Book 6

SEVENTH EDITION

The Humanistic Tradition

Modernism, Postmodernism, and the Global Perspective

GLORIA K. FIERO

Mc Graw Hill Education

THE HUMANISTIC TRADITION, BOOK 6
MODERNISM, POSTMODERNISM,
AND THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
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Pablo Picasso, *Seated Woman* (detail), Paris, 1927. Oil on wood, 4 ft. 3⅛ in. × 3 ft. 2¼ in.

Chapter

38

Globalism: The Contemporary World

ca. 1970–present

"To choose what is best for both the near and distant futures is a hard task, often seemingly contradictory and requiring knowledge and ethical codes which for the most part are still unwritten."
E. O. Wilson

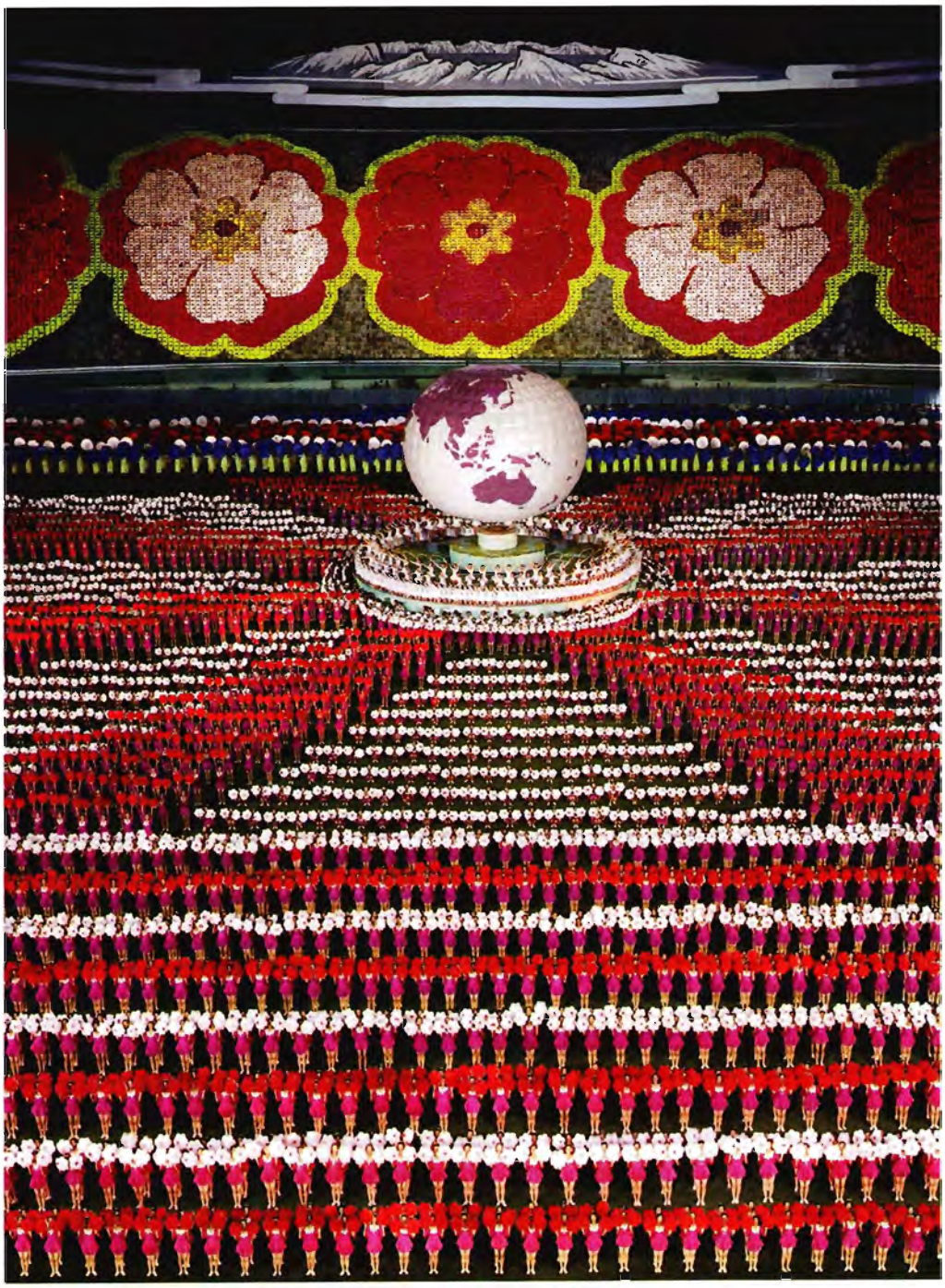


Figure 38.1 ANDREAS GURSKY, *Pyongyang I*, 2007, C print, 13 ft. 10 in. × 6 ft. 10 in. × 2½ in. Gursky's photos, printed at colossal size, are digitally manipulated "records" of public events. The Arirang Festival was held in North Korea in 2007 to honor the late communist ruler Kim il Sung. More than 50,000 performers and 30,000 schoolchildren (holding colored flip cards) took part in a tightly choreographed visual display. Some critics see in these images the loss of individuality in a totalitarian society.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 1962, the Canadian communications theorist Marshall McLuhan predicted the electronic transformation of planet earth into a "global village."* In the global village, communication between geographically remote parts of the world would be almost instantaneous, and every important new development—technological, ecological, political, economic, and intellectual—would affect every villager to some degree. Social and geographic mobility, receptivity to change, and a sense of collectivity would be the hallmarks of this new world community. Over the past five decades, McLuhan's futuristic vision has become a reality.

The roots of *globalism*—the interdependence of cultures and peoples in all parts of the world—are found in the industrial and commercial technology of the late nineteenth century. But the single factor that has been most significant in bringing together all parts of the world in the immediate exchange of information and ideas is electronic (and more recently digital) technology. The global community of the twenty-first century is challenged by some distinct problems: the effects of globalism on established religious, national, and ethnic traditions; the continuing threat of terrorism; and the future health of the world ecosystem. Globalism, its challenges, and its effects are the main themes of this chapter. In the arts, the focus is on the transformative influence of digital technology on traditional and untraditional genres. The multiple and often contradictory messages and styles in the arts of the global community make our own time one of the most exciting in the history of the humanistic tradition.

* The term was coined by the British Modernist Wyndham Lewis (1882–1957) in *America and Cosmic Man* (1948).

The Global Paradigm

Globalism has become the new model or paradigm for the contemporary world. While accelerated by digital technology, it owes much to a broad array of late twentieth-century developments: the success of anticolonial movements (see chapter 36), the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union, and the end of the cold war (see chapter 35). With the elimination of these obstacles to freedom of communication among the populations of the earth, global cultural integration became a possibility, then a reality.

Television, the Internet, and video-sharing websites have been essential in dispersing visual images of international events, and effective in promoting Western values and consumer goods to other parts of the world. As Western consumer culture took hold across Asia and the Near East, it met a mixed reception (with some critics objecting to the "McDonaldization" of the planet). In India and China, its effects were transformative, while in some parts of the Muslim-occupied Near and Middle East, it was to produce virulent anti-Western antipathy (with enormous consequences for world peace), as well as popular movements for radical political change.

Globalism itself, however, remains an inevitable contemporary paradigm. In the international best-selling book *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century* (2005), the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Thomas L. Friedman describes a world that has become metaphorically "flat." With the collapse of most of the age-old barriers—physical, historical, and nationalistic—the global landscape offers a new, level playing field to all who choose to compete in the international marketplace. Interlinked digital networks, communication satellites, fiber-optic cables, and work-flow software provide an untrammeled exchange of data and the free flow of goods and ideas. These tools continue to transform the planet into a single world community.

Globalism and Tradition

Many parts of continental Africa have had a difficult time meeting the challenge of globalism. Following the end of colonialism and the withdrawal of Western powers from Africa, a void developed between African traditions and the modern ways of life that had been introduced by the European presence. Some African states, especially those crippled by poverty and epidemic disease, have faced serious problems arising from this void. Pleas for African unity, such as those made in the 1960s by Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972), leader of Ghana, have gone unheeded; power struggles in some African countries have resulted in the emergence of totalitarian dictatorships, and age-old ethnic conflict has been reignited, all too often resulting in bloody civil wars and involving the recruitment of child soldiers (Figure **38.2**). Vast parts of Africa are thus caught in the sometimes devastating struggle between the old ways and the new.

Africa's leading English-language writer, Chinua Achebe (1930–2013), dealt sensitively with such problems. He is best known for his novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958), which remains the most widely read novel in African literature. In the short story "Dead Men's Path," Achebe examines the warp between premodern and modern traditions and the ongoing bicultural conflicts that plague many parts of Africa. At the same time, he probes the elusive, more universal tension between tradition and innovation, between spiritual and secular allegiance, and between faith and reason—polarities that continue to test human values in our time.

Figure 38.2 CHERI SAMBA, *Little Kadogo*, 2004. Acrylic on canvas, 78¾ × 106 in. Cheri Samba (b. 1956), a native of the Democratic Republic of Congo, depicts a *kadogo* (Swahili slang for "child soldier"), who raises his hands in surrender. The hand of an armed adult behind him warns, however, that the killing might very well continue.

READING 38.1 Achebe's "Dead Men's Path" (1972)

Michael Obi's hopes were fulfilled much earlier than he had expected. He was appointed headmaster of Ndume Central School in January 1949. It had always been an unprogressive school, so the Mission authorities decided to send a young and energetic man to run it. Obi accepted this responsibility with enthusiasm. He had many wonderful ideas and this was an opportunity to put them into practice. He had had a sound secondary school education which designated him a "pivotal teacher" in the official records and set him apart from the other headmasters in the mission field. He was outspoken in his condemnation of the narrow views of these older and often less-educated ones.

"We shall make a good job of it, shan't we?" he asked his young wife when they first heard the joyful news of his promotion.

"We shall do our best," she replied. "We shall have such beautiful gardens and everything will be just *modern* and delightful. . . ." In their two years of married life she had become completely infected by his passion for "modern methods" and his denigration of "these old and superannuated people in the teaching field who would be better employed as traders in the Onitsha market." She began to see herself already as the admired wife of the young headmaster, the queen of the school.

The wives of the other teachers would envy her position. She would set the fashion in everything. . . . Then, suddenly, it occurred to her that there might not be other wives. Wavering between hope and fear, she asked her husband, looking anxiously at him.

"All our colleagues are young and unmarried," he said with enthusiasm which for once she did not share. "Which is a good thing," he continued.

"Why?"

"Why? They will give all their time and energy to the school."

Nancy was downcast. For a few minutes she became sceptical about the new school; but it was only for a few minutes. Her little personal misfortune could not blind her to her husband's happy prospects. She looked at him as he sat folded up in a chair. He was stoop-shouldered and looked frail. But he sometimes surprised people with sudden bursts of physical energy. In his present posture, however, all his bodily strength seemed to have retired behind his deep-set eyes, giving them an extraordinary power of penetration. He was only twenty-six, but looked thirty or more. On the whole, he was not unhandsome.

"A penny for your thoughts, Mike," said Nancy after a while, imitating the woman's magazine she read.

"I was thinking what a grand opportunity we've got at last to show these people how a school should be run."

Ndume School was backward in every sense of the word. Mr. Obi put his whole life into the work, and his wife hers too. He had two aims. A high standard of teaching was insisted upon, and the school compound was to be turned into a place of beauty. Nancy's dream-gardens came to life with the coming of the rains, and blossomed. Beautiful hibiscus and allamanda hedges in brilliant red and yellow marked out the carefully tended school compound from the rank neighbourhood bushes.

One evening as Obi was admiring his work he was scandalized to see an old woman from the village hobble right across the compound, through a marigold flowerbed and the hedges. On going up there he found faint signs of an almost disused path from the village across the school compound to the bush on the other side.

"It amazes me," said Obi to one of his teachers who had been three years in the school, "that you people allowed the villagers to make use of this footpath. It is simply incredible." He shook his head.

"The path," said the teacher apologetically, "appears to be very important to them. Although it is hardly used, it connects the village shrine with their place of burial."

"And what has that got to do with the school?" asked the headmaster.

"Well, I don't know," replied the other with a shrug of the shoulders. "But I remember there was a big row some time ago when we attempted to close it."

"That was some time ago. But it will not be used now," said Obi as he walked away. "What will the Government Education Officer think of this when he comes to inspect the school next week? The villagers might, for all I know, decide to use the schoolroom for a pagan ritual during the inspection."

Heavy sticks were planted closely across the path at the two places where it entered and left the school premises. These were further strengthened with barbed wire.

