

*Rhizomes*  
&  
*Remix*

Remix ::=

**building new work  
by re-using / remixing existing work**

“remix”

“mashup”

# *Dancing baby animation, 1996*

3d Studio Max software demo

+

Blue Suede song

+

GIFF demo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5x5OXfe9KY>



# Allie McBeal tv show, 1998

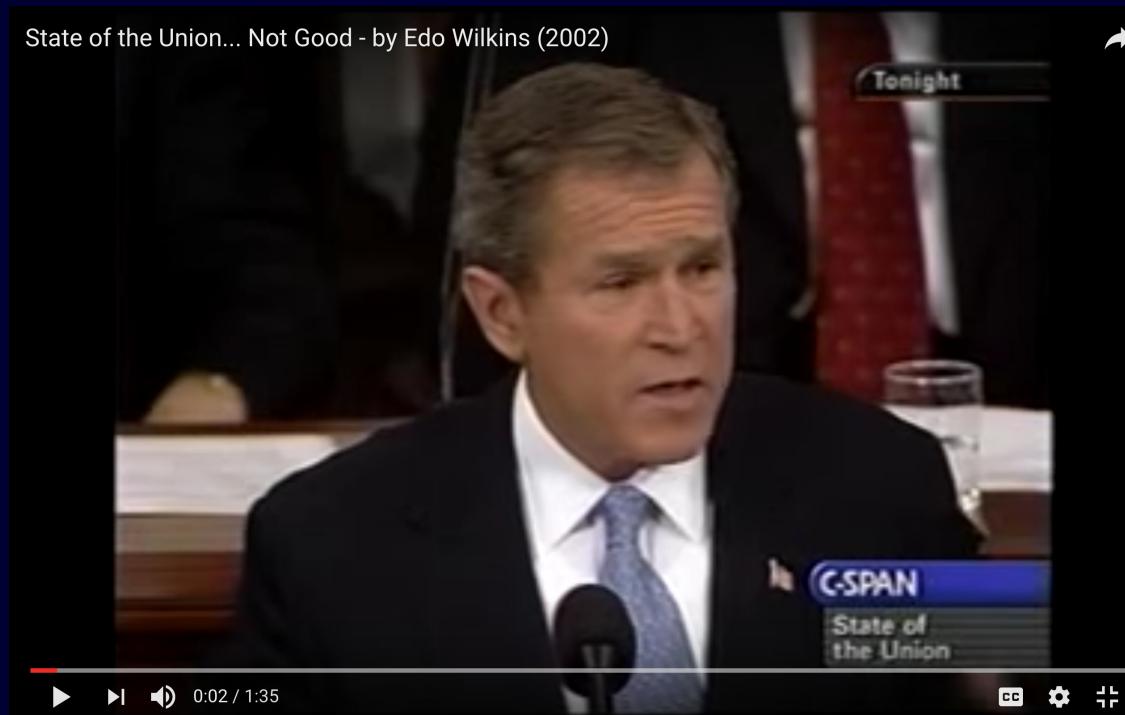
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rx88NMh-YRs>



# *State of the Union – Not Good, 2002*

Edo Wilkins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WtuYcn6N3A>



Raises questions of...

Authorship ?

Originality ?

Legality ?

Collaboration?

Contributors?

Community?

# Post-Modernism

on

## Authorship / Originality

# Roland Barthes (French, 1915-1980)

## *“The Death of the Author”* (1967)

Not one, correct meaning from the author

- . Intentions & experience of author irrelevant

The text is “a tissue of quotations” of other texts

Meaning of the text is provided by the reader

- . Many readers => many “meanings”
- . => author loses authority/centrality/importance

**Julia Kristeva** (Bulgarian-French, 1941-)

*“Intertextuality”*

All text refers to other text

All art refers to other art

# Michel Foucault (French, 1926-1984)

## *“What is an Author”* (1969)

Extend ideas about authorship

- What is the “work” (or text or artwork)?
  - Writer's notes part of the work?
  - How define/delimit the artwork?
- What is acceptable re “authorship”...
  - depends on the discourse/field
- Different for science, for poetry,...
- Function of “authorship” is legal
  - Author is responsible for what the text says
  - Pay the author? Sue the author?

