

# **Social Morphologies**

Written by Lloyd Gill

## Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to examine the beginnings of Expressionism and how those beginnings progressed into Abstract Expressionism. I will investigate into German Expressionism and Berlin Dada and I will research into artists who travelled to America and took avant-garde ideas with them. I will look into key artists who developed Expressionism, Berlin Dada group, and Abstract Expressionism.

The title of this essay is borrowed from the artist Roberto Matta's series of the same title 'Social Morphologies'. Matta as he was more commonly known, was partly responsible for influencing the New York School artists of late 1930's. I will research into Matta's work and its significance with other artists in America of that period.

## Berlin Dada

George Grosz and Otto Dix were both a part of the Berlin Dada group. Founding members include Hannah Hoch and Raoul Hausmann. They are connected seamlessly due to having a politically charged tone. These artists united not because of having similar work they united because of rejection by convention. Their aim was to shock society into self awareness by the nature of the work in the form of paintings, printmaking, drawings and sculpture. "Due to the critical nature of this work meant few German Dada periodicals survived confiscation."<sup>1</sup>

The Berlin Dada group coined the term *photomontage*. Photomontage is a technique where positive or negative photographic material from separate sources combines together to form a singular photographic image. Both Raoul Hausmann and Hannah Hoch employed this technique into their work. "Positive montages are usually made by combining photographic prints or reproductions."<sup>2</sup> The invention of photomontage cannot be attributed to one person, although Hausmann describes how a trip to the Baltic coast inspired this technique. "In nearly all the homes was found, hung on the wall, a coloured lithograph representing the image of a grenadier in front of barracks. In order to make this military memento more personal, a photographic portrait of the soldier was glued on the head. It was like a flash; I saw instantly that one could make pictures composed entirely

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1 Dawn Ades, Oxford University Press [moma.org/m/explore/collection/art-terms/10455/0/4.iphone\\_ajax?klass=term](http://moma.org/m/explore/collection/art-terms/10455/0/4.iphone_ajax?klass=term)

2 Oxford University press

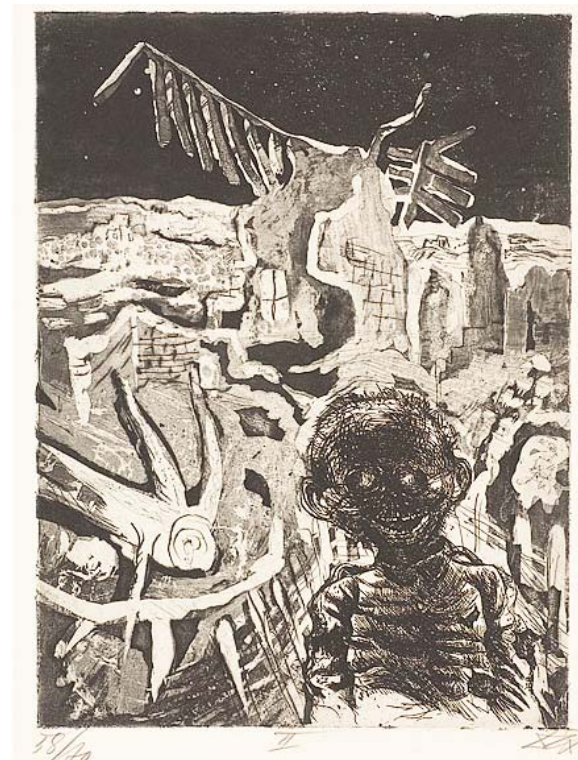
of cut-up photos.”<sup>3</sup>

### The Great War

Otto Dix immediately volunteered once war broke out in August 1914. The stalemate lasted four long years.

“Entrenched automatic rifles helped create the stalemate in Europe.”<sup>4</sup> German machine gunners fired rounds endlessly at advancing troops and they were hard to take out. Dix was on a NCO machine gun unit. Dix helped defend the line against the Great British advance on the Somme. Due to a penetrating neck injury, Dix was hospitalised until discharged in September 1914.

