



THE MAKING OF MODERN ART

With Barbara Isherwood

Fridays, September 12 - October 17, 10:30 AM-12 PM

In this exciting new series from art historian Barbara Isherwood, we'll explore how the radically new ideas and inventions that changed life in the 19th and early 20th centuries transformed art as well.

As we survey stunning works by Manet, Gauguin, Kandinsky, Picasso, Mondrian, O'Keeffe and Canadian icons like Lawren Harris and Emily Carr, we'll examine the stories behind their most important creations and learn how the social changes that they were living through—from the industrial revolution to new developments in science and spirituality—impacted the development of modern art.

Over six lively, slide-illustrated lectures, we'll confront the revolutionary changes—and artistic masterpieces—that ushered in modernity.

Lecturer Bio: *Art historian Barbara Isherwood is the former host of ArtSync TV and a frequent lecturer at the School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto. An energetic educator who brings infectious passion and clear-eyed analysis to history's greatest artworks, Barbara has been a beloved staple of the Speakers Annex/Curious Minds community for much of the past decade, leading popular courses such as The Art of Picasso, The Great Old Masters, and The Art of Living: The History of Interior Design.*

Lecture Topics and Syllabus:

September 12: Towards Modernity

The roots of modern art can be found in the Enlightenment, when the rise of individual thinking prompted the formation of rebellious artistic brotherhoods and the first independent exhibitions. The expanded urban centres of 19th century Europe, with their mix of social classes, provided artists with new subjects that called for fresh means of depiction.

Discussed in this lecture: *James McNeil Whistler, Édouard Manet, Georges Seurat, Claude Monet and more!*

September 19: Genesis of a New Vision

In the 19th century, progressive artists began to draw inspiration from sources outside the traditional canon of Western art history. Japanese prints, the new medium of photography, street posters and the popular press provided forward-thinking artists with new ideas about both the form and content of art.

Discussed in this lecture: *Vincent van Gogh, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Edgar Degas, Giacomo Balla and more!*

September 26: The Machine Age

The machine, a defining feature of modernism, had a significant impact on the development of modern art. Modern means of transportation offered artists newfound mobility and contributed to the spread of avant-garde art across nations. Machine-age technology built the modern city and powered war, prompting artists to either celebrate or decry the ubiquity of the machine.

Discussed in this lecture: *J.M.W. Turner, Sonia Delaunay, Kazimir Malevich, Georgia O'Keeffe and more!*

October 3: Expressing the Self

One of the hallmarks of modern art is that art expresses the view of the artist, rather than the patron. We will examine how the avant-garde drew upon new colour theories, radical paint application techniques, unorthodox composition and the influence of tribal and folk art to express their innermost feelings.

Discussed in this lecture: *Edvard Munch, Pablo Picasso, Francis Bacon, Jackson Pollock*

and more!

October 10: From Illusion to Essence

In the 20th century, the idea that art should be an illusionistic representation of an ideal world gave way to a search for an art that embodied a deeper, universal quality. Inspired by scientific discoveries, Utopian thinking and radical ideas about time and space (the Fourth Dimension!), artists took an increasingly abstract approach to picturing “reality.”

Discussed in this lecture: *George Braque, Piet Mondrian, Amadeo Modigliani, Barbara Hepworth and more!*

October 17: Picturing the Spiritual

As traditional religious art wanes in post-Enlightenment Europe, alternative ideas arise about how to represent spiritual values in art. In their search for new ways to express the divine, modern artists mine a wide range of sources including Christian mysticism, esotericism, eastern religions, the occult and Spiritualism.

Discussed in this lecture: *Hilma af Klint, Vassily Kandinsky, Emily Carr, Lawren Harris and more!*