

Outsider Art

According to the Insiders of the Art World

What is Outsider Art?

Outsider art is art by self-taught or naïve art makers. Typically, those labeled as outsider artists have little or no contact with the mainstream art world or art institutions. In many cases, their work is discovered only after their deaths.

The development of the awareness of forms of creative expression that exist outside accepted cultural norms, or the realm of “fine art”, began with the researches of psychiatrists early in the century.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CEsxshoGZV4> (4.5 mins--US)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKKhXcVhgAo> (20 mins)

William Edmondson (1874-1951)

William Edmondson was the first African-American folk art sculptor to be given a one-person show exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

William Edmondson, son of Tennessee slaves, did not consider himself an artist when he began carving around 1932, after retiring from his job as a laborer. Inspired by a vision, he emphasized his divine calling, claiming, “Jesus has planted the seed of carving in me” and describing his works as “mirkels.” Edmondson carved gravestones, free-standing figurative sculpture, and garden ornaments, using discarded blocks of limestone and chisels fashioned from railroad spikes. Animals, biblical subjects, and secular figures like Eleanor Roosevelt and Nashville school teachers dominated his repertoire.





Bill Traylor (1854-1949)

William Traylor was an African-American self-taught artist from Lowndes County, Alabama. Born into slavery, Traylor spent the majority of his life after emancipation as a sharecropper. It was only after 1939, following his move to Montgomery, Alabama, that Traylor began to draw.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWTvf1aAAj8>
(2.5 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrLvjqnq3KpE>
(4.5 mins)







Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985)



Jean Philippe Arthur Dubuffet was a French painter and sculptor. His idealistic approach to aesthetics embraced so-called "low art" and eschewed traditional standards of beauty in favor of what he believed to be a more authentic and humanistic approach to image-making.

Though he was an academically trained painter from a bourgeois family, Dubuffet maintained what he called in a 1951 lecture an "anticultural position."¹ He advocated for "instinct, passion, mood, violence, madness"² rather than analysis and reason, as well as closer proximity to nature and natural forms and the discarding of traditional notions of beauty. "Look at what lies at your feet!" he once said. "A crack in the ground, sparkling gravel, a tuft of grass, some crushed debris offer equally worthy subjects for your applause and admiration."³ Such values were embodied in what Dubuffet termed art brut (or "raw art"), produced on the margins by children, outsider and folk artists, and the mentally ill. His own collection of this work, formed in part with the help of the Surrealist [Andre Breton](#) and writer Jean Paulhan, was donated to the city of Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1971.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2ulsX26-j8> (7.5 mins)

<https://www.pacegallery.com/exhibitions/jean-dubuffet-17/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLb90b9P48Y> (the city)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjxuQmIV8FM&t=40s> (brief)









Lausanne's Gallery of Art by the Insane

Switzerland's hilly, lakeside Lausanne hosts the Collection de l'Art Brut — art by self-taught, nonconformist artists, many of whom were deemed insane. Collector Jean Dubuffet found their work original and untainted by the art world.

Lausanne's collection of fringe art — or Art Brut — fills one of Europe's most thought-provoking art galleries.

It presents works by self-taught creators who, for various reasons, escaped cultural conditioning and social conformity. The people who made this art were completely untrained — as free-spirited as artists can be.

These pieces were created by amateur artists — many who were labeled (and even locked up) by society as "insane" or even "criminally insane." Thumbnail biographies of these outsiders personalize their work.

In the 1940s, the artist Jean Dubuffet began collecting art produced by people he called "free from artistic culture and free from fashion tendencies." Dubuffet said, "The art does not lie in beds ready-made for it. It runs away when its name is called. It wants to be incognito. Its best moments are when it forgets what it's called."

<https://classroom.ricksteves.com/videos/lausanne-s-gallery-of-art-by-the-insane>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gv0aYD8kyzU> (in French with subtitles)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9z5_HW28FO8

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4ilzaxTSOc> (contemporary artists mental illness)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0H1PyEZ1jL0> (Yayoi Kusama)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQgZsDbrhxA> (Yayoi Kusama—self)

Nek Chand (1924-2015)

Nek Chand Saini was a self-taught Indian artist, known for building the Rock Garden of Chandigarh, an eighteen-acre sculpture garden in the city of Chandigarh. Nek Chand hailed from Shakargarh tehsil. Shakargarh was previously in Gurdaspur district in British India, but now falls in district Narowal in Pakistan.

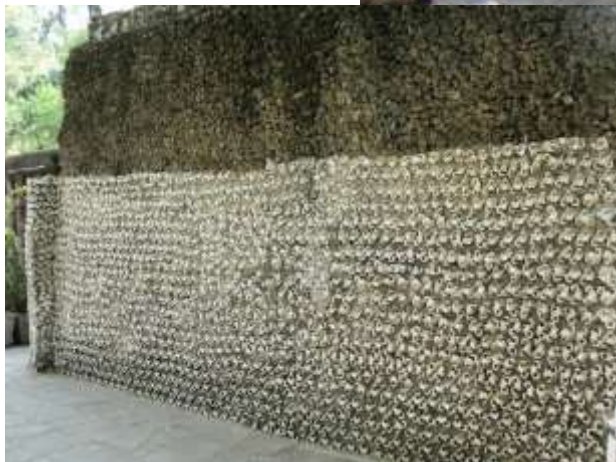
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDlrkhN80nY> (2.5 mins—use this)

<https://cfileonline.org/public-art-nek-chand-creator-of-the-rock-garden-of-chandigarh-passes/> (11 mins)











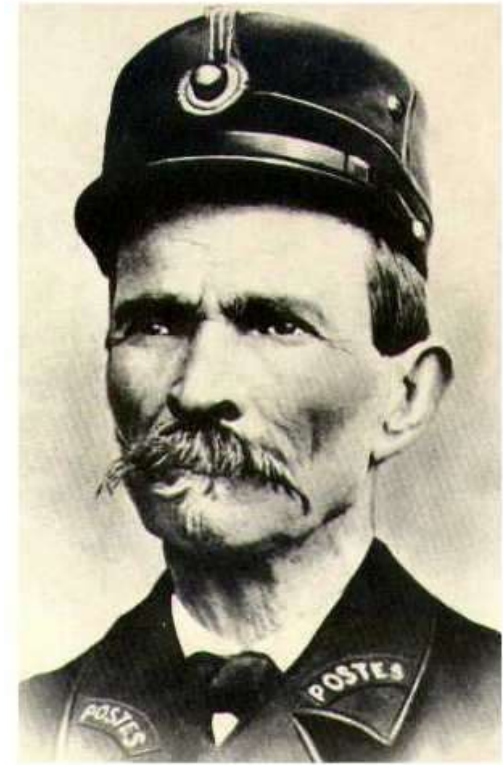
Ferdinand Cheval (1836-1924)

Ferdinand Cheval was a French postman who spent thirty-three years of his life building Le Palais idéal in Hauterives. The Palace is regarded as an extraordinary example of naïve art architecture.

More than 120,000 people travel to the commune of Hauterives in southeastern France every year to see the [Palais Idéal du Facteur Cheval](#), a stunning palace constructed entirely from handpicked pebbles.