# Post-Modernism & authorship

=> the arts?

# Appropriation

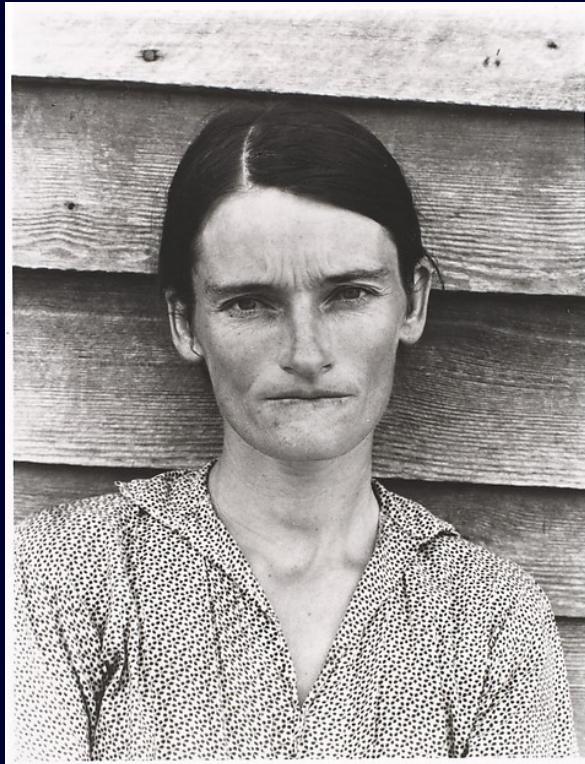
If no such thing as truly “original” artwork...

artwork challenging concept of originality (1980's)

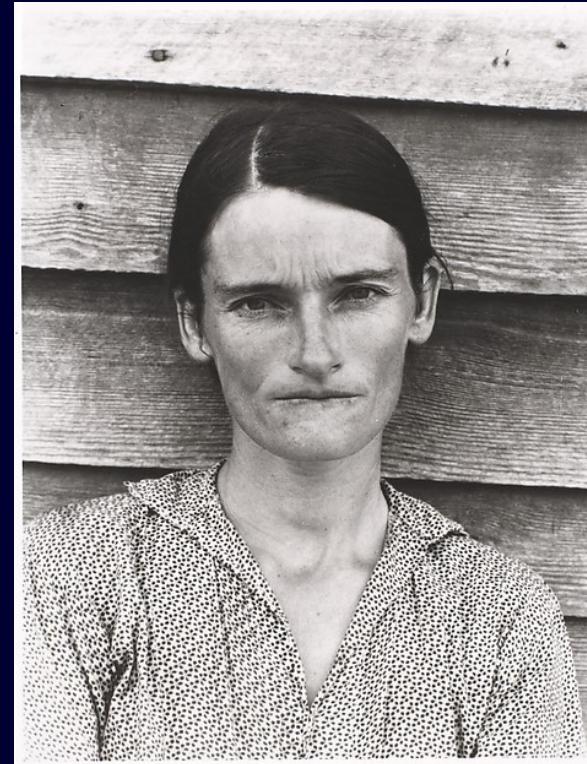
Sherrie Levine (American, 1947-)

