

GET IPMM UPDATES!

*Art/Art Resources for Teachers/Featured*

# 8 Pieces of Art That Literally Changed The World (To Share With Your Students)

Written by:

All works of art create change and push already existing ideas in new directions and into new dimensions. However, there's some art works that burst into existence at just the right moment, fueled by a changing world, a visionary mind, or a powerful new collective movement. These pieces of art have the potential to radically change both the art world, and the wider world.

Although there are many works like this to choose from, below is my curated list of 8 of the pieces of art that changed the world. They're great pieces to design a lesson plan around, as they bring in art history, exciting formal elements, culture, science, and history in general.

Each of these pieces are symbolic of what's so special about art education and art history: that it's such an interdisciplinary subject, and bleeds into tons of other topics. Art education is a great way to get students interested in other subjects, and to connect with different kinds of learners where they are! Check out our recent article **11 Rock Solid Statistics That Prove How Vital Art Education Is For Kids' Academic and Social Achievement.**

## Fountain by Marcel Duchamp

GET IPMM UPDATES!



GET IPMM UPDATES!

What better way to start off this list, then with Duchamp's ***Fountain***? Widely considered a turning point in modern and conceptual art, Duchamp created *Fountain* in 1917. He simply took a urinal off of a bathroom wall, turned it on its side, and signed it "R. Mutt". He submitted the piece to an exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists in New York City, although it was never shown.

By choosing a common object that was pre-made, Duchamp tested the prevailing assumptions about what

disagree about what it meant. It caused a huge uproar at the time, with its fair share of critics.

Today, the piece is seen as an important landmark in the development of Conceptual art, and as a huge jumping off point for future artists. Through *Fountain*, Duchamp also introduced the Readymade, an art form typified by the use of premade, found objects.

## Code of Hammurabi, Babylon

GET IPMM UPDATES!

GET IPMM UPDATES!



The Code of Hammurabi is famous for its sculptural prowess and refinement, as well as for its role as the first and most complete set of written legal codes discovered by archaeologists and historians. The legal codes enshrined in the massive stele were set out by King

most of modern-day Iraq.

The top of the stele features a large carving of King Hammurabi receiving the right to rule and govern from Shamash, the Babylonian god of justice. In the carving, the sovereignty of King Hammurabi is symbolized by a measuring rod and tape that Shamash is handing King Hammurabi. The rest of the monolith is covered with 282 laws written in cuneiform. Although many of the laws would seem cruel by today's legal standards, the Code of Hammurabi was actually the first time that a person was seen as innocent until proven guilty.

#### GET IPMM UPDATES!

Carving of the laws and the sculptural images on top all show enormous skill and refinement in Babylonian imagery and art. The code is carved out of diorite, a very hard and difficult to carve material. The forms of Hammurabi and Shamash are carved with great mastery, and display the full knowledge of a society that was highly advanced in the realms of art, trade, and law.

## **Galloping Horse by Eadweard Muybridge**

Galloping Horse is a unique entry on this list in that it represents a revolution in the arts and the sciences!

GET IPMM UPDATES!

Edwin S. Porter was an early experimenter in the field of photography and is known for his work in capturing motion. He pioneered the use of several different cameras at the same time to capture motion in stop-motion frames, as well as the zoopraxiscope, which allowed him to project the images quickly one after another to give a spectator the illusion of a moving picture.

Galloping Horse was a break-through in motion photography, as it captured each fraction of a movement in a horse's gallop, allowing for people to see something that happened much too fast for the human eye in full, glorious detail. For the first time, people could see how a horse moved, and show for certain that a horse's hooves never left the ground all at the same time.

## Guernica By Pablo Picasso

Pablo Picasso is a revolutionary artist in many ways. His paintings established the Cubist movement and were some of the first and most well-known experimentations with abstraction. However, Guernica makes this list for a very different reason. It's a testament to the power and influence that a painting can have on public sentiment and social will.

GET IPMM UPDATES!

Guernica is a massive and chilling depiction of the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica, ordered by the Spanish Nationalists and executed by the Nazis and Italian Fascists. The painting is awash with the brutality of war, violence, death, fire, and dismemberment. It's striking monochrome grays and blacks add to the grim atmosphere of the piece.

Picasso painted it to display at an exhibition intended to raise money for the antifascist cause in Spain, and would not allow it to be displayed there until Franco's regime was toppled. It's seen as one of the most powerful anti-war paintings or pieces of art ever created, and is a beloved



WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

WHERE WE WORK

**DONATE**

GET INVOLVED

**SIGN UP FOR THE IPMM NEWSLETTER - ART + MISSION,  
NEVER SPAM**

*your email*

**SUBSCRIBE**

## 7,000 Oak Trees by Joseph Beuys

GET IPMM UPDATES!

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

WHERE WE WORK

[DONATE](#)

[GET INVOLVED](#)

GET IPMM UPDATES!

7,000 Oak Trees is a key development in the realm of environmentally-focused art, and marks the beginning of a whole movement of conceptual performance or earthwork pieces that seek to address environmental health. Joseph Beuys was a mid 20th-century German artist known for his conceptual art pieces that often included an element of performance.

with volunteers to plant 7,000 oak trees in the city, with each accompanied by a monolithic basalt marker. More than just an ecological intervention, 7,000 Oaks was a symbolic beginning for the burgeoning German environmental movement. As the trees grew and aged, so too did environmental consciousness and an awareness of how humans alter the ecosystem.