Originally called "The Temple of Nature," the man-made wonder was built one stone at a time from thousands of pebbles that postman Joseph Ferdinand Cheval collected for 33 years. He combined the stones with mortar and limestone to create the impeccably detailed castle.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXxDrPdO9Rc>





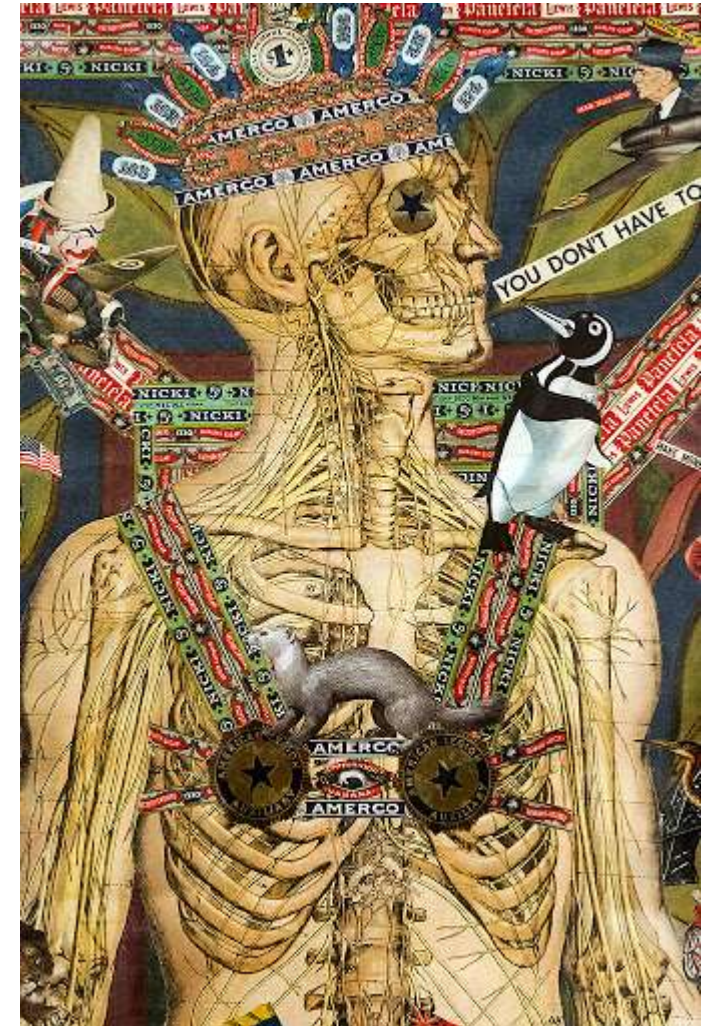






Felipe Jesus Consalvos (1890-1961)

Felipe Jesus Consalvos was a Cuban-American cigar roller and artist, known for his posthumously-discovered body of art work based on the vernacular tradition of cigar band collage.









Madge Gill (1882-1961)

Madge Gill, born Maude Ethel Eades, was an English outsider and visionary artist. Madge Gill was an outstanding exponent of mediumistic art and remains one of the foremost British Outsider artists. She was born in the East End of London, where she spent the greater part of her life.

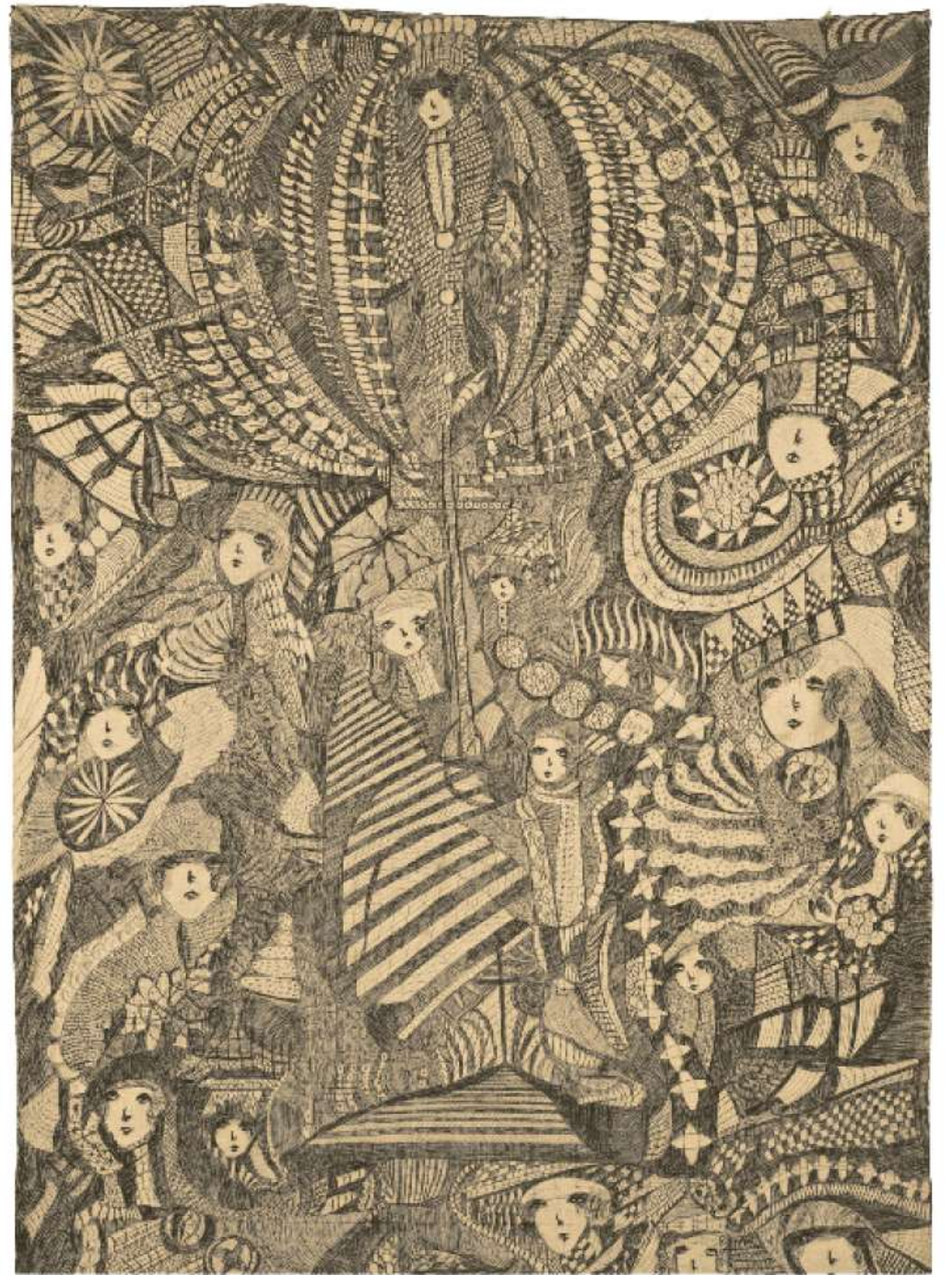
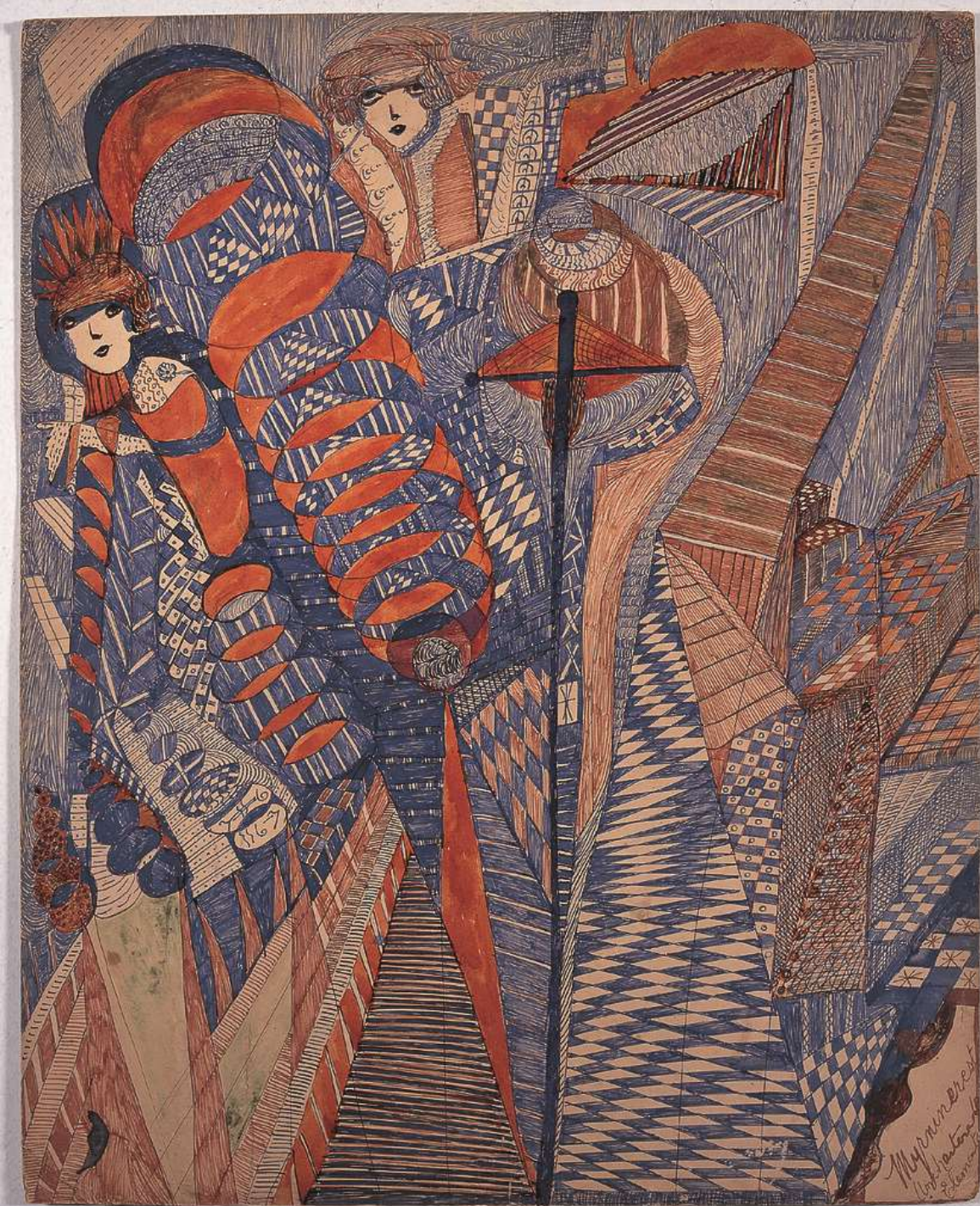
<https://worksby-madgegill.co/texts/art-is-a-comfort>











