

STEDELIJK

MUSEUM

Unbubble

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AMSTERDAM

WELCOME!

Welcome to the Stedelijk, Amsterdam's museum of modern art! Here you'll find world-famous works and emerging talent.

On this tour, we'd love to take you to the *must-see highlights* of our collection and help you learn about art and design in an accessible way.

Have a great time!

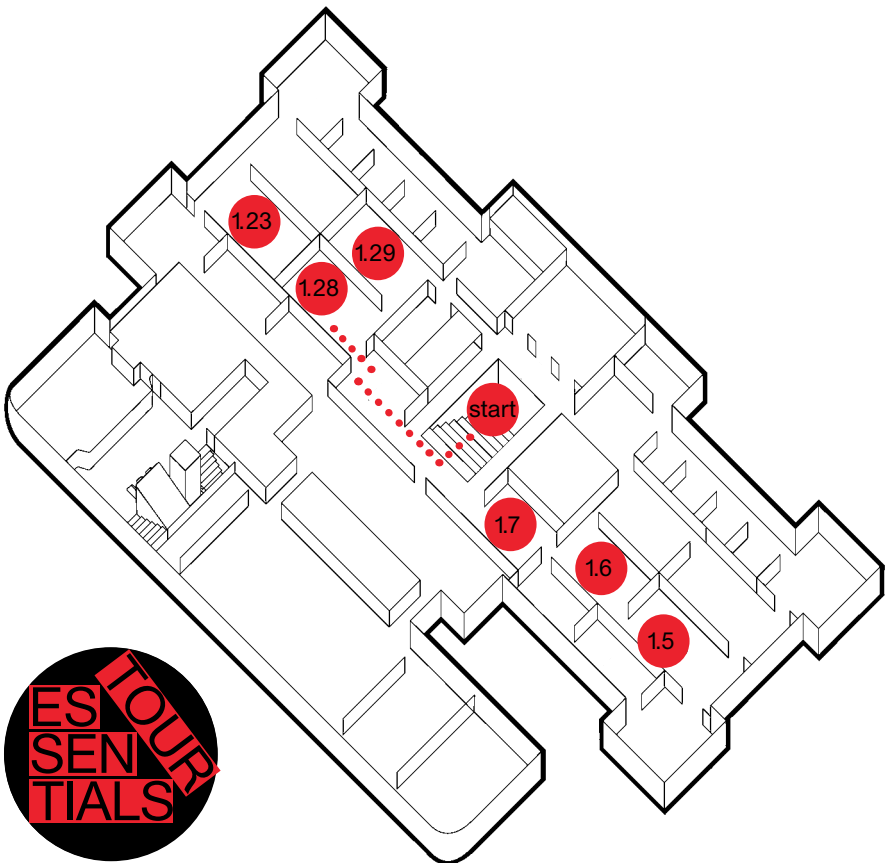
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ROUTE 1ST FLOOR

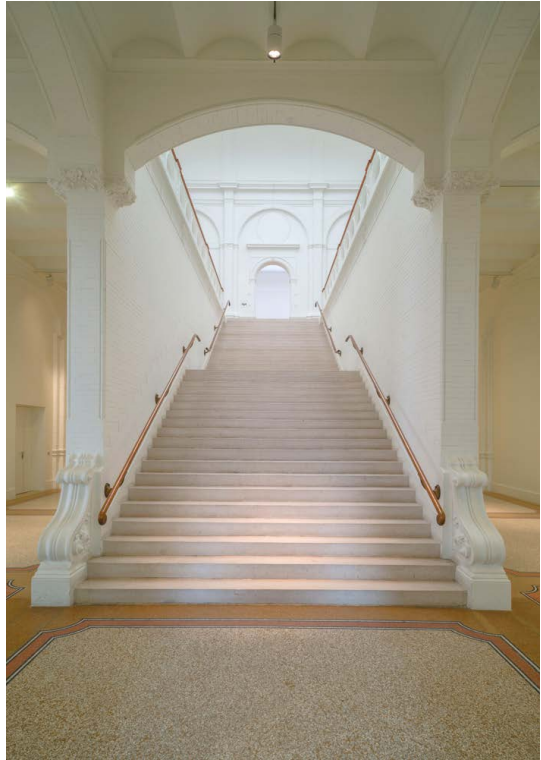
Once you have hung up your coat, walk past the ticket scan and take the small stairs on your right under the arches, straight ahead. The *Essentials Tour* starts at the old staircase. Then follow the little dots on the map up and turn right. Clicking on the big dots will take you to the right text/question about the artwork. You can also recognize each work from the tour in the museum by an Essentials Tour sticker on the wall.



