POSTWAR PRIMITIVES:  
Anti-culture? Dubuffet, Pollock, and Premonitions of the Postmodern

...make the surface speak its own surface language... — Dubuffet. 1945

Personally, I believe very much in the values of savagery... instinct. passion. mood. violence. madness... — Dubuffet, “Anti-Cultural Positions.” 1951

I am Nature. — Pollock, ca. 1947

I. Review: Rational vs Irrational Production
A. Empty pavilions versus stuffed cups (Bauhaus vs Surrealism)
B. Staging postmodernism (1970) as a return to the virtues of irrationalism in a full-blown technocracy (1950s) and emerging “information society” (1960s)

II. Existentialism and Surrealism - international movements in the post WW2 period
A. New York’s Surrealist exiles (escaping Eurofascism) in the ’30s - ’40s:
   1) Masson, Ernst, Matta (all in NY during war), Magritte (showed in NY 1936)
   2) Peggy Guggenheim “Art of This Century” Gallery promoting Surrealism, curated by Duchamp... an entry point for Jackson Pollock
B. European informe (automatism, Bataille) versus Breton’s dreamscape
C. Informel in the U.S.
   1) Wols (1947), Giacometti (1950s), and Dubuffet (1950) all had crucial exhibitions in the 1950s in NY; Brassai’s graffiti photos at MoMA
   2) Jean Dubuffet gave talks on “Anti-Cultural Positions” in Chicago and elsewhere, 1951; showed his corps de dame series in NY

III. Jean Dubuffet’s I’art brut (raw or crude art) and Anti-Cultural Positions
A. Theory of no-theory, art that is anti-art – Dubuffet (and Klee) reading Hans Prinzhorn’s Bildnerei der Geisteskranken (Painting of the Insane), 1922
B. Formal recipes
   1) Jean Fautrier’s haut pâté (“high paste,” or “impasto”), and graffiti line
   2) abject materials: dirt, asphalt, pebbles, leaves
   3) biaxial symmetry (a psychotic tendency)
C. Corps de dame series, 1950 onward

III. (Adolph Gottlieb), Jackson Pollock, and (Native) American Primitivism
A. Gottlieb and the Americanization of the pictograph
B. Pollock’s shift from formal readings of Native American art to shamanism
C. Pollock and the public
   1) from Mexican muralists to Picasso’s Surrealism (1930s and ‘40s)
   2) Mural (1943, portable; no longer part of the wall; abstract)
   3) Pollock’s modernism per Greenberg (via Jones): industrial body disciplines
D. Pollock as a trope in Post-modernism
   1) the avant-garde’s capacity for co-optation (Lawler, Muniz)
   2) the appropriated author (Bidlo)
   3) the search for authentic process (Kaprow, Oldenburg, Antoni)
**Image List** (selected) for Lecture 15

all works are o/c unless noted: Dubuffet's also often include gravel, sand, pebbles

**Bauhaus:**
Paul Klee, *Magic Garden*, 1926, mixed media (often he works with plaster and paint on paper on canvas)

**Surrealism:**
Alberto Giacometti, *City Square (Plaza)*, 1948
Max Ernst, *Europe After the Rain*, 1949-52
Yves Tanguy, *Indefinite Divisibility*, 1942
Andre Masson, *Elk Attacked by Dogs*, 1945
Rene Magritte, *The Key of Dreams*, 1936
Brassai (G. Halasz), *Graffiti series*, early 1930s photographs, published in a book and shown at MoMA in 1950s, fueling "informel"

**Parisian Informe, or “Informel”**
Wols, (Wolfgang Schulze), *Painting* 1944-45 o/c
Wols, *The Blue Phantom*, 1951 o/c
Jean Fautrier, *The Massacre* (also known as *Sarah*), 1944 o/paper on canvas
Fautrier, *Tête d’Otage, no. 8 (Head of Hostage, 8)* “1943” o/cardboard with plaster
Jean Dubuffet, *Metro*, 1943 o/c
Dubuffet, *The Smoker by a Wall*, 1945, o/c
Dubuffet, *Archetypes*, 1945 o/c
Dubuffet, *Fautrier from the Front*, 1947 o/c
Adolf Wolfli, *Herdsmen*, 1911, drawing
Jean Dubuffet, *Will to Power*, 1946
Dubuffet, *Tree of Fluids (corps de dame)* 1950 o/c
Adolph Gottlieb, *Pictograph*, 1946

**American-Type Painting** (aka “Action Painting,” “Abstract Expressionism”)
Pacific Northwest Native American works:
Kwakiutl painted cedar bark cape, 19th century
Tlingit speaking peoples, *House Screen*, 1840, carved, assembled, and painted wood
Haida Mask, ca. 1850s
George Walkus (Kwakiutl people), *Dance Mask* 1938, carved, assembled, and painted wood

Gottlieb, *Evil Omen*, 1946
Jackson Pollock, *Birth*, 1938-41
Pollock, *Bird*, 1938-41
Pollock, *Head*, 1940-41
Pollock, *She-Wolf*, 1943
Pollock, *Mural*, 1943
Pollock, *Totem Lesson #2*, 1945
Pollock, *No.1, 1948* (and detail with handprints)
Hans Namuth, *Pollock Painting*, 1950, photographs; (and film with Paul Falkenberg, 1951)
Gjon Mili, *Picasso Painting with Light* 1949, photograph published in *Life* magazine
Mili, *Housewife Making a Bed*, 1946

**Ruptures in the Modernist Avant-Garde**
Norman Rockwell, *The Connoisseur*, 1962

**Postmodern Pollocks**
Louise Lawler, *Pollock and Tureen Arranged by Mr and Mrs Burton Tremaine, Connecticut*, 1984
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