



Travel through Time: Going Global

Many people felt the world got smaller in the 1990s. The Eastern Bloc melted away, and many nations that had been restricted from access to Western ideas now rejoined the international community. Technology made it easier to communicate around the world. There was no longer just one center of the art world, and the Internet made it possible to play a part from just about anywhere.

Spectacle Art, Installation Art, and Interactive Art are not movements in the same way that some other type of art have been—like Impressionism or Minimalism. In fact, an artwork could be all three at once! But these are “types” of art and are capitalized here, just like movements, to make their names easy to recognize.

Take a moment to view a video overview about Spectacle Art, Installation Art, and Interactive Art.

Video Transcript: Spectacle Art, Installation Art, and Interactive Art

Spectacle Art

The idea of Spectacle Art was not an official movement but rather describes the work best represented by many of the Young British Artists (YBAs). This was a loosely joined group of young artists in Great Britain. The YBAs formed in the late 1980s and were most active in the 1990s. Some continue to exhibit today. Not all of the YBAs made Spectacle Art, but those who did made the group famous!

Oh My!

The YBAs were mainly known for the shock value of their work. Like artists in other movements (including Neo-Dada and Minimalism), the YBAs turned traditional ideas of art upside down. Some of these artists included violent and offensive images in their work.

For example, in 1998, artist Tracey Emin exhibited a work called *My Bed*. It was actually her bed, removed from her home and placed in a gallery. Emin claimed it was how her bed looked when she was depressed after a relationship broke up. Its shock value was in the public display of private items like rumpled sheets, dirty underwear, used tissues, and cigarette butts.



Did You Know?

The original Young British Artists featured in the Freeze exhibition in 1988 are not so young anymore! Damien Hirst continues to create controversial and sometimes shocking works. But some YBAs created other types of art. For example, since the 1990s, Gary Hume has used high-gloss house paint to create simplified forms, like blocks of color representing doors or color circles as portraits. Ian Davenport also uses gloss paint to make murals of dripped color, like the piece shown, a work from the Biennale Arte 2017, held in Venice, Italy.



Pierluigi.Palazzi/Shutterstock

To create this site-specific work, the artist poured 1,000 acrylic paint colors from syringes down the surface of a 45-foot-long aluminum wall. The colors pooled and mixed on the floor at the bottom.

Mixing It Up

The YBAs also innovated in the creative process. Many used found or prefabricated objects and combined them in experimental ways. Some used materials that are typically commercial, like house paint. These processes often invited criticism about their artistic skills.

Many of the YBAs knew each other from Goldsmiths College of Art. The fine arts program there promoted the mixing of painting, sculpture, photography, and other art forms. Many YBA artists tended to use found objects and conceptual ideas in their work. But there was no single YBA style.

Art Is Big Business

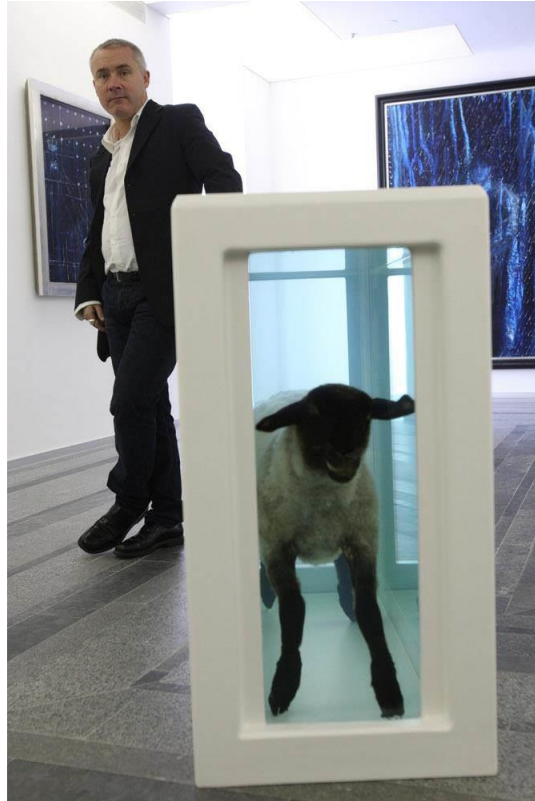
The YBAs were good at grabbing media attention, and these artists drew large crowds. Many of their artworks commanded large prices in the art market. The YBAs knew how to work the market and the media, and they became celebrities.

A good example is artist Damien Hirst, who started the YBAs. He organized the first exhibition of these artists in 1988, called Freeze. A critic later gave the group its name. Hirst became the most famous YBA—and one of the richest men in Britain.