STAIRS



Ad Petersen, Gilbert & George: *Living Sculpture*, 1969



Monumental staircase. Photo: John Lewis Marshall

The staircase has become an iconic spot in the museum. Rumour has it that this is the best spot in the museum to pose for photos. Artist duo Gilbert & George were ahead of this in 1969 by posing as a 'living statue' for five hours. They painted their faces and hands bronze and didn't move at all!

● *Strike a pose!*

ELAINE STURTEVANT, Peinture à haute tension



Elaine Sturtevant, *Peinture à haute tension*. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Gallery 1.28)

This work is a reproduction of a 1965 painting by Martial Raysse. Elaine Sturtevant created her version entirely from memory, without consulting the original. Her approach was radical: by recreating existing art, she challenged the viewer to reflect on what “original” actually means.

With works like this, Sturtevant explored the underlying structure of art and the role of authorship. Is a copy a new work of art? When does a repetition become art in its own right?

● Pick up your phone and try to recreate this portrait.

ANDY WARHOL

Bellevue II



Andy Warhol, *Bellevue II*, 1963. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Gallery 1.28)

With *Bellevue II*, Andy Warhol questioned how we process violence and death in the media. He used a repeating technique where the image gets darker each time, making it seem like the news slowly fades and becomes impersonal. Did you know Warhol based this image on a real newspaper photo of a tragic accident? Through repetition, he shows how the media makes us feel less and less about such events. The artwork makes us reflect on how distant we sometimes become toward violence.

- What is the oldest news clip you can remember?

JACKSON POLLOCK

The Water Bull



(Zaal 1.29)

After moving from New York to Long Island, where he lived near Accabonac Creek, Jackson Pollock began introducing themes in his work that referenced nature. *The Water Bull* is part of the Accabonac Creek Series.

The works in this series feature bold, bright, and cheerful colors. Specifically, *The Water Bull* consists largely of paint straight from the tubes—thick and unmixed. The image of a bull was frequently used by Pollock and symbolizes masculine aggression and power.

● Imagine you were creating your own painting; which animals would you associate with the traits: cunning, energetic, and playful?

BARNETT NEWMAN

Cathedra



Barnett Newman, *Cathedra*, 1951. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Gallery 1.29)

The enormous painting *Cathedra* contains 50 liters of paint. The artist painted as many as 7 separate layers to make the work this blue. You might be tempted to look at the work from a distance but that is actually not quite the way it was intended. According to the artist, you'll feel completely immersed in the blue when you look at it up close.

- Try looking closely at the painting for a whole minute. Feeling blue?

WILLEM DE KOONING

Two Figures in a Landscape



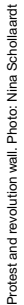
Willem de Kooning, *Two figures in a landscape*, 1967. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Gallery 1.29)

Willem de Kooning is recognizable by his powerful brushstrokes and vibrant use of color, which evoke emotion and experience. It shows what abstract expressionism can look like: not starting with a plan, but working from movement and intuition. To reinforce this, De Kooning often sketched with his eyes closed.

- If you had to create a similar painting today, what music would you play while doing so?

Protest and revolution wall. Photo: Nina Schollaardt



Protest and revolution wall. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

Protest and revolution wall. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

- Protest and revolution wall. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

BREAK



Fonda Coffee Bar. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Stairwell/Fonda Coffee Bar)

Time for a break! Take a lap around the stairs and the hall, and don't forget to look up. The skylights are an iconic feature of the building, designed in 1895 by architect Adriaan Weissman. They provide optimal light, which perfectly highlights the art. This unique play of light even gave the Stedelijk worldwide fame.

Ready for more *essentials*? When you're at the top of the stairs, walk to the left, under the arch, and discover the next work.

MARLENE DUMAS

Big Artists



Marlene Dumas, *Big Artists*, 1991.
Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Gallery 1.7)

Marlene Dumas uses humor in *Big Artists* to show how power and sexuality play a big role in the art world. She shows that we often judge art as if it were people: strong or weak, good or bad. With this work, she jokes about how famous white men mostly dominate the art world. She challenges us to think about how we judge art and who really decides what good art is. Did you know Dumas used photos of famous artists as inspiration for this piece?

● In your opinion, what makes good art?

JEFF KOONS

Ushering in Banality



Zaaloophane Tomorrow is a Different Day. Collectie 1980–Nu.
Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Gallery 1.7)

In this room, the piggy by Jeff Koons is surrounded by feminist criticism. With the naked little men portrayed in her work, Marlene Dumas criticizes the fact that it's usually women who are depicted naked in art. The big picture of Koons' piglet on the wall was also taken by a female artist. Koons is a big name within the art world, so in this way, the room humorously comments on the balance of power in the art world.