Dix returned to Dresden after being discharged. He spent his time concentrating on his art, but the grief he had witnessed lingered throughout his mind. In 1924, Dix met Karl Nierendorf who would influence Dix. Nierendorf was an art dealer based in Berlin and helped publish an important series of work 'Der Krieg' (The War). “The series confronted mass inhibition on trauma that constrained memory of the Great War. It stood anathema to the myth of the war, as a glorious cause. There was no 'stab in the back'. There was mud, mutilation, death and futility.”<sup>5</sup>



**Otto Dix**

*'Night-time encounter with a madman'*

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3 R. Hausmann: Courrier Dada, Paris, 1958, p42

4 [Http://www.ottodix.org/index/biography](http://www.ottodix.org/index/biography)

5 Same as above

## Primitive Art

Primitive art is a category of art that was created by people from indigenous areas of the world, such as; Africa, India, Australia, China, Mexico, North Africa, and East Asia. Tribe's people from indigenous areas have made carvings from wood and painted decorative work for centuries. I think there is a strong connection between Primitive art and Expressionism. The connection between the singular line that creates the primitive work that does not represent human features accurately as we see them, but in a more deliberate fundamentally pronounced way . Primitive art used the essence of human features like a nose or mouth instead of an actual nose or mouth. This essence has raw power, an energy that has been absorbed by the tribesman possibly from spending so much time in a natural habitat.

“Wooden carvings were sometimes made of Kuba Kings after they had died. These wooden sculptures were not meant to look exactly like the King, but to show the king's spirit as a carving.”<sup>6</sup>



*Ndop, Woodne carving of king ShyaamaMbul a Ngoong, Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century.*

The person can be identified by a small object at the base of the sculpture. The King portrayed here (King Shyaam aMbul aNgoong, the founding Father of Kuba Kingdom), is shown with a mancala board, a game that he is said to have brought to his country. In his left hand the king holds a peace knife.

There are many ethnic groups in which African art can be divided into. Bambara is an ethnic group and each has its own style of art. Bambara carvings are less naturalistic and can take many different forms from Humans to Hipopotamus. “The complex symbolic system of Bambara is reflected in an abundant production, related to the ritual functions, and has variable aesthetic qualities.”<sup>7</sup>



*Mali Mask in the Segu Substyle of the Bambara.*

### The Primitivist Aesthetic

“The conscious search in history for a more deeply expressive, permanent human nature and cultural structure in contrast to the nascent modern realities.”<sup>8</sup> The *Die Brucke* group had used Primitivism to allow a deeper flow of abstraction which was absent of linear perspective and was constructed of simple outlines. The figures painted by the *Die Brucke* were full of emotive distortions of each figure. Primitivism held the key to discovering energetic stylistic attributes which would later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century influence the young New York School of artists in New York City. Founding members of *Die Brucke* included Fritz Bleyl who met Ernst Ludwig Kirchner while studying in Dresden in 1901. They became

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7 [Http://www.africanethnicart.com/africanethnicgroup.aspx?ethnicgroup=bambara](http://www.africanethnicart.com/africanethnicgroup.aspx?ethnicgroup=bambara)

