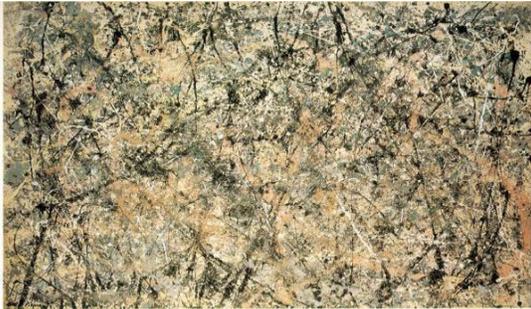


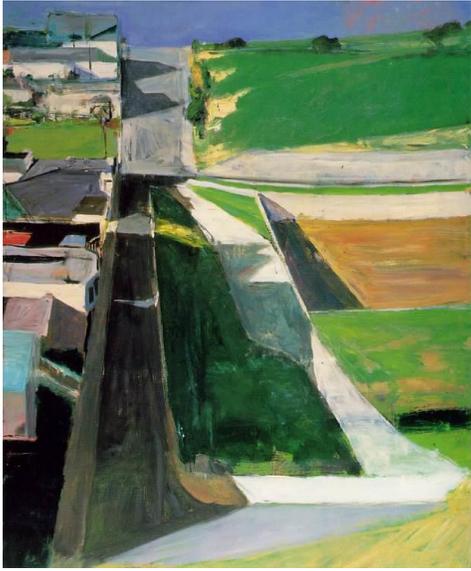
Abstract Expressionism

Abstract Expressionism exploded in New York following World War II. "AbEx" got its title because it was abstract (emphasizing shape, color and/or line with no recognizable subject matter) and expressive (stressing emotions and individual feelings more than design and form). Artists turned against reason as a reaction to the times they lived in. Their work had a spontaneous and very fresh feel to it. It was meant to be grasped _____ by the viewer rather than derived from reason. The movement lasted about fifteen years, but during that time it revolutionized the art world. America became the global leader of art during this time and remains so (arguably) today.



Willem de Kooning, "Easter Monday", 1950-1952, oil on canvas
Willem de Kooning, "Woman I", 1950-1952, oil on canvas
Willem De Kooning came from Amsterdam to the US in 1926. During the depression he worked as a house painter, and this led him to use large house-painting brushes and enamel paint.
After painting realistically for many years, he leapt into AbEx and became one of its leading exponents. His slashing brush covered large canvases with color and tremendous _____ that became his nonobjective subject matter. Because the emphasis is on the act of painting as part of the subject matter, such work was called Action Painting. In *Easter Monday* de Kooning used newspaper transfers and oils as the media of his nonobjective work. The painting is coincidentally strewn with E's. De Kooning often used letters of the alphabet as part of his huge swinging-motion paintings.
At the same time he was still very interested in the figure. His famous series of *Woman* paintings was inspired in part by advertising billboards.
Woman I is an exciting painted made at top speed. Amid the interplay of colors and brushstrokes, the overall shape of the body is recognizable. There is an emphasis on the face with its wide grin. Like other action paintings,

	<p>the image comes into and out of focus. This is _____ and very _____ painting.</p>
	<p>Jackson Pollock Jackson Pollock, "No. 1, 1950 (Lavender Mist)", oil enamel and aluminum on canvas. In 1946 Pollock began his drip paintings. His new working technique completely freed him from the use of traditional brushes and opened the door to Abstract Expressionism. Laying his canvas on the floor of the studio so he could walk on it, he literally put himself into his work. With a can of paint in his hand, he moved about the canvas, freely dripping, spilling and throwing the color with apparent abandon. Pollock's <i>No.1, 1950 (Lavender Mist)</i> is a complex interweaving of color and line that produces an overall _____ of texture Pollock intended the work to be flat; however, there is a sense of shallow depth.</p>
	<p>Lee Krasner, "Right Bird Left", 1956, oil on canvas Lee Krasner progressed through realism and small abstractions. Eventually, she turned to much larger-sized canvases to fully contain her _____. In 1965 she painted <i>Right Bird Left</i>. The resulting surfaces are rich in texture, color, movement, and overall unity. She was married to Jackson Pollock until his tragic death.</p>
	<p>Mark Rothko, "Blue, Orange, Red", 1961, oil on canvas Mark Rothko developed a style based on soft edges and blending colors. His expression was not as harsh as deKooning. As his work became more _____, the sizes of his canvases became larger. The color became less contrasting and less intense as well. He limited his large rectangular shapes to only two or three, as in <i>Blue, Orange, Red</i>. The hazy edges give the feeling of shapes floating and vibrating in and out of the background color.</p>

	<p>Richard Diebenkorn, "Cityscape I", 1963, oil on canvas.</p> <p>Richard Diebenkorn was part of the second generation of Abstract Expressionists. Many of these second-generation AbEx painters turned from complete reliance on abstraction to representational subjects and figurative painting, but with expressive overtones. Diebenkorn combined _____ with the _____ power and technique of Abstract Expressionism. <i>Cityscape I</i> shows the influence of Abstract Expressionism in the brushstrokes and reliance on flat shapes.</p>
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Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

Which of these Abstract Expressionism artists do you think is the most innovative? Why do you think they are the most innovative?

Of the two artists, Willem de Kooning or Mark Rothko; whose style would you say that you relate to most? Explain your answer.