James Hampton (1909-1964)

James Hampton was an American [outsider artist](#), originally from [South Carolina](#) but based in [Washington, D.C.](#) for much of his life. Hampton worked as a [janitor](#) and secretly built a large assemblage of [religious art](#) from scavenged materials, known as the *Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations' Millennium General Assembly*. Often abbreviated to simply the *Throne*, it is currently on display at the [Smithsonian American Art Museum](#) in Washington.^[1] Art critic [Robert Hughes](#) of [Time magazine](#) wrote that the *Throne* "may well be the finest work of visionary religious art produced by an American."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7WqtL29UAY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtjJWGJfJ6A> (18 mins--good)







Contemporary Outsider Art

The world of **Outsider Art** is a small and almost hermetic part of the world of creativity. Without formal art training, **Outsider Artists** work on **the margins of mainstream contemporary art** and beyond the confines of artistic institutions, creating works of inhibited expression without rules and taboos and providing a valuable insight into the world seen through their eyes. After the term 'Outsider art' was [first used](#) by **Roger Cardinal** to describe work by untrained artists creating outside of the mainstream art world, the parameters of this term **have expanded** in the next forty years taking into account all **different forms of raw creativity** including artists with disabilities, mental illness, homeless, ethnic minorities, migrant, folk artist, the self-taught. Our list consists of the diverse group of contemporary artists coming from different sorts of societal margins who create stunning and inspiring art on the outskirts of academic mainstream.

Gregory Blackstock

The richly obsessive life and work of renowned autistic artist Gregory Blackstock comes to life, as he uses his art to catalogue and make sense of the world around him. Gregory's cousin Dorothy helps bring his drawings to the attention of the art world, while the film brings his work to life through hand-crafted animation, drawing you into the unique vision of this singular artist.