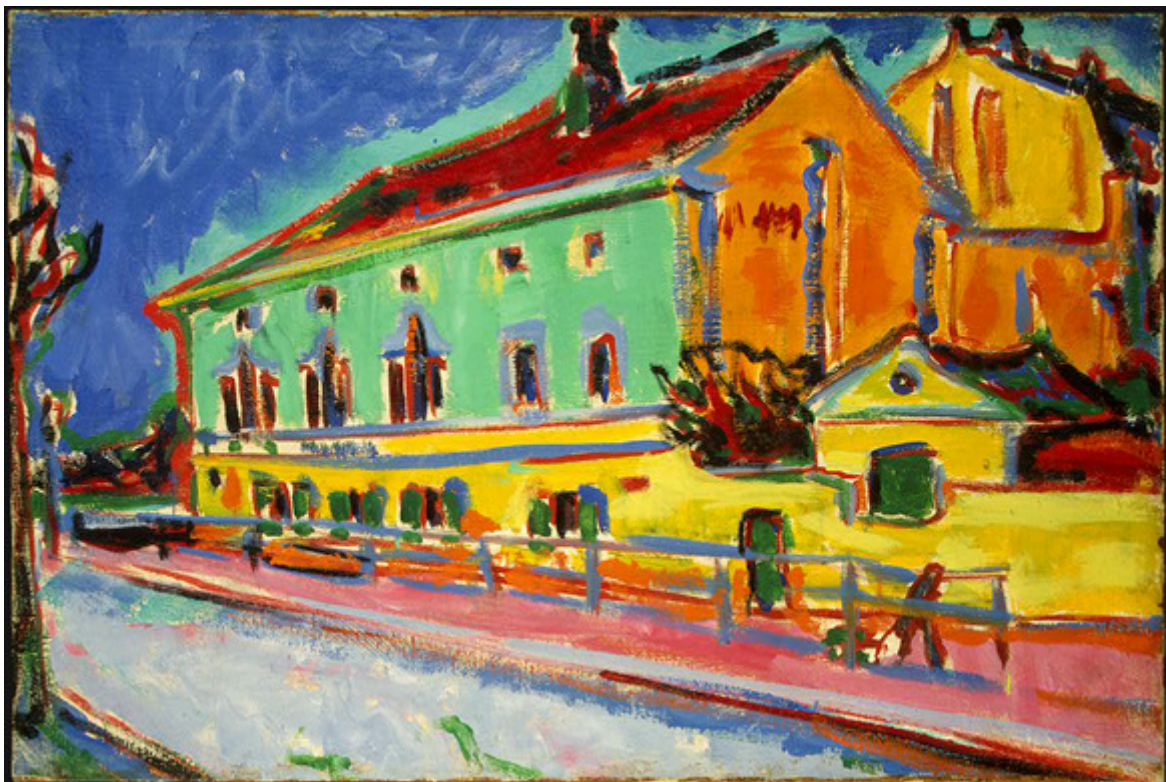
8 Diamond, S: In search of the Primitive, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1974) pp. 215-217

close friends and shared similar interests and ideas. After *Die Brücke* had formed in 1905, Bleyl became very active when participating in the group's exhibition projects. Bleyl designed posters for the exhibitions and tickets, which represented the group in the public eye.

### Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

Once *Die Brücke* had formed in 1905, Kirchner worked at a feverish pace. He painted for devoted collectors both private and institutional. In 1914 World War I had broken out and Kirchner had joined the German army. The war had caused psychological effects on Kirchner's wonderfully creative mind and he sadly suffered with a nervous breakdown.

This colour woodcut on oriental paper by Kirchner shows a difference from high-key colours of the houses in Dresden painting done in 1909/1910. It had a more darker tonal affair. Due to the Nazis regime, 600 of Kirchner's paintings were destroyed as being *dengenerate*.



*Ernst Ludwig Kirchner*  
*Houses in Dresden, 1909/1910*



**Ernst Ludwig Kirchner**  
*The Blond Painter Stirner (Blonder Maler Stirner), 1919*

This colour woodcut shows an obscuring of linear perspective in the figure and composition. Kirchner's wide indentations made into the wood from where the print was made are quite similar to the non - naturalistic style of the Bambara ethnic group. The blue colour is fragmenting the background behind the figure and blending with the figures wide-opened eye.

### Roberto Matta

Chilean born Roberto Matta was a member of the Surrealist movement and as a mentor to many important Abstract Expressionists. Matta broke away from Surrealism by adding a strong social attribute into his art, but kept the exploration into the subconscious mind aspect of Surrealism. Matta studied interior design at the Sacre Coeur Jesuit College and the Universidad Catolica of Santiago. "In his final year of college, Matta devised an ambitious architectural project called the league of religions".<sup>9</sup> The architecture Matta designed had a femininity aesthetic. He moved to Paris in 1933 and became an apprentice to the Modernist architect Le Corbusier. Matta met many influential people at this time including members of the Latin American literary avant-garde. One particular friend Frederico Garcia Larca introduced Matta to Salvador Dali. Dali instantly encouraged a young Matta to show his drawings to

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9 [Http://www.theartstory.org/artist\\_matta\\_roberto.htm](http://www.theartstory.org/artist_matta_roberto.htm)

Andre Breton. “Sensing an emerging talent and common spirit, Breton bought several of Matta's drawings and invited him to officially join the surrealist group in 1937.”<sup>10</sup>