Three days later the village priest of Ani called on the headmaster. He was an old man and walked with a slight stoop. He carried a stout walking-stick which he usually tapped on the floor, by way of emphasis, each time he made a new point in his argument.

"I have heard," he said after the usual exchange of cordialities, "that our ancestral footpath has recently been closed. . . ."

"Yes," replied Mr. Obi. "We cannot allow people to make a highway of our school compound."

"Look here, my son," said the priest bringing down his walking-stick, "this path was here before you were born and before your father was born. The whole life of this village depends on it. Our dead relatives depart by it and our ancestors visit us by it. But most important, it is the path of children coming in to be born. . . ."

Mr. Obi listened with a satisfied smile on his face.

"The whole purpose of our school," he said finally, "is to eradicate just such beliefs as that. Dead men do not require footpaths. The whole idea is just fantastic. Our duty is to teach your children to laugh at such ideas."

"What you say may be true," replied the priest, "but we follow the practices of our fathers. If you re-open the path we shall have nothing to quarrel about. What I always say is: let the hawk perch and let the eagle perch." He rose to go.

"I am sorry," said the young headmaster. "But the school compound cannot be a thoroughfare. It is against our regulations. I would suggest your constructing another path, skirting our premises. We can even get our boys to help in building it. I don't suppose the ancestors will find the little detour too burdensome."

"I have no more words to say," said the old priest, already outside.

Two days later a young woman in the village died in childbed. A diviner was immediately consulted and he prescribed heavy sacrifices to propitiate ancestors insulted by the fence.

Obi woke up next morning among the ruins of his work. The beautiful hedges were torn up not just near the path but right round the school, the flowers trampled to death and one of the school buildings pulled down.

. . . That day, the white Supervisor came to inspect the school and wrote a nasty report on the state of the premises but more seriously about the "tribal-war situation developing between the school and the village, arising in part from the misguided zeal of the new headmaster."

Q How does this story illustrate the conflict between tradition and innovation?

Q What might the path in this story symbolize?

The Challenge of Globalism

Terrorism

Probably the greatest single threat to the contemporary global community is *terrorism*, the deliberate and systematic use of violence against civilians in order to destabilize political systems or advance political, religious, or ideological goals. As a combat tactic, terrorism is not new; however, rapid forms of communication and transportation, and the availability of more virulent weaponry, make contemporary terrorism both imminent and potentially devastating. Terrorist attacks have taken place all over the world, from Madrid to Mumbai. One of the most ruthless took the form of a coordinated air assault on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. On September 11, 2001, Islamic militants representing the radical Muslim group known as al-Qaeda ("the base") hijacked four American airliners, flying two of them into the Twin Towers in Manhattan, and a third into the headquarters of the U. S. Department of Defense near the nation's capital. A fourth crashed before it could reach its target: the White House.

Masterminded by al-Qaeda's leader, Osama bin Laden (1957–2011), the attack, now called "9-11," killed more than 3000 civilians. Bin Laden justified the operation as retaliation for America's military presence and eco-political interference in the predominantly Muslim regions of the Middle East. The recurrence of radical Islamist assaults on other primarily Western targets throughout the world underline the troubling rift between two principal ideologies: the modern and dominantly Western separation of Church and state, and strict Qur'anic theocracy, by which religion and religious leaders dictate the governing order.

Eighteen months after 9-11, on suspicions of an Iraqi stockpile of chemical and biological weapons, a multinational coalition force invaded Iraq; that military intervention, which led to armed conflict between Shiite and Sunni factions, complicated the already tense situation in the Middle East. The war on terror has since spread to other regions, such as Afghanistan, where militant Sunni insurgents known as the Taliban seek to establish the rigid enforcement of Islamic law. And, since 2003, movements to end autocratic rule in various parts of the Middle East (including Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Yemen, and Syria) have resulted in regional destabilization, and, in many cases, bloody civil wars.

The Arts and Terrorism

Initially, artists responded to the events of 9-11 by commemorating the destruction of the World Trade Center and those who died in the assault. One year after the attack, the composer John Adams (whom we met in chapter 37) premiered his choral eulogy *On the Transmigration of Souls*, which was awarded the 2003 Pulitzer Prize in music. Numerous photographs and films have revisited the tragic circumstances of the event, especially the experience of victims who escaped the burning buildings by jumping to their death. The American visual artist Carolee Schneemann (b. 1939), best known for her body-oriented

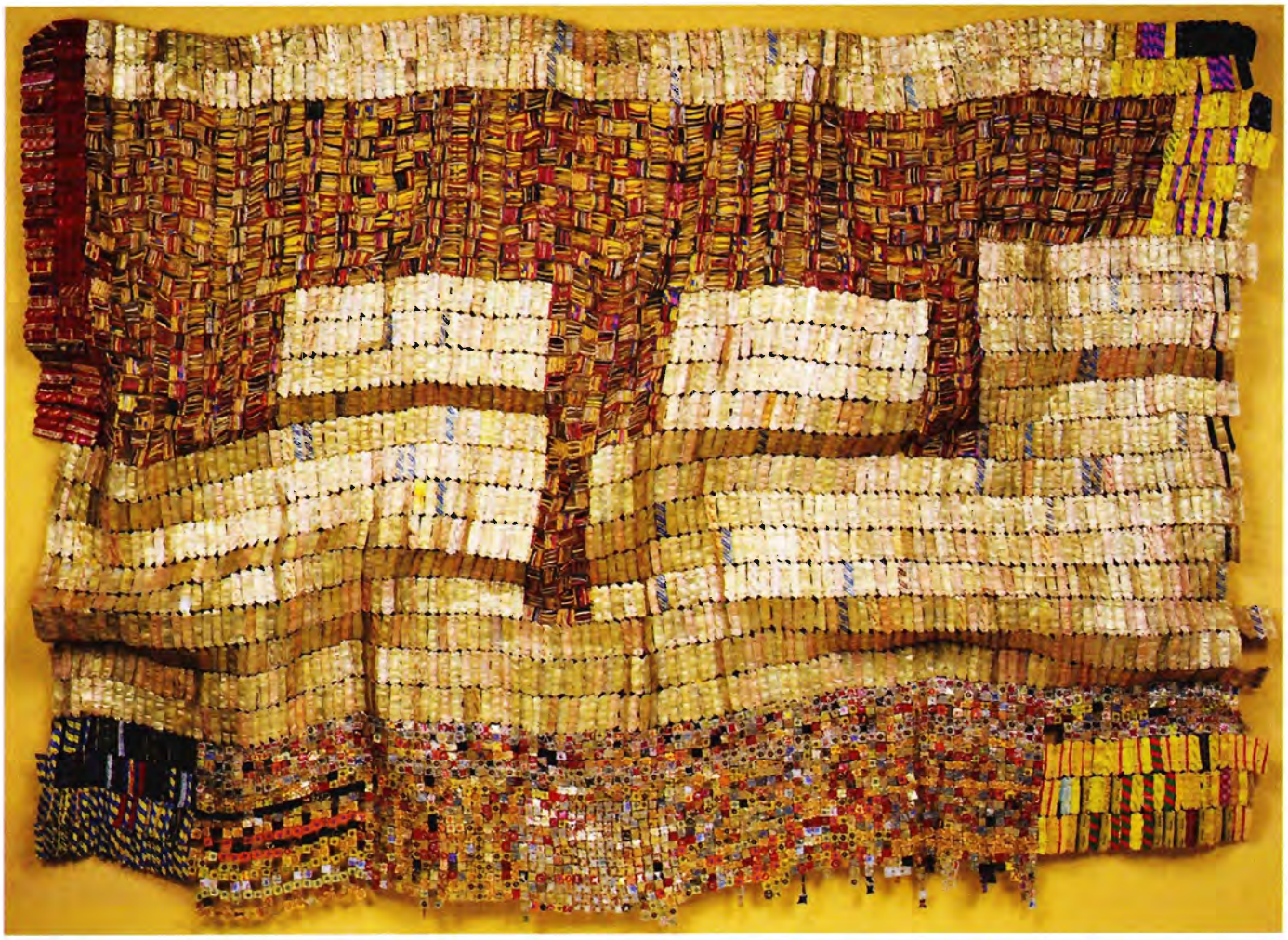


Figure 38.3 EL ANATSUI, *Between Earth and Heaven*, 2006. Aluminum, copper wire, 91 × 126 in. Widely regarded as Africa's most significant sculptor, El Anatsui teaches at the University of Nigeria.

The sculptures of the Ghanaian artist El Anatsui (b. 1944) reveal the intersection of traditional and contemporary African themes. *Between Earth and Heaven* (2006) consists of thousands of aluminum seals and screw caps from bottles of wine and liquor (Figure **38.3**). The caps are flattened and woven with copper wire to create large, shimmering metal tapestries. El Anatsui recycles discarded objects into compelling artworks whose designs and colors (gold, red, and black) have much in common with the decorative cotton-cloth textiles known as *kente* (Figure **38.4**). The handwoven *kente*—the name derives from the designs of baskets traditionally woven in the kingdom of Asante (modern Ghana)—belong to a royal textile tradition that reaches back to the eleventh century. Vibrant in color and complex in their patterns, these textiles have come to be associated with a pan-African identity.

Figure 38.4 Asante *kente* textile, mid-twentieth century. Cotton, 3 ft. 11 in. × 6 ft. 7¼ in. The individual designs on the cloth are associated with seventeenth-century Asante kings who are said to have laid claim to specific signs and patterns.

performance pieces, treated the "jumper" image in stunning mixed-media artworks. One of these, *Terminal Velocity*, is a vertical grid of scanned newspaper photographs showing nine of the 200 or so individuals (some still unidentified) who leapt from the upper floors of the Twin Towers before the building collapsed (Figure **38.5**).

Literary reflection on 9-11 and its aftermath inspired (among other works) the novel *Falling Man* (2006) by Don DeLillo (see chapter 37), and Laurence Wright's carefully researched nonfiction study, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9-11* (2007). In 2013, the Canadian writer Margaret Atwood (see chapter 37) completed a fictional postapocalyptic trilogy, involving a lethal man-made plague unleashed by an ecoterrorist hacking collective called MaddAddam.

The global sense of insecurity in the face of international terrorism was powerfully voiced by two recently deceased Nobel Prize-winning poets: Wislawa Szymborska (1923–2012) and Seamus Heaney (1939–2013). Szymborska lived most of her life in communist-controlled Poland, a country that lost nearly one-fifth of its population during World War II. Her poems, while straightforward and conversational in tone, address personal and universal subjects and matters of moral urgency. "The Terrorist, He Watches," written in 1976, is a prescient anticipation of our current unease and apprehension.

The Irish Seamus Heaney shared with his countryman W. B. Yeats (see chapter 34) the gift of lyric brilliance. Heaney's ability to translate the small details of everyday experience into transcendent ideas was unsurpassed. While much of his poetry reflects his deep affection for the "bogs and barnyards" of rural life, one recent volume of poetry, *District and Circle*, responded to the violence of our time, specifically the 2005 terrorist attacks on London's subway system of which the District and Circle lines are a part. Prompted by the Roman poet Horace, Heaney grapples with the sobering fact that "anything can happen."

Figure 38.5 CAROLEE SCHNEEMANN, *Terminal Velocity*, 2001–2005. Black-and-white computer scans of falling bodies from 9-11, inkjet on paper, 8 × 7 ft. Collection of the artist. Schneemann enlarged scanned newspaper photographs (some by the American photojournalist Richard Drew). Collaging the photos onto a huge grid, she created a haunting image of corporeal vulnerability.

READING 38.2 Szymborska's "The Terrorist, He Watches" (1976)

The bomb will explode in the bar at twenty past one.
Now it's only sixteen minutes past.
Some will still have time to enter,
some to leave.

The terrorist's already on the other side.
That distance protects him from all harm
and, well, it's like the pictures:

A woman in a yellow jacket, she enters.
A man in dark glasses, he leaves.
Boys in jeans, they're talking.
Sixteen minutes past and four seconds.
The smaller one, he's lucky, mounts his scooter,
but that taller chap, he walks in.

Seventeen minutes and forty seconds.
A girl, she walks by, a green ribbon in her hair.
But that bus suddenly hides her.
Eighteen minutes past.
The girl's disappeared.
Was she stupid enough to go in, or wasn't she.
We shall see when they bring out the bodies.

Nineteen minutes past.
No one else appears to be going in.
On the other hand, a fat bald man leaves.
But seems to search his pockets and
at ten seconds to twenty past one
he returns to look for his wretched gloves.