- <https://www.pbs.org/video/the-great-world-of-gregory-blackstock-suat5b/>



Imaging Studies

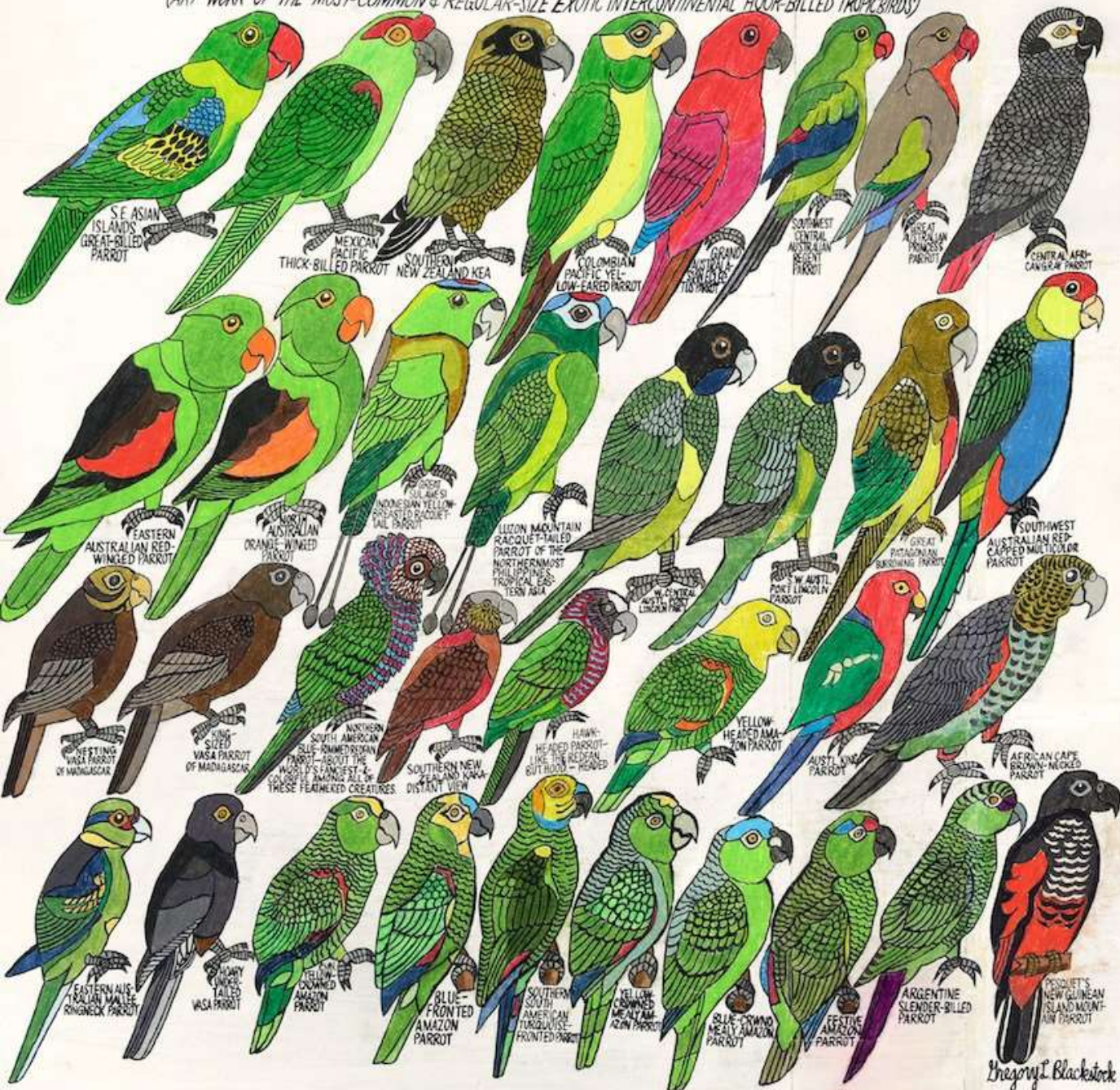


ESTIMCH-60

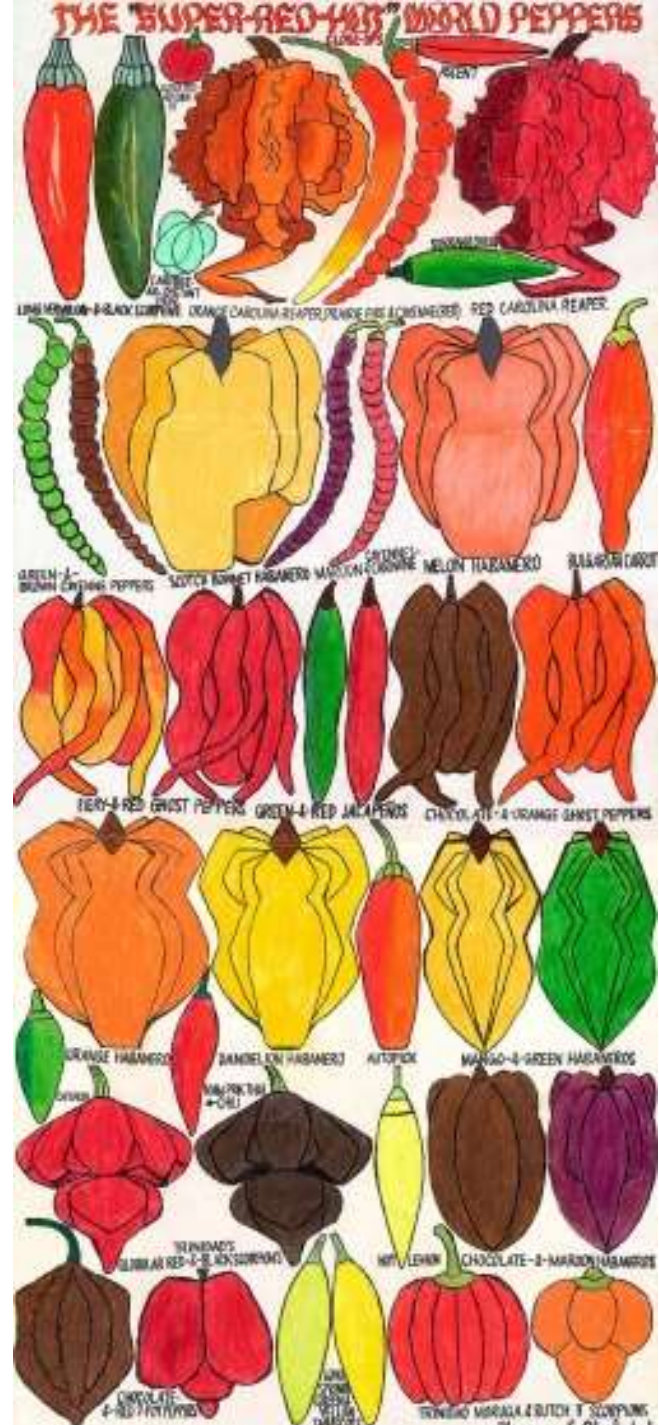


THE GREAT WORLD PARROTS COMPLETE-Color

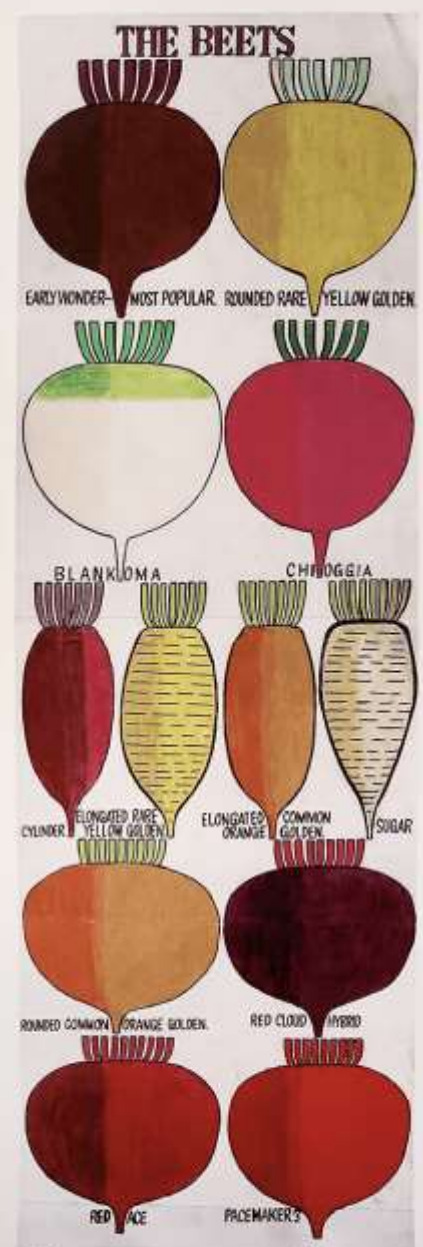
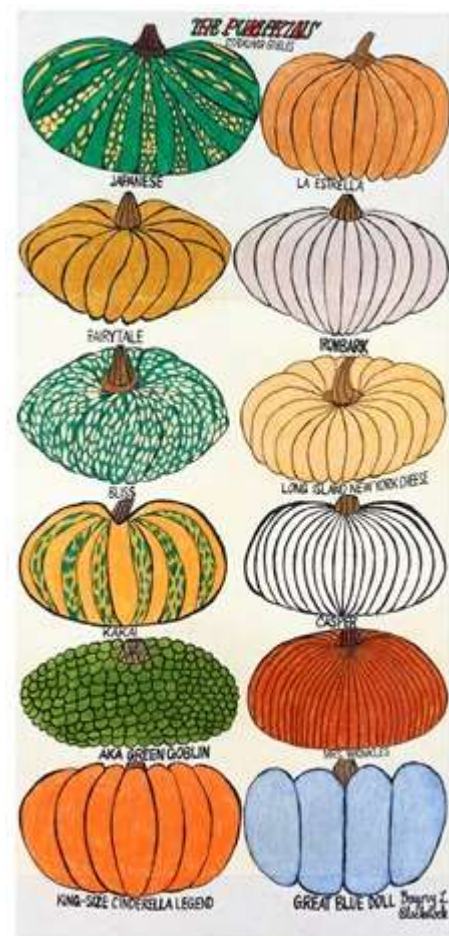
(ART WORK OF THE MOST-COMMON & REGULAR-SIZE EXOTIC INTERCONTINENTAL HOOK-BILLED TROPICBIRDS)