The Surrealist movement began in 1924, the addition of having Matta into the group gave the Surrealists a sense of having 'New Blood' in the group. Matta exhibited with the group in the exhibition “Internationale du Surrealism held at the Galerie des Beaux\_Arts in Paris (1938)”<sup>11</sup>



**Roberto Matta**

*(Chilean, 1911-2002) Endless Nude*

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10 [Http://www.brooklynrail.org/2009/03/artseen/matta\\_five\\_decades\\_of\\_painting](http://www.brooklynrail.org/2009/03/artseen/matta_five_decades_of_painting)

11 [Http://www.theartstory.org/artist-matta-roberto.htm](http://www.theartstory.org/artist-matta-roberto.htm)

## In America

In 1939, Matta escaped from Nazis occupied Europe to New York, where he stayed till 1948. When Matta met Jackson Pollock they spoke of *automatism*. “The New Yorkers became aware of these things through contact with us, although, as in a Chaplin movie, we had arrived utterly lost.”<sup>12</sup> The work Matta produced from 1939 used the automatism technique developed by the Surrealist group. Matta called this body of work 'inscapes', which describes the method of painting or drawing straight from psychological states. “The vertigo of Eros evokes an infinite space that suggest both the depths of the psyche and the vastness of the universe.”<sup>13</sup>

Matta's painting 'The Vertigo of Eros' delivers a sense of suspension in space which relates to Freud's location of the human consciousness. Matta has evoked the depth of the human psyche in the painting.



**Roberto Matta**

*The Vertigo of Eros 1944.*

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12 The Modern Museum of Art, Moma Highlights New York: The Museum of Modern Art, revised 2004, p.189

13 Same as above

## Selected note by Roberto Matta

“If any noise contains a meaning already then automatism is the method for drawing some order out of any situation of disorder, and not a creation of disorder, (my conflict with abstract expressionism). You disturb the sense, but always to get the sense.”<sup>14</sup>

## Arshille Gorky

Gorky enrolled at both the National Academy of Design and the Grand Central School of Art. The first five years in New York were important in defining Gorky's style. Gorky was influenced by Picasso's cubist style and his fellow innovator George Braque. Other influences include the philosophy *Existentialism*. *Existentialism* does validate Biology and physics, but questions what is the human conscious, and how are we able to make intentions, blame, be responsible, have character, have a duty and have virtues. Gorky met Matta, and Matta taught Surrealist techniques of automatism.

By 1940, Gorky's art had developed into a Surrealist aesthetic. Many artists fled Europe before and after World War II, including Josef Albers, Hans Hofman, Andre Breton, Max Ernst, Piet Mondrian all brought unique pictorial modes as their luggage.

The confluence of these individuals made New York an ever more boisterous and diverse artistic ground, where the iconic names of Modern painting with all its variety of styles intermingled and intertwined, preparing the way for the emergence of an inimitable New York style of painting generally know as Abstract Expressionism.



*Ashille Gorky*

'*The Leaf of the artichoke*'. 1944.

### Willem de Kooning

De Kooning style of work is a fusion of three styles of painting that preceded him, being Cubism, Surrealism and Expressionism. De Kooning's style of art followed along Ashille Gorky's style, but a key difference in de Kooning's art is that his painting balanced between representing the female form and abstraction.

“His paintings of women feature a unique blend of *gestural* abstraction and figuration. Heavily influenced by the cubism of Picasso, de Kooning became a master at ambiguously blending figure and ground in his pictures while dismembering, re-assembling and distorting his figures in the process.”<sup>15</sup>

## Pure form

De Kooning discusses *pure form* as immeasurable. “The beauty of comfort. The great curve of a bridge was beautiful because people could go across the river in comfort. To compose with curves like that, and angles, and make works of art with then could only make people happy, they maintained, for the only association was one of comfort. This pure form of comfort, became the comfort of 'pure form'. The 'nothing' part in a painting until then - the part that was not painted but that was there because of the things in the picture which were painted - had a lot of descriptive labels attached to it like 'beauty', 'lyric', 'form', 'pure', 'balance', etc.”<sup>16</sup>

De Kooning is emphasising 'pure form' as the detachment from what is easily recognisable. De Kooning did not like people that labelled the abstraction as recognised forms of circles and squares. De Kooning wanted his art to mystify the viewer.