## **Rhythm 0 by Marina Abramovic**

GET IPMM UPDATES!

[WHO WE ARE](#)[WHAT WE DO](#)[WHERE WE WORK](#)[DONATE](#)[GET INVOLVED](#)

GET IPMM UPDATES!

Marina Abramovic was one of the early innovators of feminist performance art, which pushed at the limits of bodily endurance and social norms, all in the interest of questioning the social position of women in the world. Rhythm 0 is one of her best known and most shocking works, and was performed in 1974. Abramovic stood still next to a table she'd filled with 72 objects. For 6 hours,

[Privacy](#) - [Terms](#)

a rose all the way to a gun loaded with a single bullet.

At the beginning of the performance, the audience was kind and restrained. They simply smeared honey on her, offered her a kiss, or twirled her around. As time went on, however, the onlookers felt further and further away from the normal boundaries of social behavior. They cut off her clothes, shoved thorns into her bare stomach, and eventually, one audience member held the gun to her head.

Other spectators intervened and a fight broke out. At the end of the six hour period, Marina started moving toward the audience, who all ran away. She believed that they were fearful of actually having to confront her, but were unable to hurt her and harm her because she had made herself into an object for them during the performance. The powerful performance piece spoke volumes about objectification, control, and power.

GET IPMM UPDATES!

## Balloon Dog by Jeff Koons

Whether you hate him or love him, Jeff Koons has left a mark on the art world. In much the same way that Marcel Duchamp tested the limits of art with *The Fountain*, Jeff Koons has pushed the envelope throughout his entire career as an artist.

GET IPMM UPDATES!

Through his artwork, Jeff Koons asks if art has to be made by the artist or if it can be designed by an artist and made ad infinitum by a workshop. Can art be manufactured on a large scale? Can it be sold for millions of dollars? When does art stop being art and start becoming marketing or advertising?

Balloon Dog is a perfect example of the ethical questions Koons' practice bring to the surface. Balloon Dog was first created by Koons in 1994 for an exhibition called ***Celebration***. Since then, it's been reincarnated in countless colors, sizes, and poses, netting Koon millions of dollars. You'll most likely recognize this iconic piece, from ads, museum gift shops, tv shows, or magazines.

GET IPMM UPDATES!

Faith Ringgold is a multimedia artist who's been working since the 1970s, and she's a powerful voice speaking on race, exploitation, and power in America. Although her paintings and performance pieces are no less masterful and moving, Ringgold's most well-known art is her series of story quilts. Inspired by 14th and 15th century Nepali paintings on fabric, Ringgold began to create quilt paintings in the 1980s and 1990s, sewing quilts and painting narrative scenes atop them.

By engaging with the often feminine-coded realm of craft, and creating these gorgeous and complex works of art, Faith Ringgold elevated textiles, quilting, and craft in general to the vaulted world of high art and museums.

accomplishments and legacy. She includes women like Sojourner Truth, Ida B Wells, and Frannie Lou Hammer, as well as her fictional character, Willa Marie Simone. As in other quilts by Ringgold, she subverts the largely white, male canon of art history, and has Van Gogh standing off to the side, surrounded by his characteristic sunflowers, but having little to do with the scene of joy and celebration. Faith Ringgold often places herself and other black women into the narrative of art history, and moves the "Old Masters" off to the side. It's a symbolic reclamation and re-establishment of the missing women and non-white artists in mainstream art history before the 1970s.

GET IPMM UPDATES!

## Power Of Art

Hopefully each of the entries on this list piqued your interest, and led you down a rabbit hole of research and exploration. Each of the 8 pieces transcends being a simple object or event, and bleeds into the realms of politics, law, social justice, science, and philosophy. Art co-exists with all of the other forces and movements of any given society and works to both question authority and propose new ways to live and strive for progress.

At IPMM, we believe that access to art and art education is essential to every student's growth and development. Art is a human right, and should never be hoarded as a luxury. When we teach our students about art, they become more conscientious, creative, and aware. Our art



about our [Shared Walls](#) program, and [check out more resources](#) for arts lovers, students, and art educators of all kinds!

GET IPMM UPDATES!

Written by:  
Lillie Therieau

Oct 18, 2021

## YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE...

## Office Envy: The Best Office Spaces of 2022

GET IPMM UPDATES!

*Workplace  
Solutions*

Most of us typically  
don't think of offices

May 30, 2022

## Sheefy McFly's Mural at Linkedin Detroit

*Featured /*

*Murals /*

*Workplace  
Solutions*

Just a couple weeks  
ago, we landed on

May 24, 2022

## Mike Han's Mural at Linkedin Detroit

*Featured /*

*Murals /*

*Workplace  
Solutions*

This May, we got the  
amazing opportunity

May 24, 2022

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

WHERE WE WORK

**DONATE**

GET INVOLVED

*LET'S TURN ART INTO IMPACT.*

**About** **Contact** **Get Involved** **Our Impact** **Rent Art**

*your email*

**SUBSCRIBE**

GET IPMM UPDATES!

**DONATE**

Privacy - Terms

[WHO WE ARE](#)

[WHAT WE DO](#)

[WHERE WE WORK](#)

[DONATE](#)

[GET INVOLVED](#)

IPaintMyMind is a recognized 501(c)(3) Public Charity / Nonprofit Organization and is tax-deductible in the United States

GET IPMM UPDATES!