- Do you know any musical artist who also comments on inequality? Who?

MARTINE SYMS GIRRRRLGIRLLLGIRL- GIIIRL



Martine Syms, *GIRRRRLGIRLLLGIRL-GIIIRL*, 2017. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Gallery 1.6)

In this work, Martine Syms explores feminist thinking and the identity of people of color by looking at everyday language. By writing out the word 'girl' in different ways, Syms tries to capture the verbal dimensions of language.

Feminist literature is an important reference point for Syms; the color purple in the mural is a nod to Alice Walker's book *The Color Purple* (1982). She was the first black woman to win the Pulitzer Prize.

- Do you and your friends use a word specifically very often?

STEVE MCQUEEN

Broken Column



Steve McQueen, *Broken Column*, 2014. Photo: Nina Schollaardt

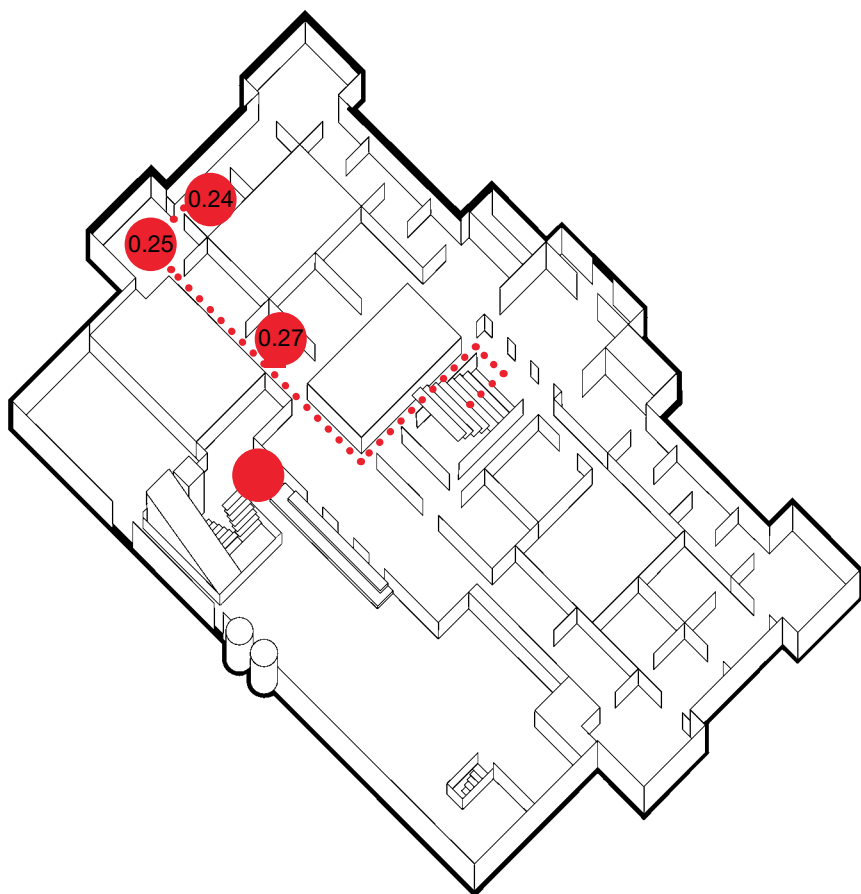
(Gallery 1.5)

This imposing pillar created by Steve McQueen is carved from black Zimbabwean granite. The shape echoes Victorian funeral memorials, referencing the tradition of obliquely truncating a tree in tribute to a young man's untimely death. McQueen considers the work to be a monument to premature and avoidable deaths in Black communities worldwide.

- Steve McQueen is also a screenwriter and film director. One of his films, *12 Years a Slave* (2013), even received an Oscar.

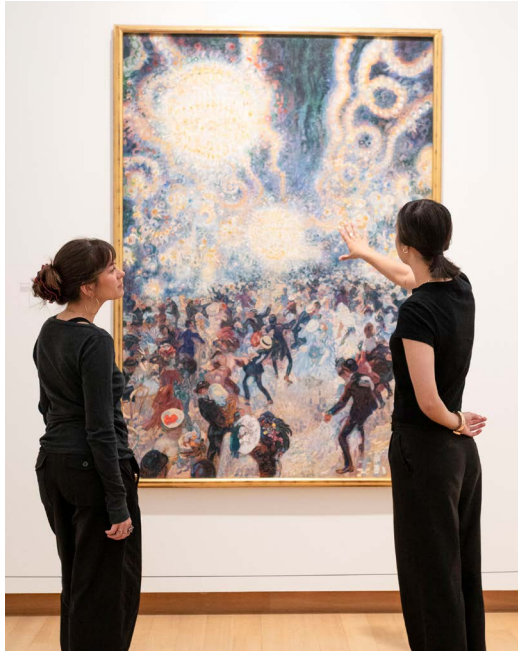
ROUTE GROUND FLOOR

The *Essentials Tour* continues downstairs. Go down the stairs and return to the room where you entered after scanning your ticket. Then turn right immediately and follow the small dots on the map to the next artwork.



