

# Seeing History Through Artists' Eyes

## Class 4: Art in the Wake of World War I: Reacting to a world in chaos

June 20, 2022

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- I. **2018 Tate Gallery, London:** “Aftermath: Art in the Wake of World War One”
- II. **Chronology and geography** of World War I (1914-1918)
  - A. Peter Jackson’s 2018 documentary “They Shall Not Grow Old” (BBC; Imperial War Museum)
- III. **How did British Artists respond? Artist-Soldier-Witness: England**
  - A. C. R. W. Nevinson (worked for War Propaganda Bureau), La Matraillouse (machine gun) (1915); Paths of Glory (1917)
  - B. Paul Nash, We Are Making a New World (1918)
  - C. William Orpen (official war artist), A Grave in a Trench (1917); Blown Up (1917); The Signing of Peace (1919); To the Unknown British Soldier in France (1927)
  - D. Hall of Remembrance, 1918, to commemorate cooperation of Britain & allies (unbuilt)
    - Percy Wyndham Lewis, A Battery Shelled
    - Paul Nash, The Menin Road
    - John Singer Sargent, Gassed
- IV. **How did German artists respond? Artist-Soldier-Witness**
  - A. Otto Dix, Storm troops advancing under a gas attack; Wounded Soldier (War series: 1924); Prostitute and Disabled War Veteran. Two Victims of Capitalism (1923)
  - B. Wilhelm Lehmbruck, Fallen Man (1915-1916)
  - C. Kathe Kollwitz, The Mothers (1919); Bread; Never Again War (1924); Grieving Parents (1914-1932)
  - D. Ernst Barlach, Hovering Angel (1927), Güstrow Cathedral
- V. **How did American artists react** to (but not go to) war
  - A. John Sloan, After the war a medal and maybe a job (1914)
  - B. Childe Hassam, Avenue of the Allies (1918)
  - C. Georgia O’Keefe, Flag (1918)
  - D. George Bellows, Massacre at Dinant (1914) (War series); The Barricade (War series)
- VI. **The total failure of Western Art:** Dada (Hugo Ball’s “Manifesto,” 1916); Surrealism
  - A. Raoul Hausmann, Tatlin at Home (1920)
  - B. Kurt Schwitters, Merz-drawing 47 (1920)
  - C. Max Ernst, The Elephant Celebes (1921)
- VII. **How do our monuments tell us to remember WWI?**
  - A. Memorials: Cenotaph, London; Thiepval Memorial to the Missing of the Somme, by Edwin Lutyens, 1932; WWI Museum, Kansas City; WWI Memorials (1931 & 2021)

### Suggested reading/watching:

- Aftermath: Art in the Wake of World War One, ed. by Emma Chambers (Catalogue for exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London, 2018)
- “They Shall Not Grow Old” – BBC Peter Jackson