Victor Moussa/Shutterstock

This 2008 sculpture by Damien Hirst looks like a huge anatomy class model. This 21-foot-tall painted bronze sculpture installed on a London street shows a male torso with exposed muscles and organs.



Slavko Sereda/Shutterstock

Damien Hirst, standing next to his work, has made many taxidermied animals in vitrines (glass cases), like this lamb displayed at Ukraine's PinchukArtCentre in 2009.

Installation Art

People started using the term *Installation Art* in the 1970s. It referred to art that was “installed” in a space. Like Spectacle Art, it wasn't as much a movement as a grouping label that could be applied to installed artworks by artists who worked in many different styles. In fact, some Installation Art included sculpture, light, sound, video, performance, architecture, and more!

Messages Within

In the 1980s and 1990s, many installations were increasingly used for social and political causes. This included gay rights, feminism, and environmental issues. Installation Art projects became very popular in the 1990s and 2000s. Many also increased in size. Some drew huge crowds to the galleries, museums, and other spaces where they were displayed.

The work of Danish-Icelandic artist Olafur Eliasson provides good examples of this. For instance, in 2001, he invited people to reflect on nature with *Green River*. He poured environmentally safe green dye into rivers running through Tokyo, Stockholm, Los Angeles, and other cities. In 2003, for *The Weather Project*, he installed a huge artificial sun and mist machines in London's Tate Modern. In 2008, he created *The New York City Waterfalls*, a series of huge artificial waterfalls near New York bridges and other landmarks. And in 2011, he transformed the rooftop of the ARoS Aarhus Art Museum in Denmark into *Your Rainbow Panorama*, which offered unusual views of the city.



Felix Lipov/Shutterstock

Olafur Eliasson created this waterfall under the Brooklyn Bridge as part of The New York City Waterfalls, both an installation and Public Art.



Oliver Hoffmann/Shutterstock

Installed atop a museum in Aarhus, Denmark, a circular walkway created by Olafur Eliasson features glass panes in the colors of the rainbow, so that perspective changes as visitors travel around it.

Step Inside

Installation Art continues to the present day. It is usually large-scale, taking up the entire space and using multiple objects. It is also usually specific to that space. In other words, once taken apart or out of the space, the work no longer exists. Finally, it tends to be immersive—a viewer could walk into it!

These artworks are not about one object. They focus on the relation between objects and their relationship to the space, and to the viewer.



What If...



Michel Piccaya/Shutterstock

One of nine spaces in Neto's The Body That Carries Me installation includes cushions on the floor and a gauzy ceiling with teardrop-shaped objects suspended from it.

In most art museums, “Do not touch” is the rule! But what if art were meant to be touched, heard, and even smelled? This is often the case with Installation Art! An example is the 2014 installation of Brazilian artist Ernesto Neto at the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in Spain. The exhibit, called *The Body That Carries Me*, began in the lobby and wound up to the second floor. It was filled with ways for visitors to experience sights, sounds, smells, and ideas.

Interactive Art

Many artworks and art performances since the 1960s have called for audience participation. This is true in both Europe and the United States. When the audience participates, whatever the style of the artwork, it also becomes Interactive Art, also sometimes called Participatory Art.

Eye (and Hand) of the Beholder

It is said that “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” This means that judging what is “art” is up to those viewing or experiencing it. With Interactive Art, the actual *making* of the art is also up to the beholder!

In some ways, all art requires participation, such as looking, listening, learning, or appreciating. But Interactive Art goes much further. It invites the audience to get involved, and it exists only through that involvement. Viewers or visitors actually take part in creating the work. They become co-authors.



wilsonwongdesign/Shutterstock

The Rain Room was installed in New York’s Museum of Modern Art in 2013, later traveling to other museums. People could experience walking in the rain without getting wet, thanks to body-mapping cameras that stopped the flow of water as someone approached a spout.

This idea of interaction with art is not new. For example, in the 1960s and '70s, Minimalist sculptors sought to activate the viewer's space. Conceptual Art made the concept of the art more important than the object, making who created a work unimportant. Take, for example, John Baldessari's 1971 work *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art*. Performance Art took this further by inviting the audience to help create some art, like Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece*.

Like Ono, many Performance Artists invited interaction. Another example is Serbian artist Marina Abramović. In *The Artist Is Present*, she was part of the art—hence the title—along with a table and two chairs. Whoever came and sat across from her became part of it, too. The artist and one audience member at a time simply sat and looked at each other in silence.



Fun Fact

In the 1980s, Marina Abramović lived with Aborigines in the Australian outback for a year. During that time, she raised a baby kangaroo.

Join in!