It's twenty past one.
Time, how it drags.
Surely, it's now.
No, not quite.
Yes, now.
The bomb, it explodes.

Q What does this poem suggest about the life of the individual in the global village?

READING 38.3 Heaney's "Anything Can Happen" (2005)

After Horace, Odes, I, 34

Anything can happen. You know how Jupiter[1]
Will mostly wait for clouds to gather head
Before he hurls the lightning? Well just now
He galloped his thunder cart and his horses

Across a clear blue sky. It shook the earth
and the clogged underearth, the River Styx,[2]
the winding streams, the Atlantic shore itself.
Anything can happen, the tallest towers

Be overturned, those in high places daunted,
Those overlooked regarded. Stropped-beak Fortune
Swoops, making the air gasp, tearing the crest off one,
Setting it down bleeding on the next.

Ground gives. The heaven's weight
Lifts up off Atlas like a kettle lid.[3]
Capstones shift. Nothing resettles right.
Telluric[4] ash and fire-spores boil away.

Q How does the poet's use of ancient mythology contribute to the poem?

China: Global Ascendance

It is widely believed that the People's Republic of China will be the next great global power. In the last three decades, China has experienced a cultural transformation of enormous proportions. Once a country of rural villages, this vast nation now claims more than 160 cities with a population of one million or more people in each. Currently, China is the largest exporter on the planet. Still governed by a communist regime, its rapid advances in industry, technology, and the arts have made it a formidable presence on the global stage.

China's ascendance has not been unmarred by internal strife. Following the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 (see chapter 34), communist officials tightened control over all forms of artistic expression. Nevertheless, young Chinese artists and writers continued to work, either in exile or at their own peril. In June 1989, at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, thousands of student activists demonstrated in support of democratic reform. With Beethoven's Ninth Symphony blaring from loudspeakers, demonstrators raised a plaster figure of the goddess of democracy modeled on the Statue of Liberty. The official response to this overt display of freedom resulted in the massacre of some protesters and the imprisonment of others.

Since Tiananmen Square, literary publication has remained under the watchful eye of the state, but efforts to control music and the visual arts have been relaxed. A large body of Chinese literature, much of it written by women, has examined the traumatic years of Mao's Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). The enormous popularity of Western classical music in China has created a talent pool of highly trained performers. Outstanding filmmakers, such as Zhang Yimou (see Film and Activism) have received worldwide attention. Even more dramatic is the upsurge in painting and sculpture, where the Chinese have broken into the world art market with works that depart radically from Chinese tradition (and command huge prices in the West).

In the past four decades, artists—most of them rigorously trained in China's Central Academy—have had the opportunity to explore the major styles and techniques of their Western contemporaries, through international travel and mass electronic communication. In the early 1990s, there emerged two overlapping (and still flourishing) styles. The first, *political pop*, seized on Western icons and images to glamorize or discredit various aspects of Chinese life. The second, *cynical realism*, engaged commercial painting techniques to satirize social and political issues. Both of these styles are evident in the "Great Criticism" series by Wang Guangyi (b. 1956).

In one painting from the series (Figure **38.6**), bright colors and broad, simplified shapes, reminiscent of the Soviet-approved posters of the 1920s (see Figure 34.5), send a sly and subversive message: three Maoist workers, armed with the red flag of China, its mast an oversized pen, advance boldly into the arena of commercial combat, their mission approved by the official government stamps stenciled on the surface of the canvas. Here, collectivist

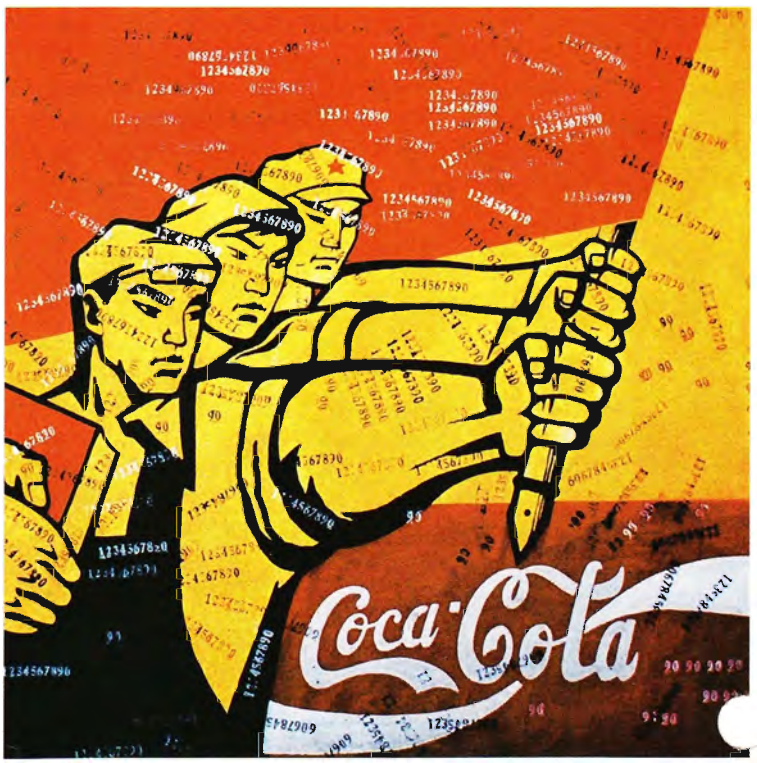


Figure 38.6 WANG GUANGYI, *Coca-Cola*, from the series "Great Criticism," 1993. Enamel paint on canvas, 4 ft. 11 in. × 3 ft. 11 in.

[1] Roman sky god.
[2] River in the underworld crossed by the souls of the dead.
[3] Mythic Titan condemned to support the heavens on his shoulders.
[4] Terrestrial.

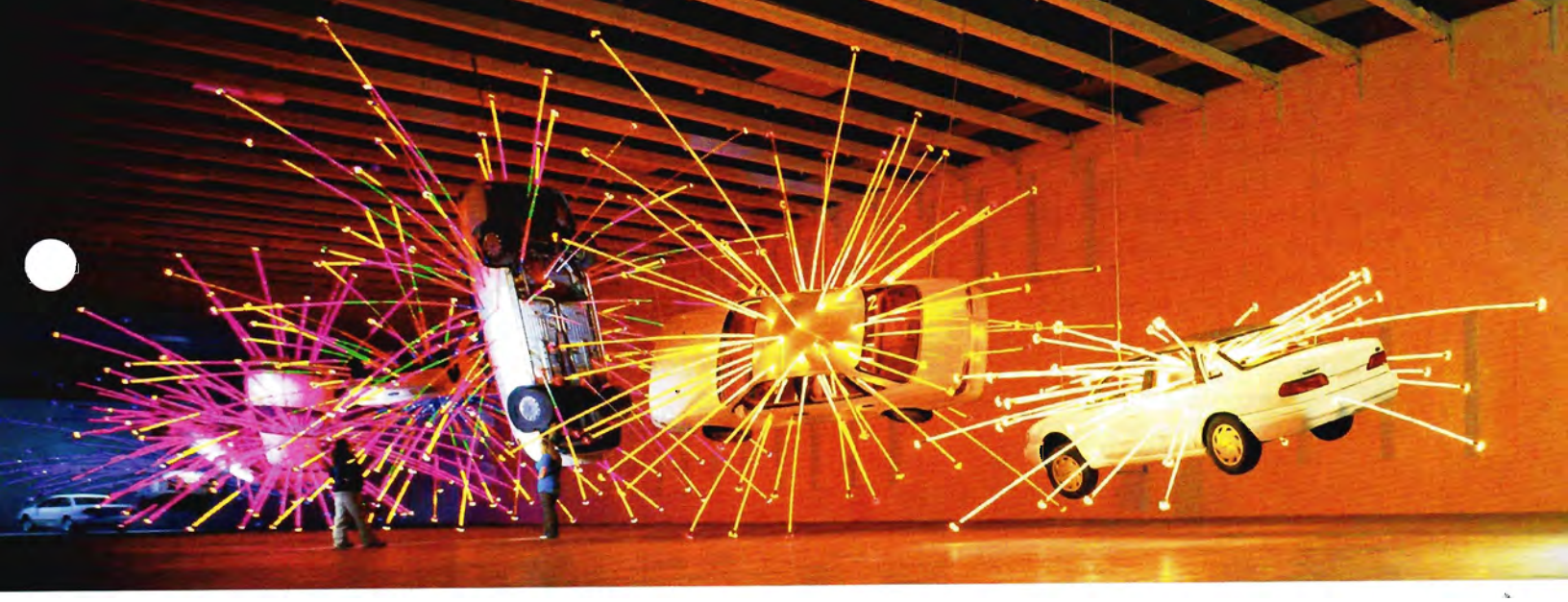


Figure 38.7 CAI GUO-QIANG, *Inopportune: Stage One*, 2005. Mixed media. Cai's installations are two- and three-dimensional "narratives" that regularly consume a series of rooms.

socialism engages capitalist consumerism, represented by such populist commodities as Coca-Cola, McDonald's hamburgers, and Marlboro cigarettes.

More recently, the Chinese art scene has exploded with an outpouring of photographic and video projects (see Figure 14.16), and elaborately choreographed mixed-media installations. The Chinese-born Cai Guo-Qiang (b. 1957) moved to Manhattan in 1995, bringing with him the age-old literary and artistic traditions of his homeland. Trained in stage design at the Shanghai Drama Institute, Cai captures in his public works the disquieting nature of contemporary life. Many of his installations explore the properties of gunpowder—an explosive invented by the Chinese for firework displays.

Cai's most ambitious project was an installation in 2004 of four works. The first piece, *Inopportune: Stage One*, featured a brilliant array of colored lights pulsing from long transparent rods that burst from nine identical Ford sedans (Figure **38.7**). The cars, suspended in midair along a 300-foot gallery, called to mind a sequence of images unfurling in a Chinese scroll, or a series of frozen film frames. *Inopportune: Stage Two*, installed in an adjacent gallery, consisted of nine prefabricated life-sized tigers pierced by hundreds of bamboo arrows—a reference to a popular thirteenth-century Chinese tale glorifying a hero who saves his village from a man-eating tiger. *Illusion* is a startling three-channel, ninety-second film projected on a huge screen of a phantom car bursting silently into flames, then floating in a dreamlike manner through Manhattan's bustling, nocturnal Times Square. In front of the screen is an actual car filled with used fireworks. The fourth work is *Nine Cars*, a huge two-dimensional wall-hanging on which one sees nine exploding cars as "painted" by ignited gunpowder on paper. In this project Cai has mixed an assortment of traditions, symbols, and images to capture the violence of contemporary urban life. He claims that he uses the tools and materials of destruction and terror for healing purposes—the Chinese character for "gunpowder" translates literally as "fire medicine," which was once thought to cure the ailing body.

One of China's foremost (and most politically controversial) contemporary artists, Ai Weiwei (b. 1957), produces multimedia sculpture, photography, films, and performance art; but he is best known in the West as an outspoken critic of China's authoritarian regime. Ai's large installations, such as *Forever Bicycle* (Figure **38.8**), reference Chinese tradition by repurposing the most common

Figure 38.8 AI WEIWEI, *Forever Bicycle*, 2011. Deeply concerned with freedom of expression, Ai Weiwei attempts to transform China's "social landscape" both through his colossal installations and by way of critical commentary posted online.

mode of transportation in China. ("*Yong jiu*," the name of China's best-selling brand of bicycle, means "forever.") For this huge installation, Ai assembled 1,200 steel bicycles, which, while totally stationary, are layered so that they seem to be in motion. At once "social sculpture" and an expression of the artist's wit, the work is both visually provocative and obliquely personal—especially since the Chinese government has immobilized the activist artist by withholding his passport.

The building boom that China has enjoyed in the early twenty-first century was markedly accelerated by Beijing's role as the site of the 2008 Olympic Games. Representative of the global perspective, the architectural projects for the Olympics involved multinational participation and cooperation: the extraordinary Beijing airport—now the largest in the world—was the brainchild of the British architect Norman Foster (discussed later in this chapter); the National Stadium (nicknamed the "Bird's Nest" to describe its interwoven steel latticework) was designed by the Swiss architects Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron in collaboration with Ai Weiwei; and the Aquatic Center (known as the "Water Cube") was designed and built by a consortium of Australian architects and Chinese engineers.

