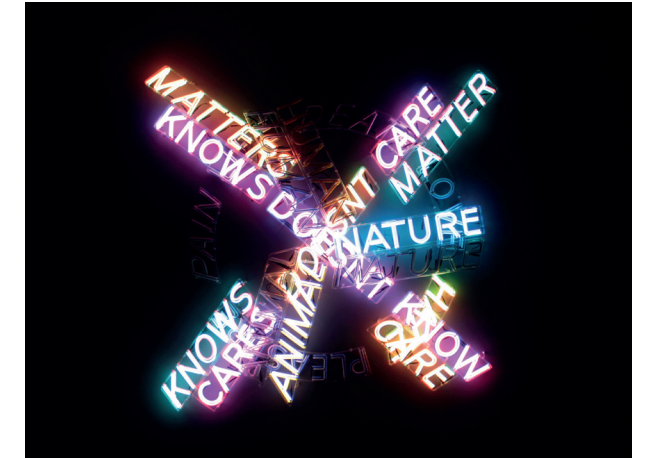


Photo by Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Biennale di Venezia 2015, Centre Pompidou Paris.

Contemporary Art

Contemporary art is, in most cases, defined as art that has been and continues to be created during our lifetime. Sounds pretty simple, right? Well, if this was the case, how can we explain that no other artistic definition, no other artistic category of -isms is as confusing, and at the same time straightforward as Contemporary Art? The term demands respect from the beginning and its first word, contemporary, it almost seems to suggest that you must know what it is without having to

Here at About.com Art History, 1970 is the cut-off point for two reasons. First, because it was around 1970 that the terms “Postmodern” and “Postmodernism” popped up -- meaning, we must assume, that the art world had had its fill of Modern Art starting right then. Secondly, 1970 seems to be the last bastion of easily classified artistic movements. If you look at the outline of Modern Art, and compare it to the outline of Contemporary Art, you’ll quickly notice that there are far more entries on the former page. This, in spite of the fact that Contemporary Art enjoys far more working artists making far more art. (It may be that Contemporary artists are mostly working in “movements” that cannot be classified, due to there being around ten artists in any given “movement”, none of which have shot off an email saying that there’s a new “movement” and “could you please tell others?”) On a more serious note, while it may be hard to classify emergent movements, Contemporary art -- collectively -- is much more socially conscious



than any previous era has been. A whole lot of art from the last 30 years has been connected with one issue or another: feminism, multiculturalism, globalization, bio-engineering and AIDS awareness all come readily to mind as subject matter. So, there you have it. Contemporary art runs from (roughly) 1970 until now. We won’t have to worry about shifting an arbitrary point on the art timeline for another decade, at least. For many, the cut-off period, or the end of Modern Art is marked in the year of 1970’s and with the birth of the term Postmodern. Towards the end of the 20th century, with the development of technology, we see the rise of the Video and Performance Art, alongside the

alongside the experimentation and appropriation from multiple disciplines and sources. Long gone is the idea that the Artist is the sole author of the work. With the development of Contemporary Art, the audience became an integral piece in the creation of the meaning and reflections of the created works. The process becomes important and the variety of different approaches helps create different categories within a category. This escape away from the dominant definition only strengthens the postmodern spirit. Topics of such works, more often than not reflect the heated issues of the contemporary society with the aim to re-define the world and accepted values.