*After Walker Evans (1981)*

Photographed reproductions of famous photographs



Levine, After Walker Evans, 1981

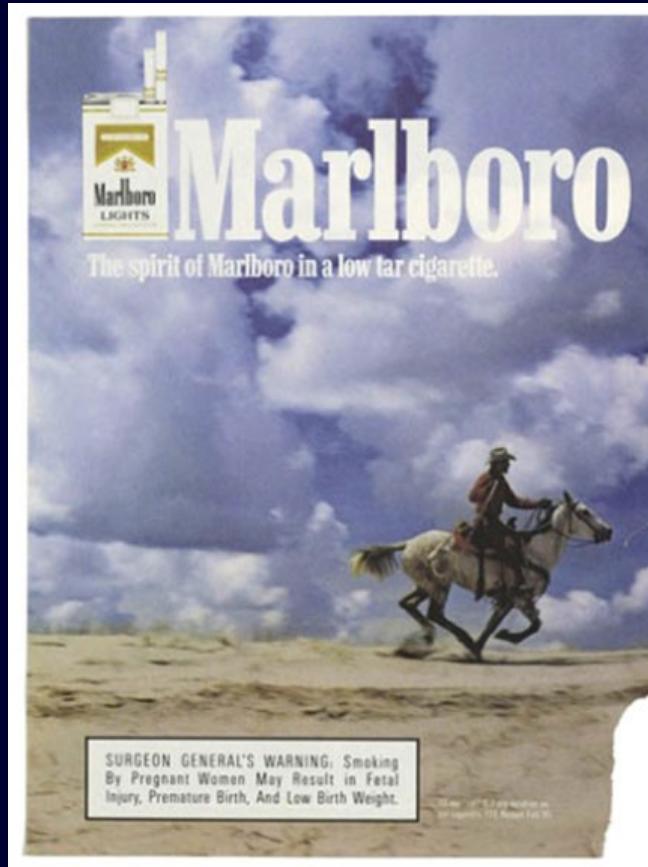


W. Evans, *Allie Mae Burroughs*, 1936

Richard Prince (American, 1949-)

*Cowboys (1980-1990)*

Photographs of Marlboro cigarette advertisements



Marlboro advertisement



R Prince, *Cowboy*, 1981

# Andy Warhol (1928 -1987)





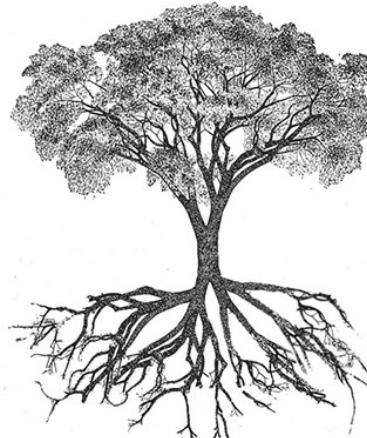
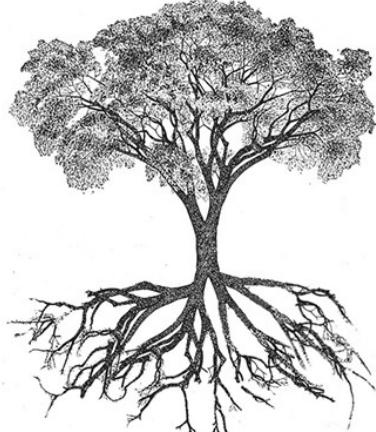
# The Rhizome

# Gilles Deleuze (French, 1925-1995) & Felix Guattari

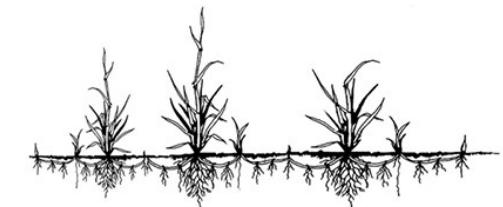
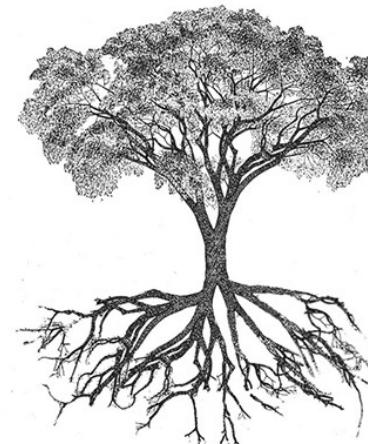
## *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980)

Structures of growth – Tree vs. Rhizome

Botany:



Tree



Rhizome

# Tree:

Seed → vertical growth → the tree

Each tree independent of the others

# Rhizome:



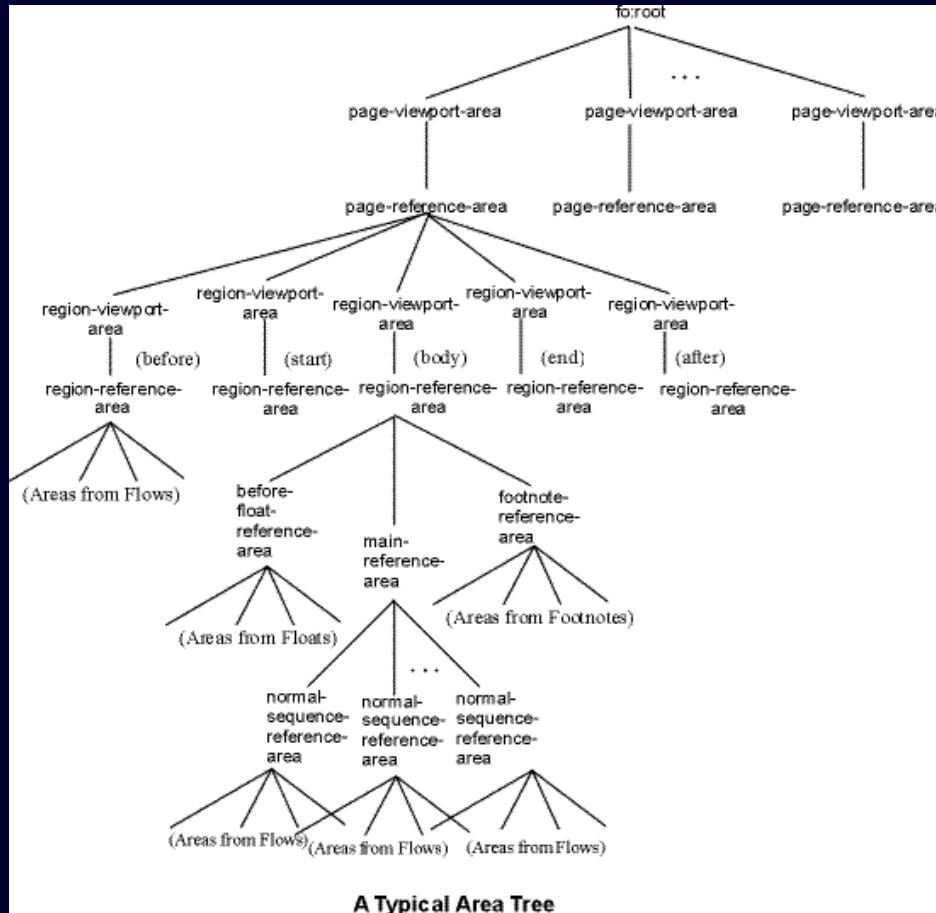
Grass rhizome



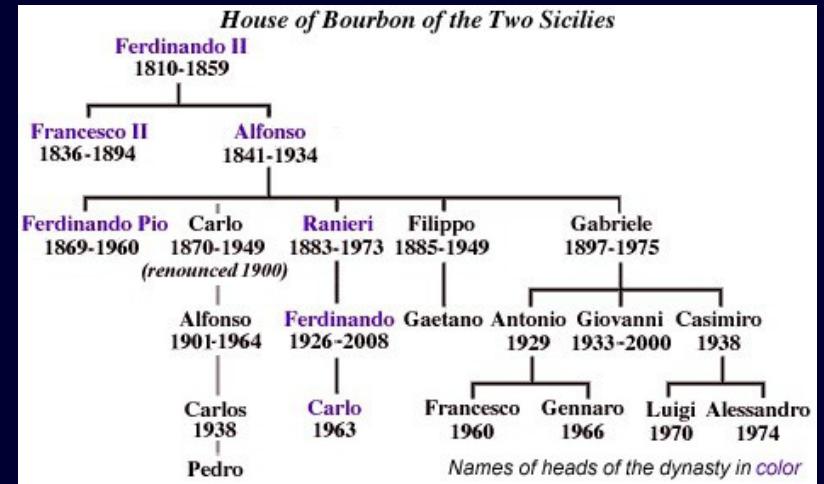
Bamboo rhizome

# Hierarchical tree structures:

- One starting point, then branch out
- Unidirectional



Graph of conceptual relationships



Graph of geneological relationships

# Some characteristics of rhizome:

## Connection

Growth is horizontal, omnidirectional

All segments connect to all other segments

## Multiplicity

There is no center, no initial seed

No beginning, no end

- only edges constantly changing

## Rupture

If separate one segment from another,  
it continues to grow & propagate

# Territoriality

In constant negotiation with its context/surroundings

The rhizome expands

It encounters other rhizomes

(All structures are rhizomatic according to D&G)