The Global Ecosystem

The future of the environment has become a major global concern. While modern industry brings vast benefits to humankind, it also threatens the global **ecosystem** (the ecological community and its physical environment). Sulphur dioxide emissions in one part of the world affect other parts of the world, causing acid rain that damages forests, lakes, and soil. Industrial pollution poisons the entire planet's oceans. Leaks from nuclear reactors (as occurred in 2011 at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear facility following a devastating tsunami) endanger populations thousands of miles away, and greenhouse gases (produced in part from the burning of the coal, oil, and natural gas that power the world's industries) contribute to global warming and increasingly dangerous changes in the earth's climate. Although such realities have inspired increasing concern for the viability of the ecosystem, they have only recently attracted the serious attention of world leaders.

A landmark figure in the study of ecological systems is the American sociobiologist Edward Osborne Wilson (b. 1929). A leading defender of the natural environment, Wilson's early work in evolutionary biology examined parallels between ants and other animal societies, including those of human beings. More recently, he proposed a new type of interdisciplinary research (which he calls "scientific humanism") that works to improve the human condition. In *The Diversity of Life*, Wilson makes a plea for the preservation of **biodiversity**, the variation of life forms within a given ecosystem. He seeks the development of a sound environmental ethic, shared by both "those who believe that life was put on earth in one divine stroke" and "those who perceive biodiversity to be the product of blind evolution." Wilson pleads for a practical ethic that will ensure the healthy future of the planet.

READING 38.4 From Wilson's *The Diversity of Life* (1992)

Every country has three forms of wealth: material, cultural, and biological. The first two we understand well because they are the substance of our everyday lives. The essence of the biodiversity problem is that biological wealth is taken much less seriously. This is a major strategic error, one that will be increasingly regretted as time passes. Diversity is a potential source for immense untapped material wealth in the form of food, medicine, and amenities. The fauna and flora are also part of a country's heritage, the product of millions of years of evolution centered on that time and place and hence as much a reason for national concern as the particularities of language and culture.

The biological wealth of the world is passing through a bottleneck destined to last another fifty years or more. The human population has moved past 5.4 billion, is projected to reach 8.5 billion by 2025, and may level off at 10 to 15 billion by midcentury. With such a phenomenal increase in human biomass, with material and energy demands of the developing countries accelerating at an even faster pace, far less room will be left for most of the species of plants and animals in a short period of time.

The human juggernaut creates a problem of epic dimensions: how to pass through the bottleneck and reach midcentury with the least possible loss of biodiversity and the least possible cost to humanity. In theory at least, the minimalization of extinction rates and the minimization of economic costs are compatible: the more that other forms of life are used and saved, the more productive and secure will our own species be. Future generations will reap the benefit of wise decisions taken on behalf of biological diversity by our generation.

What is urgently needed is knowledge and a practical ethic based on a time scale longer than we are accustomed to apply. An ideal ethic is a set of rules invented to address problems so complex or stretching so far into the future as to place their solution beyond ordinary discourse. Environmental problems are innately ethical. They require vision reaching simultaneously into the short and long reaches of time. What is good for individuals and societies at this moment might easily sour ten years hence, and what seems ideal over the next several decades could ruin future generations. To choose what is best for both the near and distant futures is a hard task, often seemingly contradictory and requiring knowledge and ethical codes which for the most part are still unwritten.

If it is granted that biodiversity is at high risk, what is to be done? Even now, with the problem only beginning to come into focus, there is little doubt about what needs to be done. The solution will require cooperation among professions long separated by academic and practical tradition. Biology, anthropology, economics, agriculture, government, and law will have to find a common voice. Their conjunction has already given rise to a new discipline, biodiversity studies, defined as the systematic study of the full array of organic diversity and the origin of that diversity, together with the

Figure 38.9 ROBERT SMITHSON, *Spiral Jetty*, Great Salt Lake, Utah, 1970. Rock, salt crystals, earth algae; coil 1500 ft. The lake itself had been degraded by abandoned oil derricks. Documentary drawings, photographs, and films of *Spiral Jetty*, along with the recent rehabilitation of the earthwork itself, have heightened public awareness of the fragile balance between nature and culture.

methods by which it can be maintained and used for the benefit of humanity. The enterprise of biodiversity studies is thus both scientific, a branch of pure biology, and applied, a branch of biotechnology and the social sciences. It draws from biology at the level of whole organisms and populations in the same way that biomedical studies draw from biology at the level of the cell and molecule. . . .

The evidence of swift environmental change calls for an ethic uncoupled from other systems of belief. Those committed by religion to believe that life was put on earth in one divine stroke will recognize that we are destroying the Creation, and those who perceive biodiversity to be the product of blind evolution will agree. Across the other great philosophical divide, it does not matter whether species have independent rights or, conversely, that moral reasoning is uniquely a human concern. Defenders of both premises seem destined to gravitate toward the same position on conservation.

The stewardship of the environment is a domain on the near side of metaphysics where all reflective persons can surely find common ground. For what, in the final analysis, is morality but the command of conscience seasoned by a rational examination of consequences? And what is a fundamental precept but one that serves all generations? An enduring environmental ethic will aim to preserve not only the health and freedom of our species, but access to the world in which the human spirit was born.

Q Why does Wilson contend that environmental problems are "innately ethical"?

Q Why does he regard "the stewardship of environment" as a global responsibility?

Environmental Art

What Wilson calls "the stewardship of environment" has captured the imagination of many visual artists. The Chinese-American conceptualist Mel Chin (b. 1951), for instance, has launched a novel project to leach toxic metals from highly contaminated soil. Chin shares the passions of the seminal eco-artist Robert Smithson (1938–1973), who pioneered one of the most important ecological landmarks of the late twentieth century: the piece known as *Spiral Jetty* (Figure **38.9**). Constructed on the edge of the Great Salt Lake in Utah, in waters polluted by abandoned oil mines, *Spiral Jetty* is a giant (1500-foot-long) coil consisting of 6650 tons of local black basalt, limestone, and earth. This snail-like symbol of eternity makes reference to ancient earthworks, such as those found in Neolithic cultures (see Figure 3.13), and to the origins of life in the salty waters of the primordial ocean; but it also calls attention to the way in which nature is constantly transforming the environment and its ecological balance.

When Smithson created *Spiral Jetty* in 1970, the lake was unusually shallow because of drought. Submerged for decades by rising waters, this iconic piece can now be seen again from ground level, its galactic coil partially encrusted with glittering white salt crystals that float in the algae-filled, rose-colored shallows. Earthworks like *Spiral Jetty* are often best appreciated from the air. Tragically, it was in the crash of a small airplane surveying a potential site that Smithson was killed.

Green Architecture

Architects have always given practical consideration to the environment in which they build. Now, however, in the face of rising fuel prices, global warming, and the degradation of the ecosystem because of industrial growth,

Figure 38.10 NORMAN FOSTER, Swiss Re building (30 St. Mary Axe), London, 2003.

Science and Technology

1962	Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* argues that man-made chemicals are damaging the earth's ecosystem
1974	American scientists demonstrate that chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are eroding the earth's ozone layer
2006	Al Gore publishes *An Inconvenient Truth: The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do About It*

the job of designing structures that do the least possible damage to the environment (a practice known as "green" or "sustainable" design), has become even more imperative. Green buildings—structures that are both friendly to the ecosystem and energy efficient—have been found to save money and preserve the environment. Although the United States launched the Green Building Council in 2000, fewer than 800 certified green buildings were constructed during the following seven years; however, the greening of architecture has become a global movement. It embraces architectural design that makes use of energy-efficient (and renewable) building materials, recycling systems that capture rainwater (for everyday use), solar panels that use sunlight to generate electricity, insulating glass, and other energy-saving devices and techniques.

Of the green buildings that have been constructed in the last ten years, one has already become a landmark: the Swiss Re office building (30 St. Mary Axe), designed in 2003 by the British architect Norman Foster (b. 1935), is London's first environmentally sustainable skyscraper (Figure **38.10**). Natural ventilation, provided by windows that open automatically, passive solar heating, and a double-glazed insulating glass skin (some 260,000 square feet of glass) are some of the features that work to reduce this forty-story building's energy costs by one-half of normal costs. While Foster's tower resembles a spaceship, its tall, rounded, picklelike shape has inspired Londoners to call it "the Gherkin."

Globalism and Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity—that is, one's bond with a group that shares the same traditions, culture, and values—is a major theme in the global community. A "cluster" of traits (race, language, physical appearance, and religious values) that form one's self-image, ethnicity differentiates the self from mass culture and manifests itself in language, music, food, and ritual. The self-affirming significance of ethnic identity is apparent in the ancient Yoruba proverb: "I am because we are; what I am is what we are."

As the global village becomes more homogeneous, efforts to maintain ethnic identity have generated self-conscious reflection. In her poems, novels, and short stories, Leslie Marmon Silko (b. 1948) celebrates the Pueblo folklore of her Native American ancestors, while the Chinese-American writer Maxine Hong Kingston (b. 1940) blends fiction and nonfiction in novels that deal with family legends and native Chinese customs. The oral tradition—stories handed down from generation to generation, often by and through women—plays an important part in the works of these authors, even as it does in the preservation of ethnic identity.

Ethnicity has also become a dominant theme in the visual arts. While El Anatsui pays homage to his African identify in the fabrication of elaborate installations (see Figure 38.3), others treat ethnicity in photography and film. The contemporary Chinese artist Huang Yan has photographed his body tattooed with traditional Chinese landscape imagery (see Figure 14.16). The Iranian-born

Figure 38.11 SHIRIN NESHAT, *Rebellious Silence*, from the series "Women of Allah," 1994. Gelatin-silver print and ink.

Shirin Neshat (b. 1957), who now lives in New York City, employs film and photography to deal with conflicting ethnic values and lifestyles: Islamic and Western, ancient and modern, male and female. Her photographic series "Women of Allah" (1993–1997) explores the role of militant women who fought in the 1979 revolution that overthrew Iran's ruling dynasty. Neshat makes dramatic use of the *chador* (the large veil of black cloth that has become an ethnic symbol of Muslim women) to frame her face, which, intersected by a rifle, becomes the site of a poem (by the feminist writer Forough Farrokhzad, 1935–1967) transcribed in Farsi calligraphy (Figure 38.11).

Latino Culture

The process of globalization and the rise of ethnicity have accelerated yet another major phenomenon: immigration—the age-old process of people moving from *mother* country to *other* country—which has increased dramatically in recent years. Every year, some 100 million people leave (or try to leave) their places of birth in search of political or economic advantage. This mass migration of peoples has resulted in the establishment of large ethnic communities throughout the world. The vast number of immigrants who have made the United States their home have had a dramatic impact: demographic changes, in the form of rising numbers of Asians and Latinos—persons from the various Latin American countries—have changed the face of the economy, the urban environment, and the culture. If current trends continue, by the year 2050 Latinos will constitute 30 percent of the total population of the United States.

In all aspects of life, from literature and art to food and dance styles, there has been a flowering of Latino culture. With *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love* (1989), the first novel by a Hispanic to win the Pulitzer Prize, the Cuban-American Oscar Hijuelos (1951–2013) brought attention to the impact of Latin American music on American culture, and, more generally, to the role of memory in reclaiming one's ethnic roots. Contemporary writers, such as the Dominican-American Junot Diaz (b. 1968), author of the best-selling novel *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (2008), have given voice to personal problems of adjustment in America's ethnic mosaic, and to the ways in which language and customs provide a vital sense of ethnic identity. These are the themes pursued by one of today's leading *Chicana* (Mexican-American female) authors, Sandra Cisneros (b. 1954). Cisneros, who describes the struggle of Chicana women in an alien society, writes in the familiar voice of everyday speech. Of her writing style, she says:

> It's very much of an anti-academic voice—a child's voice, a girl's voice, a poor girl's voice, a spoken voice, the voice of an American Mexican. It's in this rebellious realm of antipoetics that I tried to create a poetic text with the most unofficial language I could find.

Cisneros dates the birth of her own political consciousness from the moment (in a graduate seminar on Western literature) she recognized her "otherness," that is, her separateness from the dominant culture. A vignette from *The House on Mango Street*, her classic novel, describes the experience of a young girl growing up in the Latino section of Chicago. It illustrates the shaping role of language and memory in matters of identity.

READING 38.5 Cisneros' "No Speak English" from *The House on Mango Street* (1984)

Mamacita[1] is the big mama of the man across the street,- third-floor front. Rachel says her name ought to be *Mamasota,*[2] but I think that's mean. 1

The man saved his money to bring her here. He saved and saved because she was alone with the baby boy in that country. He worked two jobs. He came home late and he left early. Every day.

Then one day *Mamacita* and the baby boy arrived in a yellow taxi. The taxi door opened like a waiter's arm. Out stepped a tiny pink shoe, a foot soft as a rabbit's ear, then the thick ankle, a flutter of hips, fuchsia roses and green perfume. The man had to pull her, the taxicab driver had to push. Push, pull. Push, pull. Poof! 10

[1] "Little Mama," also a term of endearment.
[2] "Big Mama."