In the mid-1990s, a group of artists was making work that was socially conscious and required viewers to take part. These artists created social situations, and those were the “artworks.” Critic Nicolas Bourriaud gave their work the name “relational aesthetics.” He wrote a whole book about it! These events could be as simple as a shared meal. The artist arranged the event, people joined in, and it became an “artwork.”

By its very nature, Interactive Art is temporary. It exists in the moment. Often, there is no lasting record. There are some more permanent Interactive Art pieces, though! One example of this is German-Belgian artist Carsten Höller, who is often grouped with relational aesthetics. He creates interactive, amusement park-like works at galleries and museums. While the physical slides are an installation, the visual spectacle of people using them along with the thrill visitors receive create the Interactive Art itself.



Pres Panayotov/Shutterstock

The artist considered his slides pleasing and practical, saying “A slide is a sculpture that you can travel inside.”

The Artists



3

2

Get Started »



Explore Further

Art at the Movies

Manifesto (2015, not rated) is a film version of a 13-screen art installation in which Oscar-winning actress Cate Blanchett recites and sings various manifestos. So, it was a piece of art that was turned into a film! A *manifesto* is a public declaration of ideas and intentions, and these 13 come from various arenas. It might sound boring to listen to these statements for an hour and a half, but the film has humor and emotion. Blanchett takes on different identities to recite portions of manifestos from artists, including

- the founder of Surrealism, André Breton
- Conceptual and Minimalist Artist Sol LeWitt
- filmmakers like Lars von Trier and Jim Jarmusch
- dancer and choreographer Yvonne Rainer

If you see this film, watch for other artists you know about. How are their manifestos realized in their art?

[View Sources](#)

- Arnason, H. H. *History of Modern Art*, 7th edition, Pearson, 2013.

- “Biennale Arte 2017.” La Biennale di Venezia 2017, 2017, www.labiennale.org/en/art/2017.
- Bishop, Claire. *Installation Art: A Critical History*, Tate, 2005.
- “Ernesto Neto: The Body That Carries Me.” The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 2017, www.guggenheim.org/exhibition/ernesto-neto-the-body-that-carries-me.
- Fineberg, Jonathan. *Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being*. Prentice Hall, 2011.
- Floryan, Meg. “Interactive and Participatory Art.” *art 21 magazine*, 3 June 2010, magazine.art21.org/2010/06/03/interactive-and-participatory-art/#.We55QGPKUk.
- Frank, Priscilla. “The ‘Rain Room’ Is Coming to Los Angeles, Not to Be Confused with Actual Rain.” Oath Inc., 9 July 2015, www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-rain-room-is-coming-to-la_us_559e97f4e4b05b1d028fd5e7.
- Fung, Lisa. “The 13 faces of Cate Blanchett: How ‘Manifesto’ went from art installation to film.” *Los Angeles Times*, 26 May 2017, www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-cate-blanchett-manifesto-20170518-story.html.
- “Giardini Colourfall – Ian Davenport at Venice Biennale 2017.” *IdeelArt*, 2017, www.ideelart.com/module/csblog/post/435-1-ian-davenport.html.
- Gonzalez, Jennifer. “Installation Art.” *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Hopkins, David. *After Modern Art 1945-2000*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Kalb, Peter. *Art since 1980: Charting the Contemporary*. Pearson, 2014.
- Kleiner, Fred S. *Gardner’s Art through the Ages*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011.
- *Little Sun*, littlesun.com.
- “Olafur Eliasson: Biography.” olafureliasson.net/biography.
- “Participatory Art.” *Tate*, www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/participatory-art.
- Pasori, Cedar. “17 Things You Didn’t Know About Marina Abramović.” *Complex*, 26 Aug. 2013, www.complex.com/style/2013/08/marina-abramovic-facts.
- Peters, Adele. “Why Artist Olafur Eliasson Hauled 100-Tons Of Glacial Ice To Denmark Only To Watch It Melt.” *Fast Company & Inc*, 29 Oct. 2014, www.fastcompany.com/3037739/why-artist-olafur-eliasson-hauled-100-tons-of-glacial-ice-to-denmark-only-to-watch-it-melt.
- “The Unilever Series: Carsten Höller: *Test Site*.” *Exhibitions & Events. Tate*, www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/unilever-series-carsten-holler-test-site.
- “Young British Artists.” *The Art Story*, 2017, www.theartstory.org/movement-young-british-artists.htm.
- “Young British Artists (YBAs).” *Art & Artists. Tate*, www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/y/young-british-artists-ybas.
- “Your rainbow panorama.” olafureliasson.net/archive/artwork/WEK100551/your-rainbow-panorama.