Gregory I. Blackstock



Insect Pest Classifications Presents THE MAJOR WORLD TROUBLEMAKER BEETLES



Dragon J. Blackstock

Insect Pest Classifications Presents

THE MAJOR WORLD TROUBLEMAKER MOTHS

COMPLETE



COMMON- & GIANT SUGARCANE BORER MOTHS (CLOSE-UP)



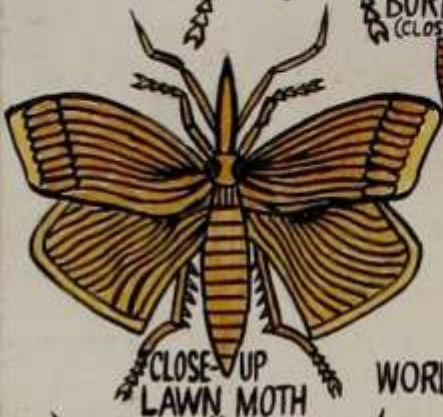
GYPSY MOTHS



EUROPEAN LPRD. MOTHS



TOBACCO PRODUCT MOTHS



CLOSE-UP LAWN MOTHS



CODLING MOTHS



E. NORTH AMERICAN PICKLEWORM MOTHS



SPRUCE BUDWORM MOTHS, WORLD'S WORST EVERGREEN FOREST PEST KNOWN



EASTERN FOREST BAGWORM MOTHS



ANGOUMOIS GRAIN CATERPILLAR MOTHS



SOUTHERN U.S. MEALWORM MOTHS



NORTH AMERICAN CORN EARWORM MOTHS



SOUTH AFRICAN EMPEROR MOTHS - LARGEST MOTHS



EUROPEAN CORN BORER MOTHS



EASTERN TENT CATERPILLAR MOTHS

THE COMMON MYNAs

FAMOUS ASIATIC STARLING COUSINS

INDOCHINA BLACK-COLLARED MYNA
ALSO FOUND IN THE SOUTHERN CHINA MAINLAND

LONGTAIL BARE-EYED MYNA
OF SIAU ISLAND, MOLUCCAS

APO MYNA OF MINDANAO, S.O. PHILIPPINES

SULAWESI WHITE-NECKED MYNA

MALAYAN ARCHIPELAGO COMMON HILL MYNA-ALSO FOUND IN SOUTHERN CHINA MAINLAND

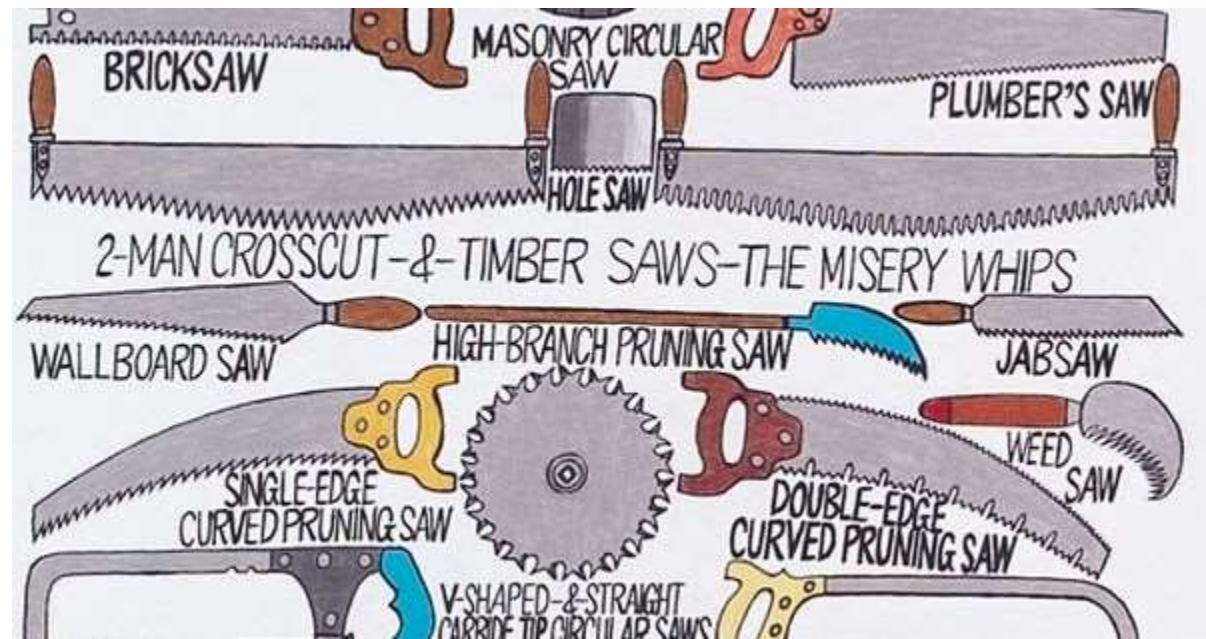
GREAT SOUTHEAST ASIAN MYNA

COLETO PHILIPPINE MYNA

NORTHERN SOLOMON ISLANDS LONG-TAILED MYNA

LONG-CRESTED MYNA OF THE MOLUCCA ISLANDS

Gregory L. Blackstock



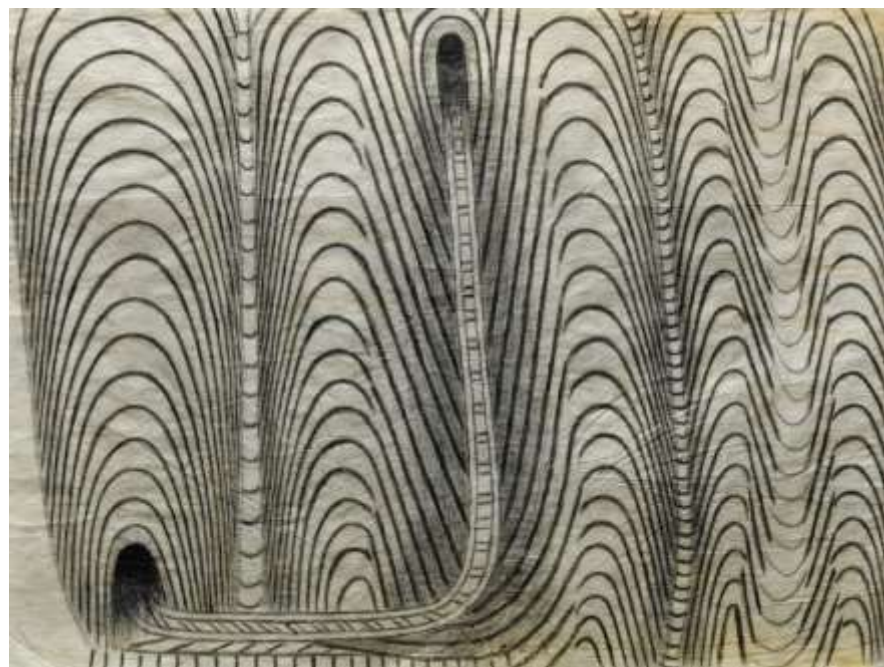
Martin Ramirez (1895-1963)

Martin Ramirez was a [self-taught artist](#) who spent most of his adult life institutionalized in [California mental hospitals](#), diagnosed as a [catatonic schizophrenic](#). He is considered by some to be one of the 20th century's self-taught masters.