All at once she bloomed. Huge, enormous, beautiful to look at, from the salmon-pink feather on the tip of her hat down to the little rosebuds of her toes. I couldn't take my eyes off her tiny shoes.

Up, up, up the stairs she went with the baby boy in a blue blanket, the man carrying her suitcases, her lavender hatboxes, a dozen boxes of satin high heels. Then we didn't see her.

Somebody said because she's too fat, somebody because of the three flights of stairs, but I believe she doesn't come out because she is afraid to speak English, and maybe this is so since she only knows eight words. She knows to say: *He not here* for when the landlord comes, *No speak English* if anybody else comes, and Holy smokes. I don't know where she learned this, but I heard her say it one time and it surprised me.

My father says when he came to this country he ate hamandeggs for three months. Breakfast, lunch and dinner. Hamandeggs. That was the only word he knew. He doesn't eat hamandeggs anymore.

Whatever her reasons, whether she is fat, or can't climb the stairs, or is afraid of English, she won't come down. She sits all day by the window and plays the Spanish radio show and sings all the homesick songs about her country in a voice that sounds like a seagull.

Home. Home. Home is a house in a photograph, a pink house, pink as hollyhocks with lots of startled light. The man paints the walls of the apartment pink, but it's not the same, you know. She still sighs for her pink house, and then I think she cries. I would.

Sometimes the man gets disgusted. He starts screaming and you can hear it all the way down the street.

Ay, she says, she is sad.

Oh, he says. Not again.

¿Cuándo, cuándo, cuándo?[3] she asks.

¡Ay, caray![4] We are home. This is home. Here I am and here I stay. Speak English. Speak English. Christ!

¡Ay, Mamacita, who does not belong, every once in a while lets out a cry, hysterical, high, as if he had torn the only skinny thread that kept her alive, the only road out to that country. And then to break her heart forever, the baby boy, who has begun to talk, starts to sing the Pepsi commercial he heard on T.V.

No speak English, she says to the child who is singing in the language that sounds like tin. No speak English, no speak English, and bubbles into tears. No, no, no, as if she can't believe her ears.

Q How does Cisneros bring Mamacita to life? What makes her a sympathetic figure?

No less than in literature, the visual arts document the Latino effort to preserve or exalt ethnic identity: Yolanda López (b. 1942) appropriates a popular Latin American icon of political resistance—the Virgin of Guadalupe (see Figure 20.2). She transforms the Mother of God into the autobiographical image of an exuberant marathon athlete outfitted in track shoes and star-studded cape (redolent of both Our Lady of Guadalupe and Wonder Woman, Figure **38.12**).

[3] "When?"

[4] An exclamation, loosely: "Good grief."

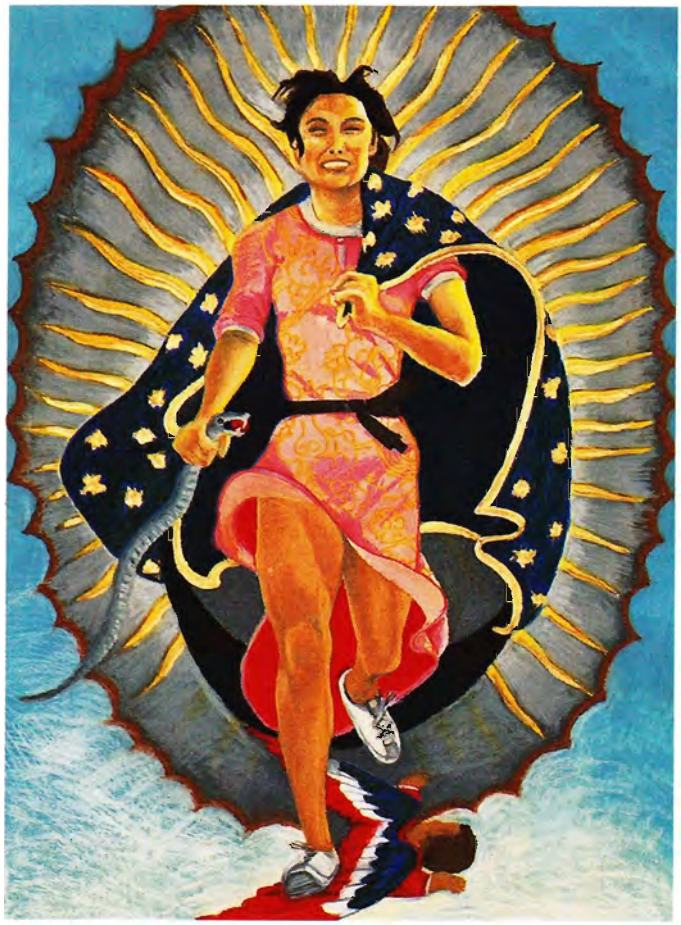


Figure 38.12 YOLANDA LÓPEZ, *Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe*, part 3 from the *Guadalupe Triptych*, 1978. Oil pastel on paper, 30 × 24 in.

Ethnic Conflict

The exercise of ethnic identity has become a powerful social and political force in the global perspective. Having cast off the rule of foreign powers and totalitarian ideologies, ethnic peoples have sought to reaffirm their primary affiliations—to return to their spiritual roots. "Identity politics," the exercise of power by means of group solidarity, has—in its more malignant guise—pitted ethnic groups against each other in militant opposition. In Africa, the Middle East, the Balkans, the Indian subcontinent, and the former Soviet Union, efforts to revive or maintain ethnic identity have coincided with the bitter and often militant quest for solidarity and political autonomy. Nowhere is this more evident than in the ongoing conflict between Palestinians and Israelis who lay claim to the same ancient territories of the Middle East. Hostilities between the Arab (and essentially Muslim) population of Palestine and the Jewish inhabitants of Israel preceded the establishment of an independent Jewish state in 1947. However, these have become more virulent in the past few decades, and the move toward peaceful compromise seems to be remote.

The life of the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish (1942–2008) was one of displacement and exile. Born

to Sunni Muslim parents in a Palestinian village that was destroyed by Israel in 1948, Darwish lived in dozens of cities across the globe. Holding the bizarre status of a "present-absent alien," however, he remained a refugee from his homeland. Regarded by Palestinians as their poet laureate, this "poet in exile" published some twenty volumes of verse. His passion to redeem his lost homeland is expressed in a simple, yet eloquent, style illustrated in the poem "Earth Presses Against Us."

Darwish's Israeli counterpart, Yehuda Amichai (1924–2000), was born in Germany but moved to Palestine in 1936. Raised as an Orthodox Jew amidst Israel's turbulent struggle to become a state, Amichai began writing poetry in 1948. Israel's renowned poet takes as his themes the roles of memory, homeland, and religious faith. His poem "The Resurrection of the Dead" looks beyond the immediacy of ethnic turmoil to consider both the weight of past history and the promise of the future.

READING 38.6 The Poems of Darwish and Amichai

Darwish's "Earth Presses Against Us" (2003)

Earth is pressing against us, trapping us in the final passage.
To pass through, we pull off our limbs.
Earth is squeezing us. If only we were its wheat, we might die and yet live.
If only it were our mother so that she might temper us with mercy.
If only we were pictures of rocks held in our dreams like mirrors.
We glimpse faces in their final battle for the soul, of those who will be killed
by the last living among us. We mourn their children's feast.
We saw the faces of those who would throw our children out of the windows
of this last space. A star to burnish our mirrors.
Where should we go after the last border? Where should birds fly after the last sky?
Where should plants sleep after the last breath of air?
We write our names with crimson mist!
We end the hymn with our flesh.
Here we will die. Here, in the final passage.
Here or there, our blood will plant olive trees.

Amichai's "The Resurrection of the Dead" (2004)

We are buried below with everything we did,
with our tears and our laughs.
We have made storerooms of history out of it all,
galleries of the past, and treasure houses,
buildings and walls and endless stairs of iron and marble
in the cellars of time.
We will not take anything with us.
Even plundering kings, they all left something here.
Lovers and conquerors, happy and sad,
they all left something here, a sign, a house,
like a man who seeks to return to a beloved place
and purposely forgets a book, a basket, a pair of glasses,
so that he will have an excuse to come back to the beloved place.
In the same way we leave things here.
In the same way the dead leave us.

(Translated, from the Hebrew, by Leon Wieseltier.)

Q How does each of these poets deal with history, memory, and hope?

Q Why do you think there is no mention of religion in either poem?

The Visual Arts in the Global Village

The contemporary migration of artists from one part of the world to another, the media of television and film, and a rapidly expanding availability of digital technology link studio to gallery and artist to patron. Megasurveys and art fairs held regularly in Venice, Shanghai, Miami, and elsewhere invite the exchange of ideas and stimulate a vigorous multimillion-dollar commercial art market. The arts have become vehicles for global activism and for the expression of universally shared experience.

Art and Activism

Artists have always provided perspective on the social scene; however, since the late twentieth century, many artists have self-consciously assumed an activist stance. Overtly political and critical of the status quo, activist artists (such as Ai Weiwei, discussed above) seek to transform society by awakening its visionary potential or by demanding outright change. Such artists draw attention to ecological ruin and widespread drug use, to the threat of terrorism and the plight of marginalized populations, to decay in the quality of urban life and the erosion of moral values.

One of America's most outspoken social critics, Leon Golub (1922–2004), used figurative imagery to bring attention to state-sponsored aggression and political repression. Opposing both the Postmodern technology of war and America's military presence in Vietnam and Iraq, he painted large canvases showing mercenary soldiers carrying out acts of physical torture and gang violence (Figure **38.13**). Some of the assailants in these paintings stare blatantly at the viewer as they intimidate and mutilate their victims. Golub's oversized figures, whose national affiliations are deliberately left unidentified, appear against the indeterminate (usually red) background of his canvases, which he scraped and abraded to resemble ancient frescoes. Regarded during his lifetime as an "existential activist," Golub left visual statements that seem as relevant to our own time as to former centuries.

The Polish sculptor Magdalena Abakanowicz (b. 1930) practices a more subtle form of activism. Drawing on nontraditional methods of modeling, she casts hulking, life-sized figures that stage the global drama of the human condition (Figure **38.14**). Sisal, jute, and resin-stiffened burlap make up the substance of these one-of-a-kind humanoids, whose scarred and patched surfaces call to mind earth, mud, and the dusty origins of primordial creatures. Abakanowicz installs her headless, sexless forms (more recently cast in bronze) in groups that evoke a

Figure 38.13 LEON GOLUB, *Interrogation II*, 1981. Acrylic on canvas, 10 × 14 ft. Some of the imagery in Golub's two series, "Mercenaries" and "Interrogation," was based on newspaper photographs documenting specific incidents of political suppression, intimidation, and torture.

sense of collective anonymity and vulnerability. She brings to these works her experience as a survivor of World War II (and Poland's repressive communist regime).

In today's big cities, from Belfast to Buenos Aires and from Manhattan to Moscow, street artists comment on urban problems, such as crime, domestic violence, and homelessness, in the form of public murals. At the same time, a rebel subculture consisting of

Film and Activism

The last fifty years has witnessed a golden age of cinematic creativity, one in which the film medium (in alliance with television) reached a new level of social influence. Its impact has been so great as to shape public opinion in the manner achieved by Eisenstein's seminal protest film, *Battleship Potemkin* (see chapter 34). The films of some directors/artists who emerged in the 1970s and 1980s reestablished the Hollywood film industry, which had faltered financially prior to the mid-1960s. The new directors, products of film schools rather than the Hollywood studio system, contributed to a critical reassessment of America's "master narratives" and dominant fictions: Arthur Penn's *Little Big Man* (1970), for example, exposed the myth of the Native American as "savage."

Robert Altman, one of America's finest director/artists, launched a biting satire on the Korean War (and war in general) with the film *M*A*S*H** (1970). The image of the passive, male-dependent female was transformed in the film *Thelma and Louise* (1991), directed by Ridley Scott, and the plight of transgendered individuals was explored in Kimberly Peirce's *Boys Don't Cry* (1999). Altman favored the telephoto zoom lens to probe the faces of his (usually) socially troubled characters; fractured sounds and bits of dialogue overlap or intrude from off-camera. To achieve lifelike spontaneity, Altman often invited his actors to improvise as he filmed. In *Nashville* (1974), he traded the single cinematic protagonist for some two dozen characters involved in a presidential election.