JAN SLUIJTERS

Bal Tabarin



Jan Sluijters, *Bal Tabarin*, 1907
Photo: Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

(Gallery 0.27)

In *Bal Tabarin*, Jan Sluijters depicts the nightclub in Paris, the city he visited several times. It was also in Paris that he became acquainted with other styles of painting, which ultimately made him an innovative painter within Dutch painting. What makes this painting particularly special are the lights that Sluijters has depicted. Electricity was still new at the time.

- What was your most memorable party ever?

PICASSO

Têtes



Picasso, Têtes, 1943
Foto: Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

(Gallery 0.27)

Throughout his life, Picasso created several “têtes.” These ‘heads’ clearly illustrate how Picasso evolved through different periods of his life. “Têtes” dates from his Surrealist period, during which his works became increasingly abstract. You can also recognize Cubism in the painting, a movement of which Picasso was one of the founders.

- Which characteristics of this head do you recognize immediately, and which ones do you not?

PIET MONDRIAAN

Composition No.IV, with Red, Blue, and Yellow



Piet Mondriaan, *Ruitvormige compositie met twee lijnen*, 1931.
Photo: Nina Schollaardt

(Gallery 0.25)

In his art, Mondrian wanted to capture the essence behind the visible world. To portray this, he said, you need the most essential elements of visual language: primary colors (red, blue, and yellow) and horizontal and vertical lines.

Because Mondrian did not use green, a rumor started that he did not like nature. He found this funny himself and fueled it on purpose by sitting with his back to the window while visiting a friend. He supposedly did this to not have to look at the green trees!

- *Fun fact:* Mondrian never used a ruler for his straight lines.

KAZIMIR MALEVICH

An Englishman in Moscow



Kazimir Malevich, *Een Engelsman in Moskou*, 1914.
Photo: Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam

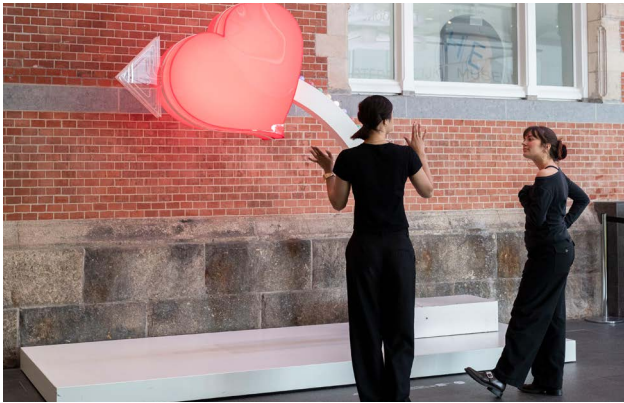
(Gallery 0.24)

Kazimir Malevich painted *An Englishman in Moscow* in 1914, at an important point in his career. In this painting, he almost completely moves away from showing reality. The ‘Englishman’ is barely recognizable as a person—and that’s exactly what he wanted. You can still see clear shapes, like a pipe, and even hidden letters and numbers, as if he left a secret message. What do they mean? Nobody really knows.

- Think back to a travel moment that made a strong impact on you—what comes to mind? Think of a place that amazed you, or perhaps unsettled you. Anything goes. What images or elements would you include in a painting, like Malevich did?

MARTIAL RAYSSE

Encore un instant de bonheur (sculpture moderne)



Martial Raysse, *Encore un instant de bonheur* (sculpture moderne), 1965

(the Don Quixote Sculpture Hall)

This sculpture from 1965 by Martial Raysse stood previously in the museum in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, the work has a place in our new Sculpture Hall. The work's English title is *Still a Moment of Happiness (Modern Sculpture)*. By 'modern', Raysse was referring to showing the immaculate, ideal side of consumer society: 'I wanted a new world, sterile and pure, one that seamlessly matched the technical achievements of the new age in the techniques used'.

- If you could design a new world, what would you add to it first?

The tour is over. Please feel free to explore the rest of our museum or visit our café and museum shop.

We are really curious about your thoughts on the tour. Would you mind answering four questions so we can improve your experience? Please enter our survey [here](#).

Keep an eye on your email when you have ordered your ticket online. You will receive an e-mail with information about obtaining a 20% discount on your next visit shortly.