Martín Ramírez was a self-taught Mexican artist whose intricate drawings melded Catholic iconography and figures into surreal spaces. His idiosyncratic works were made on salvaged paper bags and postcards pieced together with a glue composed of saliva and potato starch. Born on January 30, 1895 in Tepatitlán, Mexico, he left his wife and children behind in 1925 to find work in California. After six years of working on the railroads, he like other laborers of the era lost his job during the Great Depression. Homeless and unable to explain his situation in English, he was taken to a medical facility by police where he was diagnosed with catatonic schizophrenia. He would spend the next 30 years in psychiatric facilities. In 1948, after moving from the Stockton State Hospital to the DeWitt State Hospital outside of Sacramento he began creating the works for which he is now remembered. It was a professor of art and psychology, Tarmo Pasto, who first took an interest in Ramírez's work. Pasto later put on exhibitions of his work at colleges and sent 10 drawings to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 1955. Despite efforts to bring the artist to public attention, he remained mostly unknown during his lifetime. The artist died of tuberculosis on February 17, 1963 in Auburn, CA. It was not until 1973, when the Chicago Imagists [Gladys Nilsson](#) and [Jim Nutt](#) organized a solo exhibition of Ramírez's work at Phyllis Kind Gallery that he began to gain notoriety. In 2007, he was the subject of a retrospective show at the American Folk Art Museum in New York.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2ttSl1eM_s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n6eqJpn6Kw0>







Untitled (Stag with Green Border), c. 1952-54
graphite, tempera and crayon on paper, 28.25 x 34.5 in.

Henry Darger (1892-1973)

Henry Joseph Darger Jr. was an American writer, novelist and artist who worked as a hospital custodian in Chicago, Illinois.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BGA4wNTIjY>



ジョン・マクレーガー / 小出由紀子

ヘンリー・ダーガー / 非現実の王国で

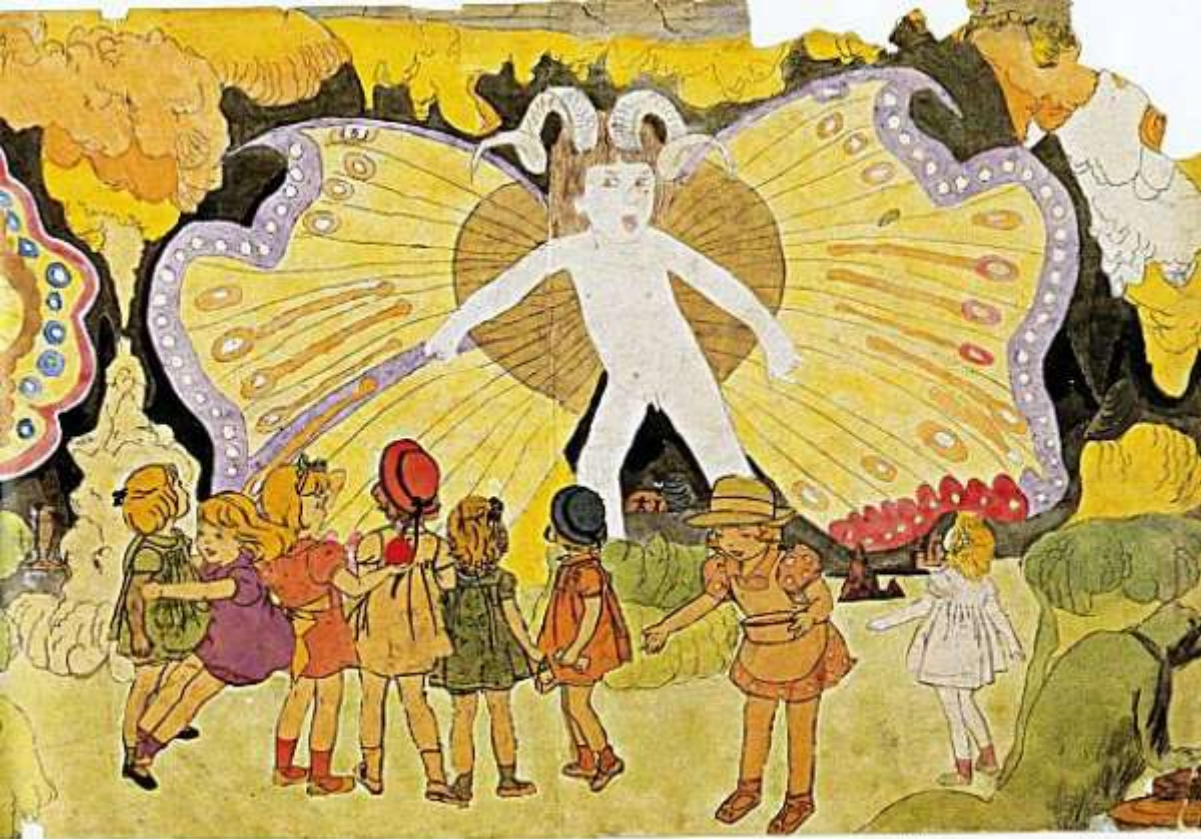
Henry J. Darger In the Realms of the Unreal

John M. MacGregor / Koide Yukiko





They are a copy
made by the
Gilchrist & Sons



... / Photo courtesy of Wellspring





Adolf Wölfli (1864-1930)