Issue-driven subjects were common fare in the history of late modern American film. But they have rarely been treated as powerfully as in Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993), a story of the Holocaust (see chapter 34) adapted from Thomas Keneally's prize-winning novel of 1982. A virtuoso filmmaker, Spielberg made brilliant use of the techniques of documentary newscasting to create visually shattering effects.

Activist cinema is by no means confined to the United States. In *Salaam Bombay!* (1988), filmed in the brothel district of Bombay, one of India's leading filmmakers, Mira Nair, exposed the sordid lives of that country's illiterate street urchins. China's internationally celebrated filmmaker and cinematographer Zhang Yimou (b. 1951) lived among the peasants of Shaanxi province prior to making films about China's disenfranchised rural population (*The Story of Qiu Ju*, 1992) and in particular its courageous women, many of whom remain hostage to feudal and patriarchal traditions (*Raise the Red Lantern*, 1991). An admirer of Ingmar Bergman and Akira Kurosawa (see chapter 35), Zhang rejected the socialist realism of the communist era in favor of purity of vision and fierce honesty. His films, at least three of which have been banned in China, are noted for their sensuous use of color and their troubling insights into moral and cultural issues.

Documentary films have played a major role in contemporary activism. Notable examples include *Everyday Rebellion: The Art of Change* (2013), which offers a global picture of contemporary nonviolent resistance movements; Jehane Noujaim's *The Square* (2013), which captures the violent political upheaval that took place between 2011 and 2013 in Cairo's Tahrir Square; and *KONY 2012*, a thirty-minute documentary film promoting a campaign to unseat the Ugandan leader Joseph Kony, responsible for the forced recruitment of child soldiers in Central Africa (see Figure 38.2). The film initially drew 97 million "views" on the video-sharing network YouTube.

Figure 38.14 MAGDALENA ABAKANOWICZ, *Crowd 1* (detail), 1986–1987. Burlap and resin, fifty standing life-sized figures, each 5 ft. 6⅞ in. × 23⅝ in. × 11¾ in. In their denial of individuality and human difference, these headless and sexless figures have been interpreted as a subtle criticism of Soviet ideology, that is, of communist collectivity; at the same time, they call to mind Ellul's "mass man."

Figure 38.15 BANKSY, *No Trespassing*, Mission Street, San Francisco, ca. 2010. (Now painted over.)

political and social activists post public protests as urban graffiti. Satiric, subversive, and often humorous, these sprayed, stenciled, drawn, or painted images, often accompanied by written messages, are either executed with the approval of civic authorities (thus "street art") or posted illegally (thus "graffiti"). The most notorious of contemporary graffiti personalities is the anonymous British figure known only as "Banksy." A painter, filmmaker, and political activist, Banksy has gained both a following and an unimpeachable reputation for some of the most incisive examples of antiwar, anticonsumerist, and antiauthoritarian imagery. In one instance, he makes use of an existing urban No Trespassing sign by adding the seated figure of a Native American—a sly comment linking America's displacement of its Native American population with the contemporary plight of the urban homeless (Figure **38.15**).

Immersive Environments

Room-sized installations, a version of total art (see chapter 37) that invites the participation of the spectator, have been popular for almost half a century. As early as 1968, a "Walk-in Infinity Chamber" by Stanley Landsman (b. 1930) dazzled viewers with mirrors and some 6000 miniature light bulbs. Contemporary installations, however, are much larger and more technically elaborate, often embracing recorded sound, digitally programmed lighting, and even specially orchestrated odors. The Brazilian artist Ernesto Neto (b. 1964) animates vast exhibition halls with temporary installations consisting of colored nylon fabric. From these soft, tentlike structures hang podlike sacs filled with herbs and aromatic substances. Designed to be "completed" by the physical presence of the viewer, Neto's

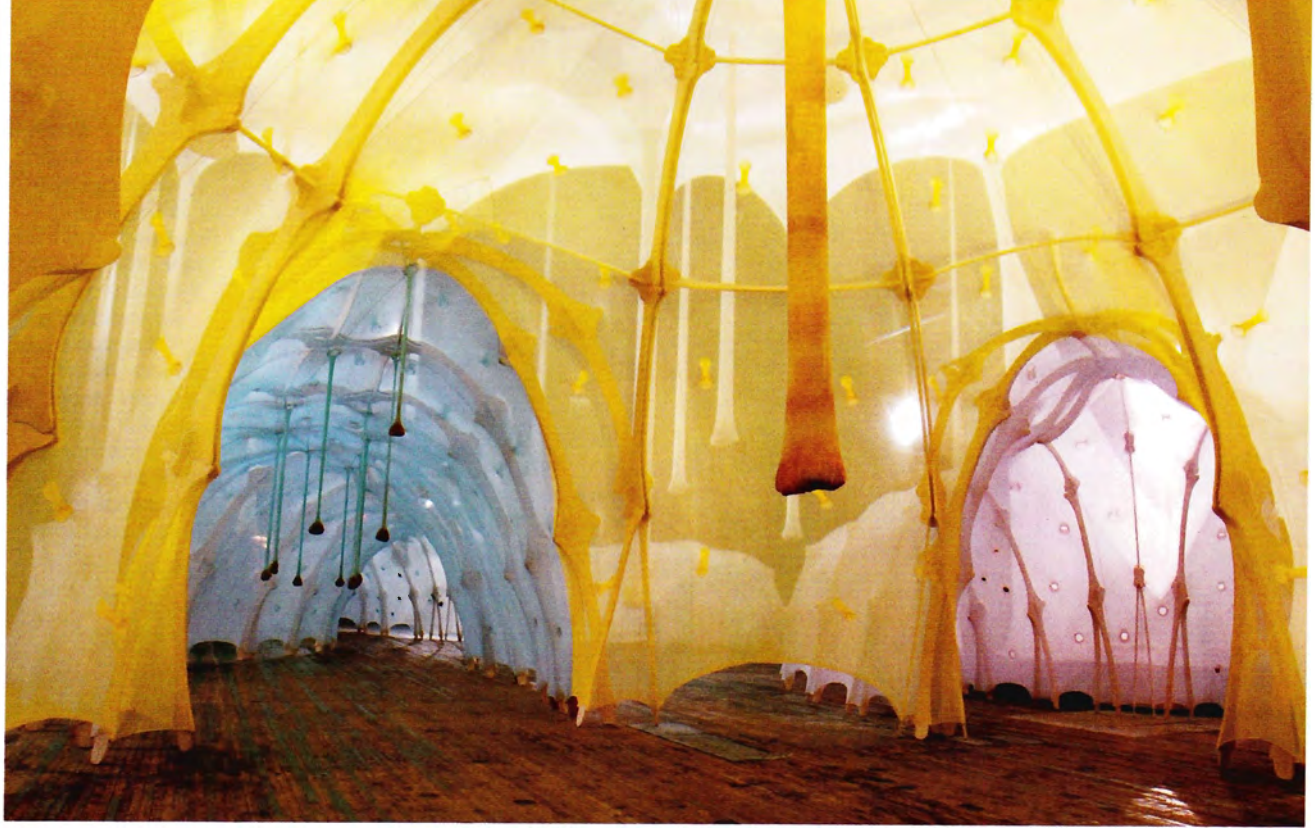
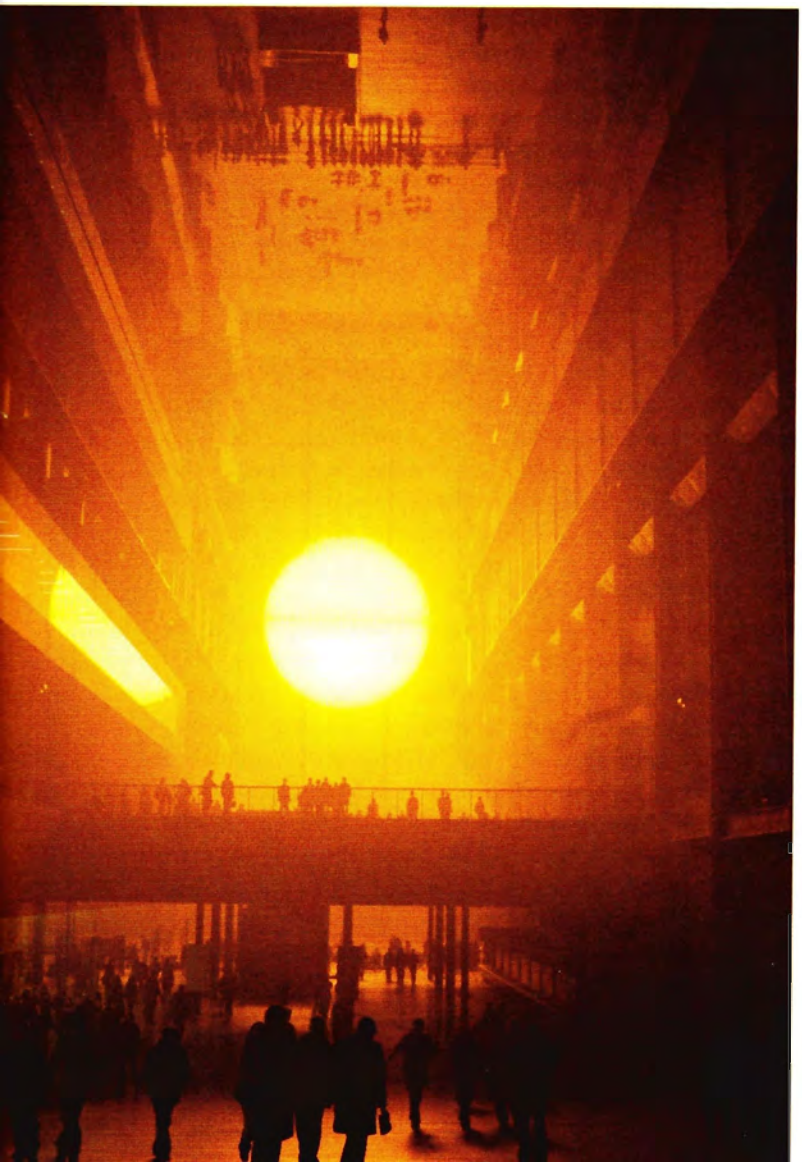


Figure 38.16 ERNESTO NETO, *Anthropodino*, 2009. Installation in Park Avenue Armory, New York. Neto claims his ideal space would be a cave in which gravity, balance, and the interaction between elements might produce a unique environment.



biomorphic, site-specific environments immerse spectators in an enveloping, multisensory space (Figure **38.16**).

The Weather Project, launched in 2003 by the Danish artist Olafur Eliasson (b. 1967) for the Turbine Hall of Tate Modern in London, used 200 computer-controlled yellow lamps to form a circular "sun" that glowed through vapor generated by humidifiers. Spectators, two million of whom experienced this unique immersive environment, saw themselves as tiny black shadows, reflected in a huge ceiling mirror (Figure **38.17**). While *The Weather Project* struck some as dismally postapocalyptic, others looked upon it as the futuristic counterpart of ritual sites like Stonehenge, the Neolithic project that served humankind's spiritual and communal needs.

The Digital Arts

All forms of expression, from art and architecture to music and dance, reflect the abundance and exchange of digitally transmitted information, that is, information expressed in discrete numerical codes used by computers or other electronic devices. Digital computers have put at our disposal the entire history of art. The Internet gives access to the contents of more than 5000 museums; and millions of photographic images are available on a variety of websites. In addition to their function in storing and distributing images, digital computers have transformed the manner

Figure 38.17 OLAFUR ELIASSON, *The Weather Project*, installation view at Tate Modern, London, 2003. Monofrequency lights, projection foil, haze machine, mirror oil, aluminum, and scaffolding. The giant yellow "sun" hangs 90 feet above the floor, while the mirrored ceiling reflects the movements of the spectators, many of whom are stretched out on the floor enjoying the misty golden ambiance.

in which art is made, sold, and experienced. Webcams, inkjet printers, and painting software applications ("apps") empower every individual to create, advertise, and sell art. The World Wide Web provides a virtual theater in which one may assume an online identity—or more than one identity—in cyberspace.

"Digital art" describes a wide range of genres that employ the language of computers as a primary tool, medium, or creative partner. Digitization itself has revolutionized the art world by blurring the boundaries between the traditional genres of painting, sculpture, film, and photography, and by generating entirely new kinds of visual experience, such as **virtual reality**, animation, videogame art, Internet art, and two- and three-dimensional imaging. In the world of image-making, the laptop has become the studio.