*Willem de Kooning,  
American, born Netherlands, 1904-1997, Excavation, 1950*

Excavation, 1950

'Excavation' was de Kooning's largest painting up to 1950. The painting is dominated by what de Kooning called *Pure form*, the non-representable forms. De Kooning gained inspiration from the film 'Bitter Rice', a 1949 Italian *Neorealist* film. "The mobile structure of hooked, calligraphic lines defines anatomical parts - bird, and fish shapes, human noses, eyes, teeth, necks and jaws - revealing the particular tension between abstraction and figuration that is inherent in de Kooning's work."<sup>17</sup>



*Willem de Kooning*

*Women 1. 1944*

“This is a ballad of sexual frustration. If you had to visualise de Kooning's relationship to the women, you would picture him trying to make polite conversation, or ignoring her sitting across from him on the subway, while desire pounded his brain.”<sup>18</sup>

De Kooning would cut-out mouths from magazines that optimised femininity. His fondness of mouths were funny because of their ability to express feeling and emotion. The mouth in 'Women one', is exaggerated and has angst. The women's features in her face and body have been exaggerated to a cartoon-like scale. The work has a painterliness aesthetic which projected de Kooning's desire for gestural abstraction.

### Jackson Pollock

During the 1930's, Pollock spent years painting realist murals which was a defining course that led Pollock to painting on a large scale. He realised early the power scale has over the audience. Pollock was largely influenced by Surrealism and Cubism as were the majority of New York artists. Pollock's upbringing was tough by being dragged around repeatedly throughout the South West of America, due to his Father being a surveyor. Pollock developed a love for nature, animals and the landscape. While living in Phoenix in 1923, Pollock discovered Native art. The key point to make here is that in a relatively short career, Pollock had transcended the movements before him. Pollock's technique of dripping paint onto canvas using a fluid body motion and stick was completely unique.

Harold Rosenberg wrote the essay 'The American Action painters' (1952) and discussed the idea that the canvas surface had to change its primary function of being a surface for paint to recording an event or 'action'. “Rosenberg wrote, painters were now treating the canvas as an arena in which to act... what was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event.”<sup>19</sup> Rosenberg celebrated the action painters and believed Abstract Expressionism to be a radical break by treating the canvas in a new way.

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18 [Http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2002/02/24/art](http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2002/02/24/art)

19 [Http://www.thearthistroy.org/critics-greenburgrosenberg.htm](http://www.thearthistroy.org/critics-greenburgrosenberg.htm)

Pollock did not work from studies he work directly from his imagination. Using a stick and pouring and dripping fluid paint and using sand, broken glass and string.

“Technique is just a means of arriving at a statement. There is no accident like there is no beginning or end. The painting has a life of its own, I try to let it live on its own, I try to let it live.”<sup>20</sup>

Enamel paint was used by Pollock as he found it pliable and allowed his wrist to flow into a rhythm of a weaving motion as the paint drips. Pollock's paintings confronted the opposition between nature and art. He used titles such as 'lavender mist' (1950) or 'Autumn Rhythm' (1950) to emphasise his affinity with nature. His own natural spontaneity allowing the point to flow without a point of reference is more natural than a formalist standpoint. A formalist painter would try to paint forms which are easily recognisable to human cognition. The act of creating a line, is the actual starting point from where form can exist.

“In painting, the primary agency of physical motion (as distinct from illusionary representation of motion, as with the Futurists) is the line, conceived not as the thinnest of planes, nor as edge, contour or connect, but as stroke or figure (in the sense of “figure skating”.) In its passage on the canvas each such line can establish the actual movement of the artist's body as an aesthetic statement line, from wiry calligraphy to footwide flaunts of the house painter's brush, has played the leading part in the technique of action painting, through there are other ways besides line of releasing force onto canvas.”<sup>21</sup>

### Pollock's Process

Standing above a 9ft x 17ft canvas laid bare onto the barn floor, Pollock would stare intently as he proceeded to have creative thoughts, while puffing a cigarette profusely. Taking a can of paint and dripping the brush and allowing the paint to fall like rain from a drain pipe. The movement of his wrist was enough to control the motion needed, while crouched in position low enough to circulate the floor-barred canvas. The movement of

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20 [Http://www.Youtube.com/jacksonpollock](http://www.Youtube.com/jacksonpollock)

21 H. R., from “Hans Hofmann: Nature into Action,” Art news, May 1957

Pollock's own body counteracted upon previous movement and would intensify. The period of intense painting would halt.

