

## Topic Page: [Pollock, Jackson, 1912-1956](#)

Definition: **Pollock, Jackson** from *Philip's Encyclopedia*

US painter. A leading figure in abstract expressionism. He began experimenting with abstract art in the 1940s. In 1947 he began pouring paint straight onto the canvas. Instead of brushes, he used sticks or knives to create the surface patterns. This method has been called action painting. His works include *The Blue Unconscious* (1946) and *Lavender Mist* (1950).



Summary Article: **Pollock, Jackson**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

Image from: [Jackson Pollock, Autumn Rhythm, 1950. Oil on... in Blackwell Companions to American History: A Companion to Post-1945 America](#)

1912–56, American painter, b. Cody, Wyo. He studied (1929–31) in New York City, mainly under Thomas Hart Benton, but he was more strongly influenced by A. P. Ryder and the Mexican muralists, especially Siqueiros. From 1938 to 1942, Pollock worked on the Federal Art Project in New York City. Affected by surrealism and also by Picasso, he moved toward a highly abstract art in order to express, rather than illustrate, feeling. His experimentations led to the development of his famous “drip” technique, in which he energetically drew or “dripped” complicated linear rhythms onto enormous canvases, which were often placed flat on the floor. He sometimes applied paint directly from the tube, and at times also used aluminum paint to achieve a glittery effect. His vigorous attack on the canvas and intense devotion to the very act of painting led to the term “action painting.” Pollock had become a symbol of the new artistic revolt, abstract expressionism, by the time he was killed in an automobile accident. His paintings are in many major collections, including museums in New York City, San Francisco, Dallas, and Chicago. Pollock was married to the painter Lee Krasner.

See Harrison, H. , ed., *Such Desperate Joy: Imagining Jackson Pollock* (2001) and Karmel, P. , ed., *Jackson Pollock: Key Interviews, Articles, and Reviews* (2002); catalogue raisonné, 4 vol., ed. by F. V. O'Connor; E. B. Thaw (1978, supplement 1995) and catalog ed. by K. Varnedoe and P. Karmel (1998); Friedman, B. H. , *Jackson Pollock: Energy Made Visible* (1972, repr. 1995); Potter, J. , *To a Violent Grave: An Oral Biography of Jackson Pollock* (1985); Solomon, D. , *Jackson Pollock: A Biography* (1987); S. Naifeh; G. W. Smith, *Jackson Pollock: An American Genius* (1988); Landau, E. G. , *Jackson Pollock* (1989); Ratcliff, C. , *The Fate of a Gesture: Jackson Pollock and Post-War American Art* (1996).

**APA**

Chicago

Harvard

MLA

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## Chicago

"Pollock, Jackson." In *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, by Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University. 8th ed. Columbia University Press, 2018. [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/pollock\\_jackson\\_1912\\_1956](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/pollock_jackson_1912_1956)

## Harvard

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## MLA

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