Science and Technology

2010	3D printers become available commercially; Apple releases the iPad
2012	robots serve in commercial distribution of products; Peter Higgs discovers an elementary particle that may explain the operations of mass in the universe
2013	wearable computers become commercially available; the first 3D map of the universe is produced by FastSound Project
2014	quantum computers are used for optimizing metadata

Digital Photography

Digital technology has had a revolutionary impact on photography. In contrast with traditional (or **analog**) photography, which uses photographic film or plate to record real or contrived physical settings (see, for example, Figures 32.13, 34.1, 36.3 and 36.15), digital photography is of two main types: One involves the computerized manipulation of existing photographic resources (either digital or analog) to alter, rework, or assemble images (see Figures 38.1, 38.5 and 38.19). The other engages purely digital means (a geometric model or mathematical formula) to create an entirely new image. In the latter method, the artist may give the computer a set of instructions through which the image is digitally generated (see Figure 38.18).

The vast panoramas of the German artist Andreas Gursky (b. 1957) are representative of the first type of computer imaging. Gursky's photographs (often more than 15 feet in width) are the products of his world travels. His tours through Europe, Brazil, Mexico, Japan, Vietnam, and the United States document contemporary life: its concerts and public performances (see Figure **38.1**), its garbage dumps, stock exchanges, supermarkets, factories, prisons, and luxury hotels. Gursky's photographs are not, however, documentary: they are stitched together from transparencies of his own photographs, which undergo many rounds of editing, scanning, and proofing. By way of digitization, Gursky creates realistically detailed images in which (ironically) all individuality is lost. His works convey the anonymity of "mass man," or what the artist himself calls the "aggregate state" of a globalized world.

An example of the second type of digital imaging is found in the works of Karl Sims (b. 1962). Sims, a graduate of the MIT Media Lab in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a student of biotechnology, devised special computer-graphics techniques that generate abstract, three-dimensional simulations of genetic organisms (Figure **38.18**), and natural phenomena such as fog, smoke, and rain. According to Sims, his graphics of virtual creatures "unite several concepts: chaos, complexity, evolution, self-propagating entities, and the nature of life itself."

Digital Projects

Digital technology has inspired a wide range of new media projects, only a few of which can be mentioned in this chapter. In general, such technology has contributed to the monumental size and complexity of *site-specific installations*. One example, *The Bay Lights* (2014) launched by Leo Villareal (b. 1967), involved mounting 25,000 digitally programmed LEDs to the 300 vertical cables of the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge. *The Bay Lights* will continue to glitter nightly for two years.

Reimagining global communication, the Japanese artist Noriko Yamaguchi (b. 1983) dons headphones and a body suit made of cellphone (*keitai*) keypads to "become" a human mobile phone—the telecommunications device that also functions as a television, credit card, video player,

Figure 38.18 KARL SIMS, *Galapagos*, 1997. Interactive media. This interactive artwork is part of a twelve-screen media installation that invites viewers to participate in the evolution of animated forms. Inspired by the theory of natural selection advanced by Darwin after he visited the Galapagos Islands in 1835, Sims invented a program whereby virtual "genetic" organisms appear to mutate and reproduce within the environment of the computer.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Contemporary Japanese artists have been particularly successful in using computer technology in various photographic and video projects. Yasumasa Morimura transforms Western masterpieces into camp spoofs in which he impersonates one or more of the central characters. In *Portrait (Futago)* (the Japanese word for "twins"; Figure **38.19**), Morimura turns Manet's *Olympia* (Figure **38.20**) into a drag queen decked out in a blond wig and rhinestone-trimmed slippers. Using himself as the model for both the nude courtesan and the maid, he revisualizes a landmark in the history of art and suggests, at the same time, the intersecting ("twin") roles of prostitute and slave. By "updating" Manet's *Olympia* (itself an "update" of a painting by Titian), Morimura also questions the authority of these historical icons, even as he makes sly reference to the postwar Japanese practice of copying Western culture. *Portrait* is a computer-manipulated color photograph produced from a studio setup—a combination of Postmodern techniques borrowed from fashion advertising. Here, and in his more recent photographs in which he impersonates contemporary icons and film divas (Madonna, Marilyn Monroe, and Liza Minnelli), Morimura pointedly tests classic stereotypes of identity and gender.

Figure 38.20 EDOUARD MANET, *Olympia*, 1863. Oil on canvas, 4 ft. 3¼ in. × 6 ft. 2¾ in.

Figure 38.19 YASUMASA MORIMURA, *Portrait (Futago)*, 1988. Color photograph, clear medium, 82½ × 118 in.

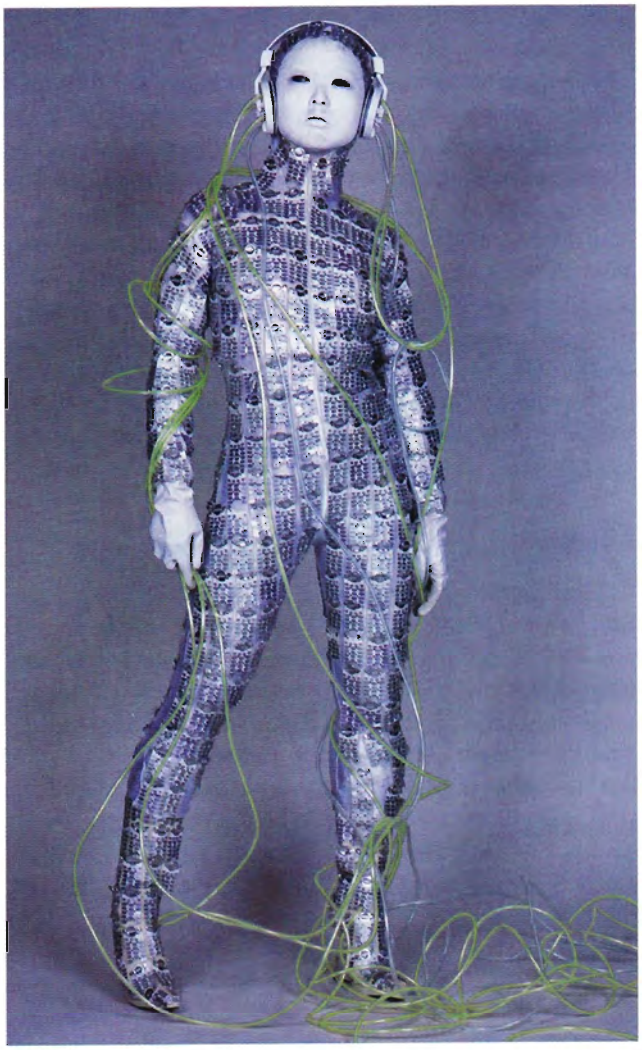


Figure 38.21 NORIKO YAMAGUCHI, *Keitai Girl*, 2003. The artist's use of white face make-up is a reference to *butoh*, a traditional Japanese dance form.

portable music device, digital camera, and more (Figure **38.21**). Those who have the artist's telephone number may "dial up" Keitai Girl from their own cellular phones. Noriko's futuristic armor is part of a performance involving interactive lasers, fast, upbeat music, and a popular Japanese dance style known as *Para-Para*—a type of line dancing.

The latest advances in virtual reality immerse individuals in an interactive computer-simulated environment. By means of sophisticated digital software, virtual environments—both real and imagined—appear in three dimensions on a head-mounted display or glasses worn by viewers, or on a 360-degree screen. High-tech sensors detect the viewer's movements and commands. Like a giant videogame, virtual reality combines illusion, sound, and spoken texts. A synthesis of all kinds of retrievable information, such interactive hypermedia offer an image-saturated playground for the mind. However, the applications of VR go well beyond today's gaming systems, for use in education, city planning, advanced medicine, and elsewhere.

Probably the most exciting development in contemporary art is the opportunity it affords the individual to become part of the creative act. *Interactive art* projects, available in galleries, museums, and on computers or smartphones, make the viewer a partner in art-making. Such projects are distinctive in that they provoke a dialogue between the artwork and the spectator, offering the latter a means of altering the artwork itself. For instance, with *Electronic Eve* (1997), an interactive project conceived by the Greek video artist Jenny Marketou (b. 1944), "image consumers" create their own multimedia environment by selecting (through direct touch on the computer screen) from a database of video sequences, still images, computer graphics, texts, and sounds. In *Text Rain* (2005), an interactive installation by the American new-media artist Camille Utterback (b. 1970) and the Israeli Romy Achitov (b. 1958), viewers mirrored on a video projection screen interact with virtual falling letters to form words and phrases (Figure **38.22**). The letters belong to Evan Zimroth's poem "Talk You" (1993), which

Digital Film

Digital technology has transformed the world of filmmaking. New technology, such as high-definition (HD) video, which gives visual images greater clarity, has begun to replace film stock altogether. The ease with which digital video can be produced, reproduced from film, and downloaded via computers has raised major issues concerning copyrights, but it has also made the archive of motion pictures readily available to a worldwide audience. The website YouTube, which welcomes video postings, has become a global forum for young and independent filmmakers, especially in the production of short and documentary films.

Computers have also revolutionized the way films are made: Computer-Generated Imaging (CGI) of realistic settings makes it unnecessary for filmmakers to use large-scale sets and locations. Special effects, achieved by way of computers, are used to juxtapose images in ways that distort reality. Like docufiction, films render believable what in actuality may be untrue. The film *Forrest Gump* (1994), for instance, shows its antihero shaking hands with the long-dead president John F. Kennedy.

Digital technology makes possible such hyperreal images as Steven Spielberg's dinosaurs (*Jurassic Park*, 1993), James Cameron's liquid-metal cyborgs (*Terminator 2*, 1991), and Larry and Andy Wachowski's extrordinary special effects in the science-fiction trilogy *The Matrix* (see Science-Fiction Film, chapter 37). *Terminator* was the first film to feature the computer-generated shape-shifting technique called "morphing." Just as CGI can create realistic settings, so it can replace human actors with computer-generated characters. The use of digital actors (as in the fantasy epic trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*, 2001–2003) blurs the border between the traditional live-action film and CGI animation. While digital artistry may not put live-action filmmaking in jeopardy, it provokes questions concerning differences between the original and the replica, the real and the virtual, truth and illusion.

Finally, film *animation* has undergone major changes since the early twentieth century, when still drawings and stop-motion techniques prevailed. The first feature-length, entirely computer-animated film, *Toy Story*, appeared in 1995. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, more sophisticated software for digital imaging, including three-dimensional graphics, has facilitated a greater range of color, movement, and special effects. In 2001, Hayao Miyazaki's award-winning *Spirited Away* brought Japanese *animé* to world attention, and in 2008 the Disney/Pixar science-fiction film *WALL-E* brought to life the story of a whimsical little robot who cleans up the garbage-ridden planet earth. The Pixar-produced adventure fantasy *Up* became, in 2009, the first computer-animated film to be presented in Disney Digital 3D.

Figure 38.22 CAMILLE UTTERBACK and **ROMY ACHITOV**, *Text Rain for Phaeno,* 2005. Computerized interactive media, 4 ft. 6 in. × 6 ft. Originally exhibited in 1999, this version of the piece was commissioned by Ansel Associates for the Phaeno Science Center in Wolfsburg, Germany.

deals with bodies and language. Utterback favors the digital medium because, she claims, "it is a perfect site to explore the interface between physical bodies and various representational systems."

The use of the computer in making art either alone or with others is no longer exclusive to professional artists. Digital art and design collectives such as Universal Everything (founded in 2004 by Matt Pyke) invite contributions from the public (through a smartphone app) to create digital artworks using **3D printing**, motion capture, and other new technology. Such projects might be considered a kind of crowdsourcing comparable to the collective enterprises of contemporary scientists and engineers.

Architecture in the Global Village

Since the 1960s, architects have made use of advanced three-dimensional modeling tools and sophisticated animation software. Now 3D printing promises to fabricate and construct houses in a twenty-four hour period. Contemporary technology has generated a futuristic vocabulary of folded, splintered, tilted, and boldly curved shapes that contrast with the well-defined axes, sharp edges, and clearly bounded space of older building styles. The architecture of our time embraces the experimental thrust of Russian Constructivism (see chapter 32), the Postmodern mix of whimsy and appropriation (see Figure 37.21), and the seductive morphing of Frank Gehry's breathtaking designs (see Figure 37.24). But, among contemporary architects, bulding-design reaches a higher level of structural complexity, tectonic fluidity, and plastic articulation.