The canvas would be pinned directly to a wall and study would commence for hours, intently observing what he had done. Pollock would call this study period as 'getting acquainted' with the painting.

“The feverish intensity of the actual painting process could not be kept up indefinitely, but long period of contemplation and thought must aid in the preparation for renewed work.”<sup>22</sup>

After the 'getting acquainted' period had passed, Pollock would place the canvas back onto the floor. He would start using another colour and repeat the dripping process. After several periods of being on/off the wall and being more finalised, Pollock would confirm that the painting had gone into the 'concrete' phase. The 'concrete' phase is where Pollock would declare there is nothing else I can do to it. “He said, that he works from the abstract to the concrete, and that the painting does not depend on reference to my object or tactile surface, but exists 'on its own’”<sup>23</sup>.

When discussing his work, Pollock stated “my paintings do not have a center,” “but depend on the same amount of interest throughout.”<sup>24</sup>

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22 [Http://www.artnews.com](http://www.artnews.com), Ann Lardi

23 [Http://www.artnews.com](http://www.artnews.com) Ann Lardi

24 [Http://www.artnews.com](http://www.artnews.com) Ann Lardi



*Jackson Pollock*

*(American, 1912-1956) Number 4*

There is no reference point to an object of interest like with de Kooning's or Gorky's paintings. Pollock's work must be considered from the point of view of expression through the integration of rhythm, colour and design, which he feels beauty is composed of. The colours in number 4, are integrated as a whole, so that one does not separate and identify the colours separately. The physicality of space has been removed. We the viewer are not given the opportunity to float into the work. Instead, we are given the opportunity to immerse our emotional self and the intangible quality we sometimes call 'spiritual'.

## Conclusion

I have written about the influence Primitivism had on the Expressionism group in Berlin known as 'Die Brücke' and showed examples of the non-representable forms that were carved by tribesmen of the Bambara tribe show a direct significance with how Expressionism developed. Expressionism quickly developed out of World War one due to trauma and conflict artists suffered with, who fought in that war and were directly affected on a psychological level. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner is an example of how war can affect a gifted artist's perception on reality. Even though the War caused trauma to Kirchner's psyche, he continued to produce a portfolio of wonderful expressive work.

The significance of Roberto Matta is vastly important to American painting. Along with a few other artists who travelled to America just after World War one.

Matta's significance has been proven through my research into meeting artists in Paris such as Andre Breton and Salvador Dali and being accepted into the Surrealist group. Being allowed to exhibit with the group and meet and discuss ideas was hugely influential to Matta. Matta was the connection between Europe and America.

Through meeting Gorky, Matta influenced Gorky's Surrealist interest. Gorky's work was hugely influenced by Surrealist ideas of automatism. In turn, De Kooning met Gorky and would hang out in bars in New York and drink and discuss automatism and try to reach into the sub-conscious mind while painting.

Pollock was influenced by his friends Gorky and De Kooning and the ideas Matta brought over from Paris, but his work was mostly influenced by childhood memories of the vast landscape Western America has. Pollock was the true revolutionary, because although his work should be influenced by Cubism, Surrealism and Expressionism, Pollock was bold enough to experiment with new ways of painting and new ways of approaching the canvas on the floor and on the wall in an unconventional space. Pollock did not work on an easel or did he have a 'studio' as such as did artists in New York. He was based in Long Island and worked in a barn. His 'drip technique' was

completely new to what any other artist has tried to do before him.

