

1969    United States astronauts land on moon

1950s   US government aggressively investigates suspected Communists

1950    Korean War begins

1953    Korean War ends

Joseph McCarthy is chair of Senate Sub-Committee on Government Operations

1954    Supreme court rules to desegregate schools in Brown v. Board of Education

        McCarthy hearings

1955    Rosa Parks, Montgomery Bus Boycott

Martin Luther King, Jr. emerges as civil rights leader

1975    Vietnam War ends

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