

Art History and Artists

Expressionism

General Overview

The Expressionist movement started in Germany. These artists wanted to paint about emotion. It could be anger, anxiety, fear, or peacefulness. This wasn't a completely new idea in art. Other artists like Vincent van Gogh had been doing the same thing. However, this was the first time this type of art had been given a name.

When was the Expressionism movement?

The Expressionist movement occurred during the early part of the 1900s.

What are the characteristics of Expressionism?

Expressionist art tried to convey emotion and meaning rather than reality. Each artist had their own unique way of "expressing" their emotions in their art. In order to express emotion, the subjects are often distorted or exaggerated. At the same time colours are often vivid and shocking

Examples of Expressionist Art

The Scream (Edvard Munch)

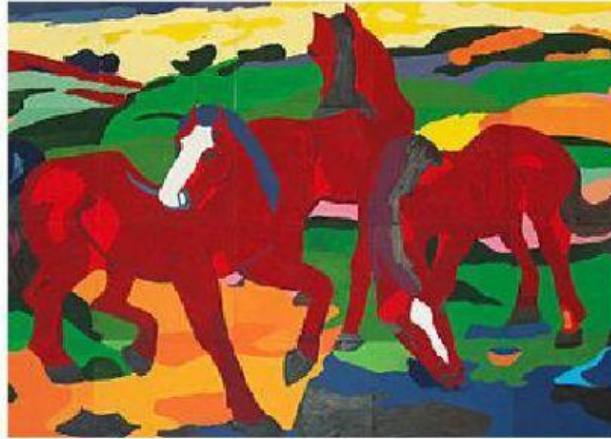
This painting shows a man standing on a bridge. His hands are on his face and he is screaming. The sky behind him is red and swirling. The picture expresses the emotion of a person alone in their anguish and anxiety. Munch made four versions of this picture. One of them sold for over \$119 million in 2012.



The Scream

The Large Red Horses (Franz Marc)

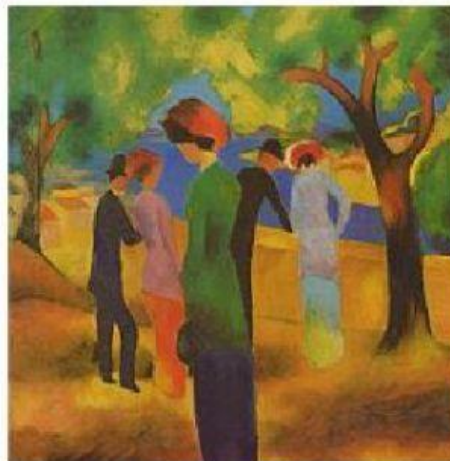
The *Large Red Horses* uses colour and movement to express the energy and power of nature. Franz Marc often used colours to represent certain emotions; blue meant spirituality, yellow femininity, and red power and violence. He also painted a lot of pictures of horses and other animals.



The Large Red Horses

Lady in a Green Jacket (August Macke)

In this painting a lady is standing in the foreground wearing a dark green jacket. She is looking sort of down and to the side. There are two couples in the background walking away from her. You get the feeling that maybe she is lonely or has lost someone recently. One of the ladies in the background has turned to look back at her, perhaps feeling sorry for her.



Lady in a Green Jacket

Famous Expressionist Artists

- Max Beckman - Beckman was a German painter who was against the Expressionist movement. However, many of his paintings are described as Expressionist.
- James Ensor - A Dutch painter who had great influence on the Expressionist movement in Germany.
- Oskar Kokoschka - An Austrian artist whose artwork was displayed in the German magazine *The Storm* when Expressionism became a true art movement.
- August Macke - A leading member of the Expressionist group The Blue Rider in Germany, he also painted some Abstract Art.
- Franz Marc - A founding member of The Blue Rider group, Franz Marc was one of the leaders in the Expressionist movement.
- Edvard Munch - A Symbolist and Expressionist, Munch is best known for his famous painting *The Scream*.
- Egon Schiele - An early adopter of Expressionism, Egon died at the young age of 28.

Interesting Facts about Expressionism

- Another movement was taking place in France at the same time called Fauvism. It was led by artist Henri Matisse.
- Groups of Expressionist artists formed in Germany. One was called The Bridge and the other The Blue Rider.
- Many Expressionist artists also overlap into other movements such as Fauvism, Symbolism, Abstract Art, and Surrealism.
- There was also Expressionist literature, dance, sculpture, music, and theatre.
- Many of the German Expressionists artists had to flee Germany during World War II.

Art: Expressionism Test Quiz

1) When did the Expressionism art movement take place?

- 1200s
- Late 1400s to early 1500s
- Mid 1600s
- Early 1900s
- Late 1900s to early 2000s

2) What famous painting did Edvard Munch paint four versions of?

- Red Horses
- The Scream
- Lady in a Green Jacket
- The Blue Rider
- The Storm

3) What characteristic was typical of Expressionist art?

- Art that conveyed emotion rather than reality
- Distorted and exaggerated subjects
- Vivid and shocking colours
- All of the above
- None of the above

4) What Austrian artist had his Expressionist art displayed in the German magazine 'The Storm'?

- Franz Marc
- August Macke
- Max Beckman
- Edvard Munch
- Oskar Kokoschka

5) What artist painted 'The Large Red Horses' and was a founding member of the Blue Rider group?

- Franz Marc
- August Macke
- Max Beckman
- Edvard Munch
- Oskar Kokoschka

6) What German painter claimed to be against the Expressionist movement, but many of his paintings are described as Expressionist?

- Franz Marc
- August Macke
- Max Beckman
- Edvard Munch
- Oskar Kokoschka

7) What leading member of the Blue Rider group painted 'Lady in a Green Jacket'?

- Franz Marc
- August Macke
- Max Beckman
- Edvard Munch
- Oskar Kokoschka

8) What artist was also known as a Symbolist and painted 'The Scream'?

- Franz Marc
- August Macke
- Max Beckman
- Edvard Munch
- Oskar Kokoschka

9) What other art movement took place around the same time in France and was led by Henri Matisse?

- Pop Art
- Abstract Art
- Baroque
- Realism
- Fauvism

10) In what country did the Expressionist art movement begin?

- Germany
- France
- Russia
- Netherlands
- Denmark