#### Image list

1. Otto Dix 1891 Germany - 1969 Switzerland *'Nachtliche Begegnung mit einem Irrsinnigen'*

[Night-time encounter with a madman], plate 22 from *Der Krieg* Intaglio etching, aquatint, drypoint

Edition: ed 58/70 printing plate 26.2 h x 19.7 w cm The Poynton Bequest 2003 Accession No: NGA 2003.352.22 © Otto Dix. Licensed by Viscopy

2. Ndop, Woodne carving of king ShyaamaMbul a Ngoong, Late 18<sup>th</sup> Century. British Museum.

3. Mali Mask in the Segu Substyle of the Bambara. Private collection

4. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Houses in Dresden*, 1909/1910 Ruth and Jacob Kainen Collection, Gift (Partial and Promised) in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art © Ingeborg and Dr. Wolfgang Henze-Ketterer, Wichtrach/Bern

5. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner *The Blond Painter Stirner (Blonder Maler Stirner)*, 1919 color woodcut on oriental paper image: 62.7 x 33.8 cm (24 11/16 x 13 5/16 in.) sheet: 69.6 x 41.1 cm (27 3/8 x 16 3/16 in.) Ruth and Jacob Kainen Collection, Gift in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art © Ingeborg and Dr. Wolfgang Henze-Ketterer, Wichtrach/Bern

7. Roberto Matta (Chilean, 1911-2002) *Endless Nude*, 1938. Pencil and crayon on paper, 12 3/4 x 19 1/2" (32.4 x 49.5 cm). Katherine S. Dreier Bequest. © 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

8 Roberto Matta *The Vertigo of Eros* 1944. Oil on canvas, 6' 5" x 8' 3" (195.6 x 251.5 cm). Given anonymously. © 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

9 Ashille Gorky *The Leaf of the artichoke*. 1944. Oil on canvas, 28 x 35 7/8" (71.1 x 91.2 cm). Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection Fund. © 2011 Estate of Arshile Gorky / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

10 Willem de Kooning, American, born Netherlands, 1904-1997, *Excavation*, 1950

© 2008 The Willem de Kooning Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

11 Willem de Kooning *Women 1*. 1944. Engraving, plate: 11 7/8 x 9 13/16" (30.2 x 24.9 cm); sheet: 18 7/8 x 12 1/4" (48 x 31.1 cm). Gift of Lee Krasner Pollock. © 2011 Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

13. Jackson Pollock (American, 1912-1956) *Number 4*, 1950 Oil, enamel, and aluminum paint on canvas Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh Gift of Frank R. S. Kaplan, 1954

## Glossary

Die Brücke = A group of artists that formed in 1905 in Germany, primarily in Dresden. They formed the movement of German Expressionism and included the artist Ernst Ludwig Kirchner.

Degenerate = Hitler wanted to denounce any art that challenged authority and titled art of political or sociological significance as 'degenerate'. All work classified as degenerate was destroyed by Nazis Germany.

Existentialism = Agrees with the Science of Physics and Biology, but states there is more to understanding human that Physics and Biology can conceive alone. Intention, blame, responsibility, character, duty, virtue are apart of human conditioning which those Sciences do not understand.

Pure Form = pure abstraction where easily recognisable forms do not exist.

Photomontage = A montage created using photographic material

Neorealism in painting = A style of painting that focuses purely on being exact and precisely what the eye can see. (Neo relates to the period in Art history of artists who have worked from 1980 in this style)

Automatism = can be compared to improvisation in music and acting, where the artist allows freedom to release sub-conscious creative decisions rather than the dominance of the conscious mind.

Gestural = used to describe the sense of freedom Abstract Expressionism had

Bambara = The Bambara are a large Mande racial group located mostly in the country of Mali. They are the largest and most dominant group in that country. Across the border in Mauritania, there are about 1000 Bambara living near the town of Timbedra. The Bambara live in the middle valley of the Niger River. During the 1700's, there were two Bambara kingdoms: Segu and Karta. In the 1800's, aggressive Muslim groups overthrew these kingdoms, leaving only a few anti-Muslim Bambara to oppose their occupation. This lasted forty years until the arrival of the French. Only 3% of the Bambara had become to Islam by 1912. After World War II, the number of Muslim converts grew due to their resistance to the French and their exposure to Muslim merchants. The Bambara are 70% Muslim today. Even though most Bambara claim to be Muslim, many people still follow their traditional beliefs in ancestor worship. The Bambara trust that the ancestral spirits may take on the forms of animals or even vegetables. In extraordinary ceremonies, the spirits are worshipped and presented with offerings of flour and water. The oldest member of a lineage act as the "mediator" between the living and the dead. Information kindly provided by [Emuseum](#) - Written by: Tomoki Kato