One rhizome expands (territorializes)

The other contracts (deterritorializes)

They settle back into a stable state (reterritorializes)

A constant flux, change of boundaries/edges

# Extended concept of rhizome

# Rhizomatic structures in animal world

Herd of American Buffalo



Flock of starlings



Pack of wolves





New York City

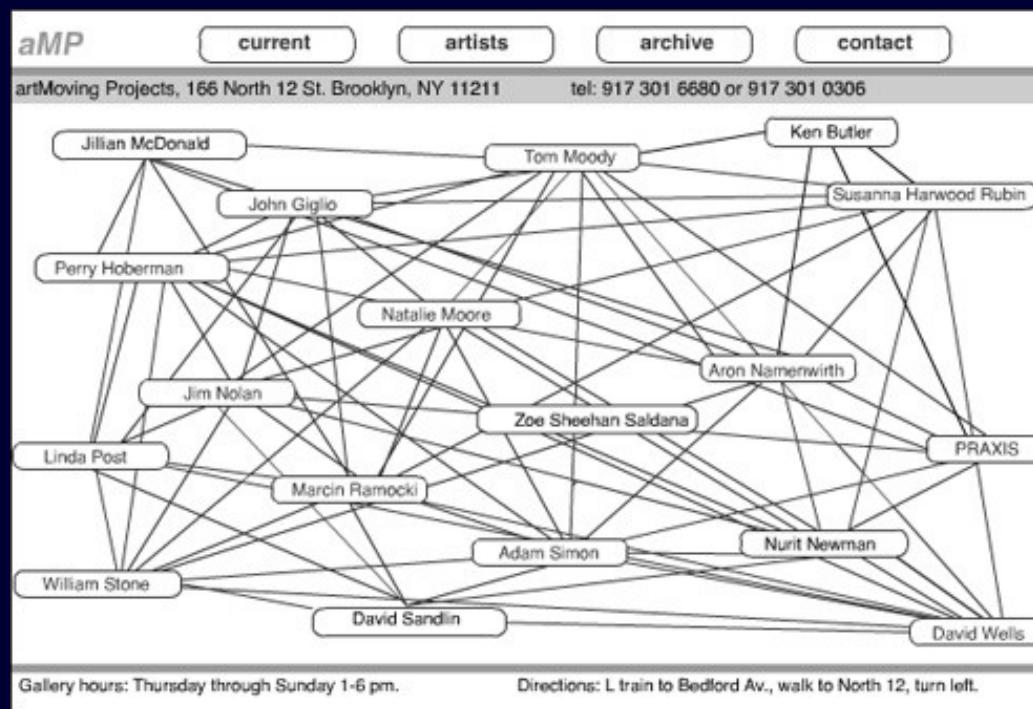


Coral colony

# Non-physical rhizomatic structures

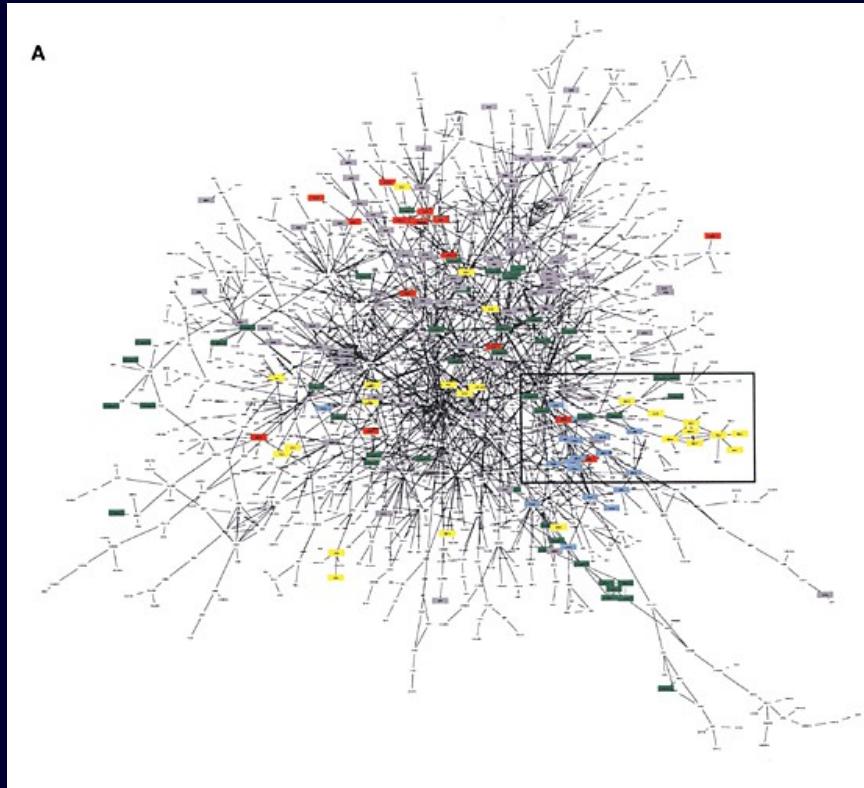
Human social interactions  
networks of friends