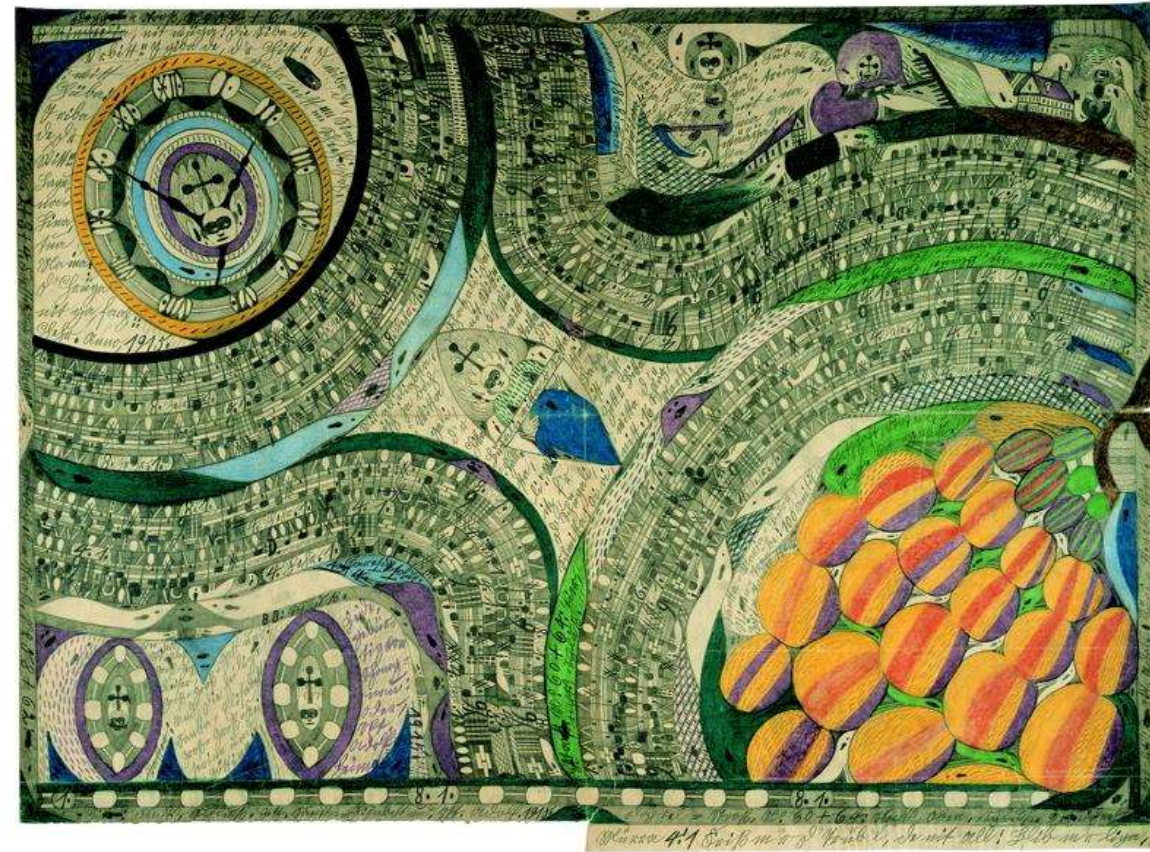
Adolf Wölfli was a Swiss artist who was one of the first artists to be associated with the Art Brut or outsider art.

Adolf Wölfli, who spent many years of his life in the Waldau psychiatric clinic near Bern, created a universe of his own in drawings and writings. The wealth of lines, patterns, musical notation and script is literally mesmerizing to look at. From the podcast series featuring highlights of the Kunstmuseum Bern Collection.

- <https://www.kunstmuseumbern.ch/en/see/collection/videos-highlights-collection/adolf-woelfli-general=view-of-the-island-neveranger-1911-1318.html>







Judith Scott (1943-2005)

Fiber artist [Judith Scott](#) (1943-2005) is renowned for her intricately wrapped sculptures that transform everyday found objects into cocoon-like, abstracted forms. From 1987 until her death in 2005, Scott worked at the Creative Growth Art Center, Oakland, California, where she developed her singular artistic voice.

Isolated as a result of being institutionalized for most of her life due to Down syndrome and deafness, [Judith Scott](#) began creating art at age forty-three, after being introduced to Creative Growth in 1987. Scott's vivid and enigmatic sculptures, which evolved in shape and material throughout her career, expressed her imagination in ways she could not through speech. Her abstract works have been compared to nests and cocoons while her processes alluded to both ritual and play. Described as hermetic and complex, the wrapping suggests protection and concealment.

- <https://art21.org/watch/art-in-the-twenty-first-century/s9/creative-growth-art-center-in-san-francisco-bay-area-segment/>





SCREENING OF TWO FILMS AND WINTER PICNIC

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 2019 - 7:00 PM - ARTYARD - IN FRENCHTOWN, NJ



JAMES CASTLE: PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST
DIRECTED BY JEFFREY WOLF