The most dynamic figure in the development of the new "digital architecture" is the prize-winning visionary Zaha Hadid (b. 1950). Born in Baghdad and trained in London, Hadid has produced some of the most inventive structures of the past two decades. The Heydar Aliyev Center (2012) in Baku, Azerbaijan, reflects Hadid's gradual move away from the fractured, angular designs of her earlier buildings to a series of fluid forms (or "flow fields") with sinuous parabolic curves, that is, dynamic "curvilinearity" (Figure **38.23**). The 619,000-square-foot Center features a single continuous surface made of reinforced concrete coated with fiberglass, a medium that Hadid has also explored in her space-age furniture designs.

Music in the Global Village

Cultural interdependence and the willful fusion of disparate musical traditions have transformed contemporary music. Inspired by ancient and non-Western oral and instrumental forms of improvisation, much of today's music relies less on the formal score and more on the ear. The influence of Arabic chant, Indian *ragas*, and Latino beat is evident in both jazz and classical music. Cuban brass punctuates contemporary rock, shimmering Asian drones propel New Age music. The street music of black South Africa and traditional Zulu wedding songs inspired the rhythms of the rock album *Graceland* (1986), produced by the American songwriter Paul Simon (b. 1941).

The Intercultural Tapestry

Some contemporary composers create musical tapestries that utilize conventional Western instruments along with ancient musical ones (such as the Chinese flute or the *balafon*, an African version of the xylophone), producing textures that may be manipulated by electronic means. These innovations are evident in the compositions of Tan Dun (b. 1957), a Chinese-born composer who has lived in the United States since 1986. Tan's works, ranging from string quartets and operas to multimedia pieces and film scores, represent a spirit of cultural pluralism that blends Chinese opera, folk songs, and instruments with traditional Western techniques and traditions ranging from medieval chant and romantic harmonies to audacious aural experiments (in the style of John Cage) using the sounds of water, torn paper, and bird calls.

Tan's opera *The First Emperor* (2006) marries the singing style of Beijing opera and the use of Chinese instruments with Western performance style and a standard Western orchestra. Directed by the noted filmmaker Zhang Yimou, the opera tells the story of the visionary and brutal Qin Shi Huang Di, China's first imperial Son of Heaven (see chapter 7). Haunting and lyrical, the work is a bridge between East and West; it also anticipates a new musical possibility. As Tan Dun predicts: "Opera will no longer be a Western form, as it is no longer an Italian form."

One of the most notable experiments in contemporary intercultural music is the Silk Road Project, which involves

See Music Listening Selections at end of chapter.

Figure 38.23 ZAHA HADID, Heydar Aliyev Center, Baku, Azerbaijan, 2012. The Center, with its swooping, undulating walls, encloses a conference hall, theater, and museum. Three-dimensional modeling, X-ray layering, and multiperspective projection are three of the digital tools used in Hadid's designs.

the exchange of Western musical traditions with those of the ancient Silk Road, the vast skein of trade routes that linked East Asia to Europe (see chapter 7). Begun in 1998, this extended effort to connect East and West was the brainchild of the renowned Japanese-American cellist Yo-Yo Ma (b. 1955). Ma aimed to revitalize the spirit of cultural exchange once facilitated by the Silk Road, which he calls "the Internet of Antiquity." In the current age of cultural pluralism, musicians from across Central Asia have joined with American virtuosos (selected by Ma) to produce works that integrate radically different compositional forms, instruments, and performance styles.

The global character of contemporary music is also evident in popular genres that engage issue-driven lyrics. The Jamaican musician Bob Marley (1945–1981) brought to the international scene the socially conscious music known as *reggae*—an eclectic style that draws on a wide variety of black Jamaican musical forms, including African religious music and Christian revival songs. Hip-hop (see chapter 36) and break-dancing (see chapter 37) have moved from their inner-city origins to assume an international scope. This "mutating hybrid" makes use of various musical traditions: modern (disco, salsa, reggae, rock) and ancient (African call-and-response). *Rap*—the vocal dimension of hip-hop—launches a fusillade of raw and socially provocative words chanted in rhymed couplets over an intense rhythmic beat.

The American avant-garde composer John Zorn (b. 1953) borrows harmonic and rhythmic devices from the domains of bluegrass, klezmer (Jewish folk music), and punk rock. The new-music collective known as Bang on a Can offers an eclectic mix of sounds that blur the boundary between classical and popular music. Part rock band and part amplified chamber group, its classically trained performers work in close collaboration with leading composers, jazz musicians, and pop artists. A recent work (*Timber*, 2013) by Bang on a Can's resident experimentalist Michael Gordon (b. 1956) calls for intense polyrhythmic percussion (involving neither pitches nor melody) performed on a series of thin wooden slabs of varying lengths and timbres. Such fusions of East and West, urban and folk, popular and classical styles, constitute the musical mosaic of the new millennium. While some critics lament that Western music has bifurcated into two cultures—art (or classical) music and popular music—the fact is that these two traditions are becoming more alike, or, more precisely, they share various features of a global musical menu.

Cybersounds

Digital technology has contributed enormously to global musical composition and performance. John Adams' opera *Doctor Atomic* (2005), which examines the role of Robert Oppenheimer in the genesis of the atom bomb, made use of electronically amplified instruments and computerized visual effects. Computerized images, infrared cameras, and digital projectors constitute some of the "spectacle-producing technology" now employed in staging operas such as Nico Muhly's *Two Boys* (2011), inspired by a real-life, Internet-related violent crime.

While musical instruments can be manipulated by computers, computers themselves have become "musical instruments." Equipped with a miniature keyboard, faders, and foot pedals, the computer is capable not only of producing a full range of sounds but also of producing and reproducing sounds more subtle and complex than any emitted by human voices or traditional musical

instruments. Sound generators have come to replace live musicians in the studio and in some staged musical performances. The hyperinstrument projects of Tod Machover (b. 1953), who heads the MIT Media Lab in Cambridge, Massachusetts, engage electronically enhanced instruments, as well as "homemade" interactive instruments. Machover's "robotic opera," *Death and the Powers* (2010), employs forty computers, custom graphics, and software mapping to choreograph a chorus of "operabots" that join live singers in this century's first futuristic opera.

Using the computer itself to generate music, the American composer Barton McLean (b. 1938) draws (with a light pen) the contours of sound waves on the video screen of a sophisticated computer that "emits" the composition. Today, one can "compose" and produce music using a single laptop computer and a variety of sophisticated software tools, a phenomenon that abandons traditional performance practice and promotes the democratization of music, both classical and popular. The ultimate development in the global landscape may just follow from the availability of new kinds of visual programming language (such as Pure Data), which encourage musicians in different parts of the world to engage in live collaboration—that is, to create music together in real time.

Dance in the Global Village

Contemporary choreographers have been drawn increasingly to social issues and historical events: witness Charles Atlas' *Delusional* (1994), a meditation on death and decay in Bosnia, and Paul Taylor's 1999 spoof of the Ku Klux Klan (*Oh, You Kid*). The company known as Urban Bush Women, founded in 1984, uses dance to bring to light the histories of disenfranchised people. In their fiercely energetic performances, this Brooklyn-based ensemble of African, Caribbean, and black American women call on the spiritual traditions of the African diaspora. The Bangladeshi choreographer Akram Khan (b. 1974) blends classical Indian Kathak dance with contemporary improvisation in solo works such as *Desh* (Bengali for "homeland").

Returning to Vietnam fifteen years after fleeing her war-torn homeland, the choreographer Ea Sola (b. 1970) studied its traditional dance and music, both of which are present in her choreographed recollection of war, *Sécheresse et Pluie* (*Drought and Rain*, 1995). This work, as well as others by contemporary choreographers, reflects the influence of *butoh*, a Japanese dance form that features simple, symbolic movements performed in a mesmerizingly slow and hypnotic manner. *Ankoko butoh*, meaning "dance of utter darkness," grew out of ancient forms of Asian theater. Two other notable traditions have influenced contemporary choreography: Indian classical dance and German *Tanztheater* ("dance theater"), an expressionistic style that features everyday actions, speech, and theatrical props (including, occasionally, live animals).

Chronology

1947	Israel becomes an independent state
1954–1975	Vietnam War
1966–1976	Mao's Cultural Revolution
1989	Berlin Wall falls
1989	Massacre in Tiananmen Square
2001	al-Qaeda terrorists attack the United States
2003	United States and coalition forces invade Iraq
2005	terrorists attack London's subway system
2006	sectarian violence increases in Iraq
2008	global financial crisis and recession
2010–2012	revolutionary wave of demonstrations and protests (the "Arab Spring") begins in the Arab world, forcing rulers from power in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Yemen
2013	civil war erupts in Syria
2014	militant group ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) attempts to create a unified Islamic state in the Middle East
2014	renewed militant conflict between Palestinian Gaza and Israel

LOOKING BACK

The Global Paradigm

- Globalism—the interdependence of cultures and peoples in all parts of the world—is the new model for contemporary society.
- Digital technology links all parts of the world, and electronic networks facilitate the dissemination of values and goods. The sense of collectivity in the integrated landscape of the global village has become a hallmark of a new world community.
- In this post-colonial era, efforts to reconcile Modernist modes of life with waning ancient traditions have challenged many regions, none more dramatically than Africa.
- The novels and short stories of Chinua Achebe deal with the warp between premodern and modern conditions in parts of Africa. Similarly, Africa's visual artists draw on past traditions in creative projects that often involve modern media.

The Challenge of Globalism

- Challenging the future of the global village, terrorism reflects an extremist response to ideological and political differences. The devastating attack of the radical Muslim group al-Qaeda on the United States on September 11, 2001, provoked a variety of creative and commemorative responses in literature, the visual arts, and music.
- The poets Wislawa Szymborska and Seamus Heaney both addressed the threat of terrorism in the global community.
- In the last three decades, China has emerged as a major world power. As state officials have somewhat loosened controls over artistic expression, China's academically trained painters and sculptors, along with a new generation of artists, have taken the world by storm with a variety of original projects.

The Global Ecosystem

- While environmental issues are not new, it is only recently that world leaders have begun to come together to address the ailing health of the global ecosystem.
- Edward Osborne Wilson, an early advocate for the preservation of the environment, has advanced "scientific humanism," an interdisciplinary discipline that values biodiversity and a sound environmental ethic.
- In the visual arts, earthworks and "green" architectural designs bring attention to the importance of a healthy ecosystem. The energy-efficient buildings of Norman Foster are models of environmentally sustainable projects that are both beautiful and practical.

Globalism and Ethnic Identity

- Ethnic identity has become a dominant theme in the global community.
- While immigration contributes to the blending of different ethnic populations, it has inspired efforts to maintain distinctive ethnic values and traditions. In the United States, large numbers of Latin Americans have introduced into American culture a unique array of culinary, musical, and dance styles. The growing number of female writers and artists who deal with ethnic identity is represented by the Mexican-American novelist Sandra Cisneros.
- Matters related to one's homeland and ethnic roots have provoked strife in many parts of the world, as illustrated by the ongoing conflict between Palestine and Israel. The role of memory in the painful progress toward peaceful co-existence is voiced in the poems of Yehuda Amichai and Mahmoud Darwish.

The Visual Arts in the Global Village

- The visual arts have become increasingly significant vehicles for global activism. Critical of the status quo, artists work to transform society by way of traditional media, as well as through photography, video, and digital resources.
- Film has become a dominant medium in the creative effort to bring attention to the plight of marginalized populations, criminal violence, and political unrest.
- Immersive environments and public art projects reflect the contemporary affection for greater size and spectacle.

The Digital Arts

- Computers and digital technology facilitate access to the arts of the entire world.
- Digital processes have become essential to making and sharing creative projects, to the blurring of traditional disciplines, and to the development of new techniques, such as animation, 3D imaging, and virtual reality.

Architecture in the Global Village

- Advanced digital tools have aided architects, such as Zaha Hadid, in creating a futuristic building style that features dynamic curvilinearity.

Music in the Global Village

- Western music and dance have responded to the influence of the cultures of Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean.
- Distinctions between popular and art (classical) music are becoming less pronounced.
- The compositions of Tan Dun and the efforts of the Silk Road Project and Bang on a Can are representative of the successful integration of widely diverse musical traditions.
- Digital technology has broadened the spectacular dimension of staged music and has facilitated the globalization of musical traditions and styles.

Dance in the Global Village

- Contemporary dance assumes a global dimension in choreography that reflects world events and the integration of ethnic dance styles.

Music Listening Selection

- Kalhor, *Gallop of a Thousand Horses*, the Silk Road Project, 2005.

Glossary

3D printing a technology of digital fabrication in which layers of material are built up to create a 3D form

analog (photography) traditional (camera and film) photography

biodiversity the preservation of all life forms in the ecosystem

ecosystem the ecological community and its physical environment

virtual reality the digital simulation of artificial environments