OUTSIDER: THE LIFE AND ART OF JUDITH SCOTT
DIRECTED BY BETSY BAYHA

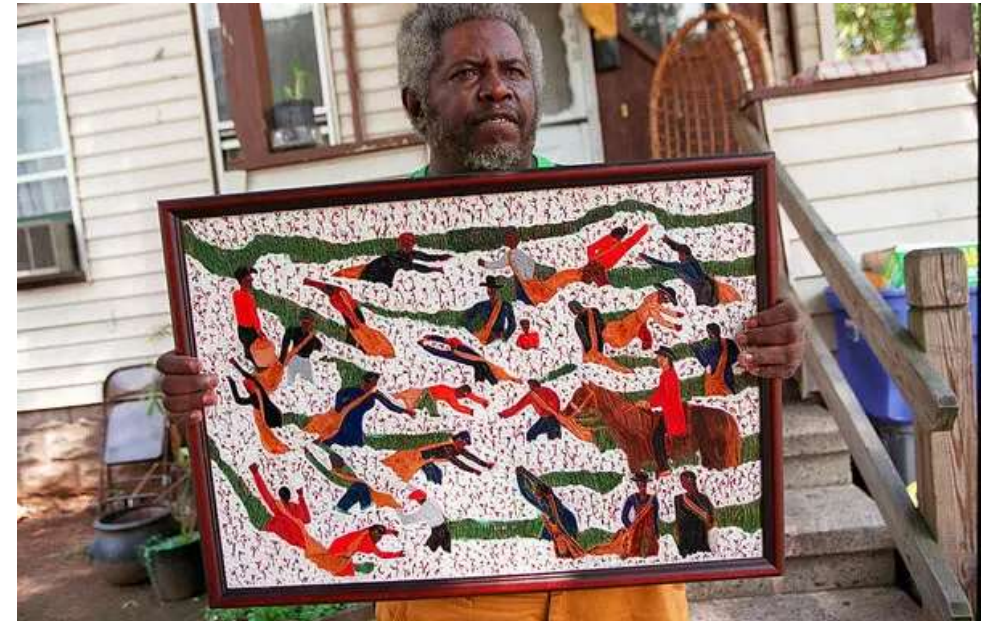




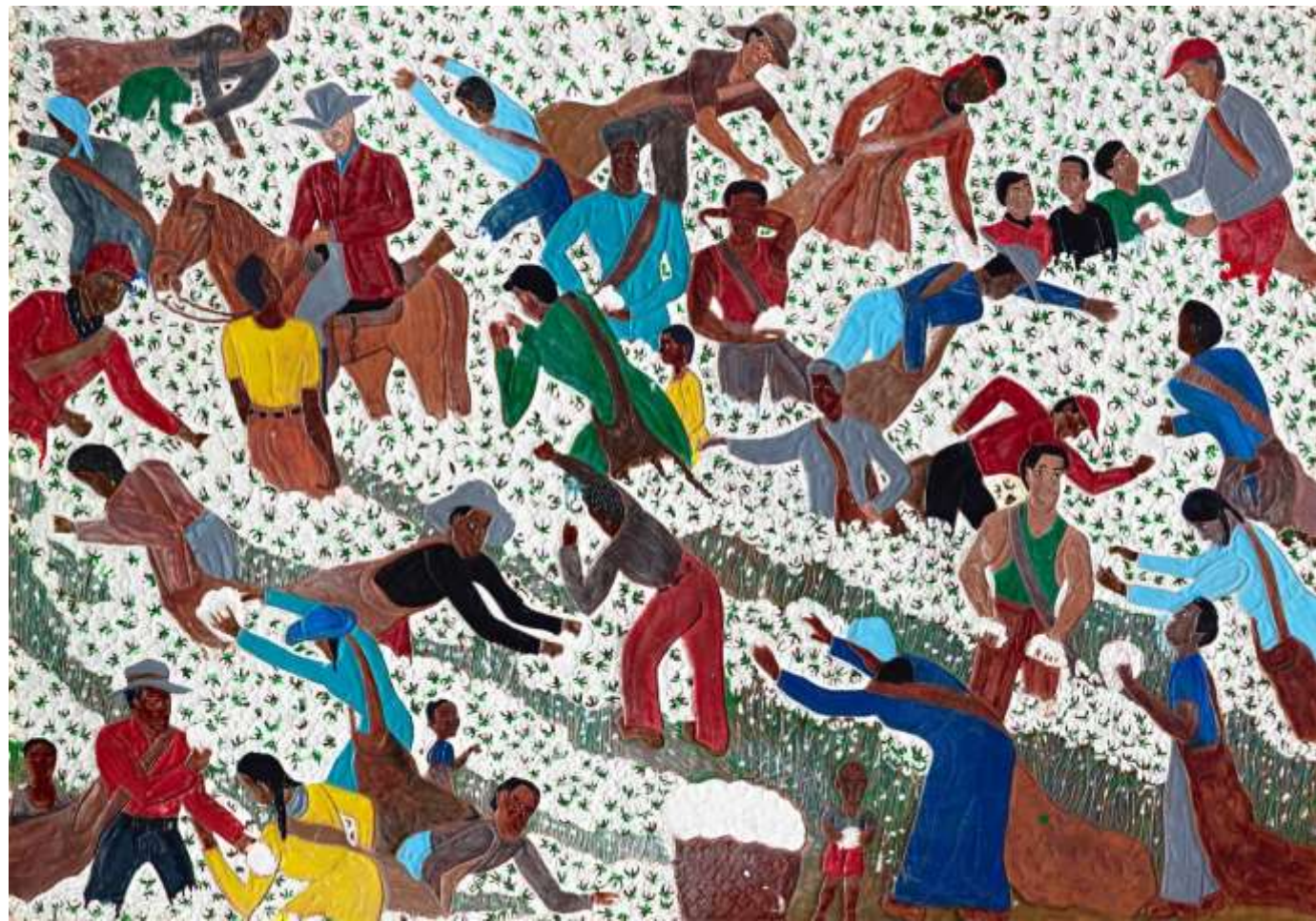
Winfred Rembert (1945-2021)

Winfred Rembert was an African-American artist who used hand-tools and paints on leather canvases. Rembert grew up in Cuthbert, Georgia, where he spent much of his childhood laboring in the cotton fields. During a 1960s civil rights march, he was arrested without being charged.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BsTZjLp6zpQ> (use this)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgtBbuWnoVU>





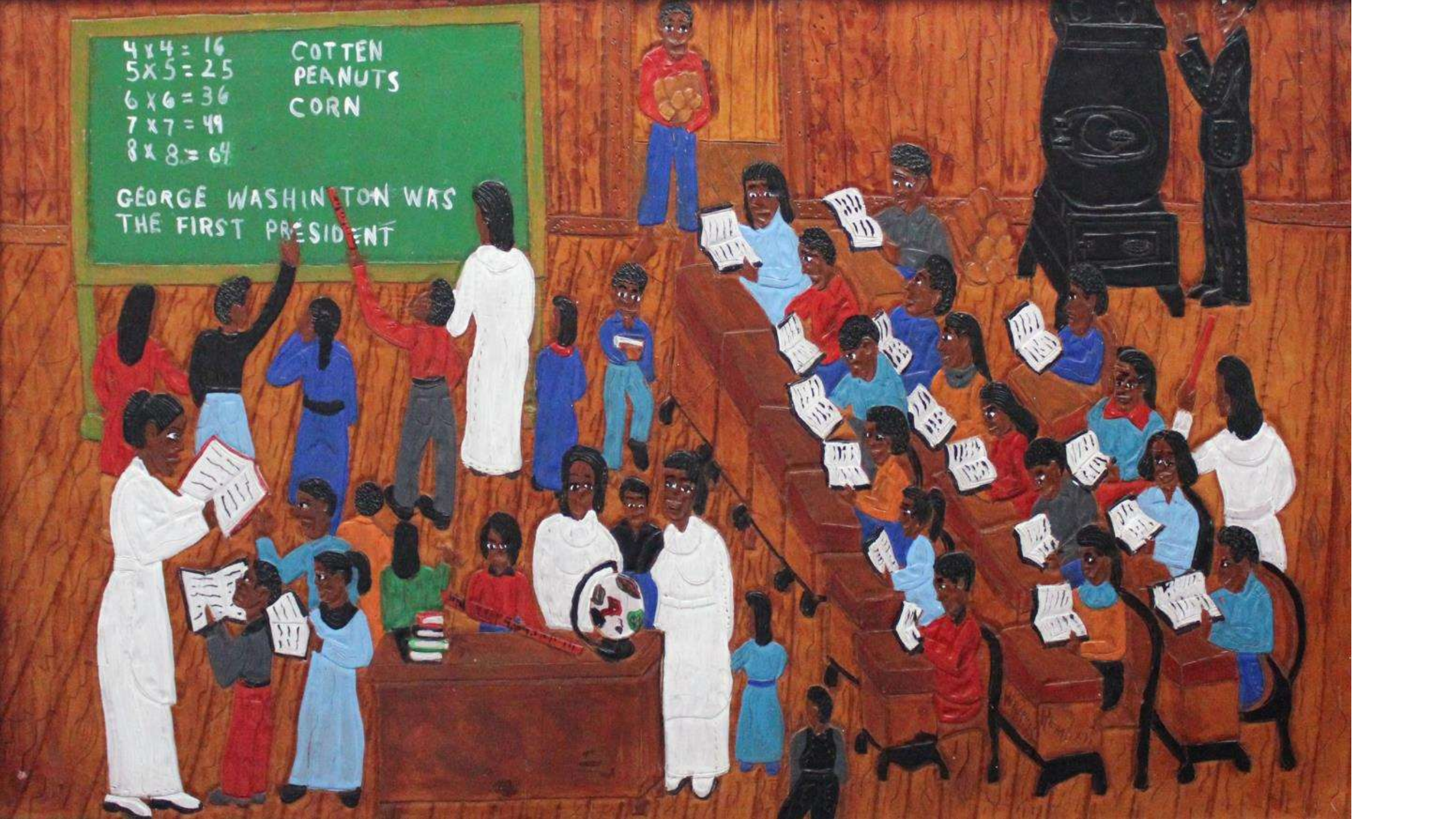




$4 \times 4 = 16$
 $5 \times 5 = 25$
 $6 \times 6 = 36$
 $7 \times 7 = 49$
 $8 \times 8 = 64$

COTTEN
PEANUTS
CORN

GEORGE WASHINGTON WAS
THE FIRST PRESIDENT



Assignment Suggestions...

- Create an artwork inspired by an outsider artist
- Create an artwork using repetitive patterns and lines.
- Try to shut out your inner editor by creating an artwork while watching TV or listening to music. Cover a 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper with lines shapes and images—no borders.