...professional connections  
...blood relations (cousins, etc.)



# World Wide Web

## a “web” – an inter-”net”



Human culture  
arts, philosophy, science

Human knowledge  
Wikipedia, wiki-this, wiki-that

# Rhizomatic “authorship”?

# Western Romanticism

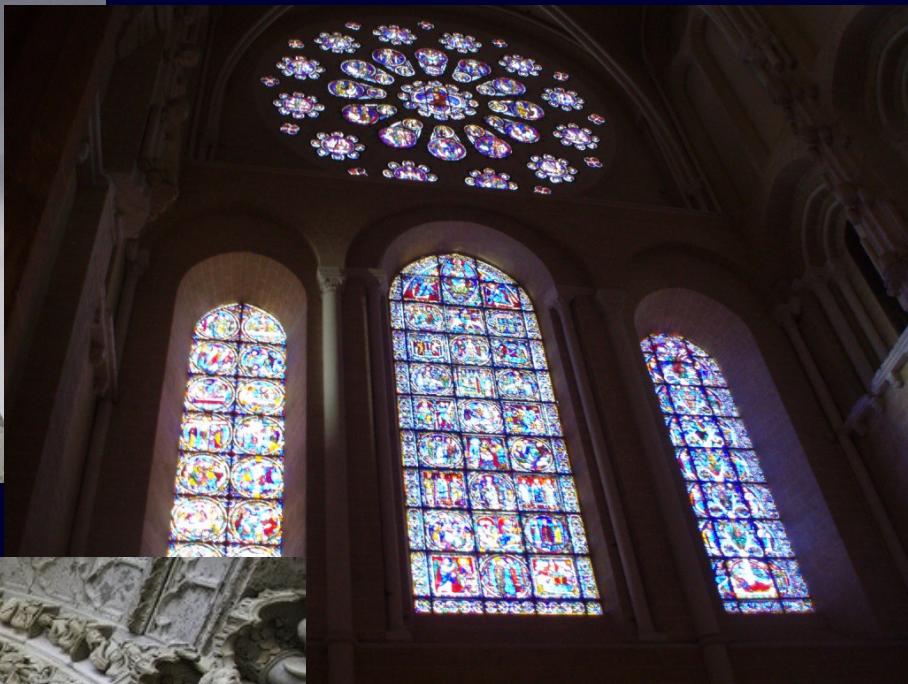
- The solitary individual → art
- The artist as social outcast
  - breaking the rules
  - “starving artist”
- The artist as solitary “genius”
- The artist with personal, individual “inspiration”

Art schools:

grades based on blah, blah, “...and originality”

# Medieval cathedrals

- architecture
- masonry
- stained glass
- sculpture
- painting



Chartres cathedral (12<sup>th</sup> century, French)

# Tribal art

Accepted motifs, styles, ideas  
Created by the community  
over many generations

Artist's goal NOT to be original  
Instead...

- to recreate the communal art
- to do so extremely well
- but NOT to significantly change it



Mossi, West Africa

# Bamara, West Africa

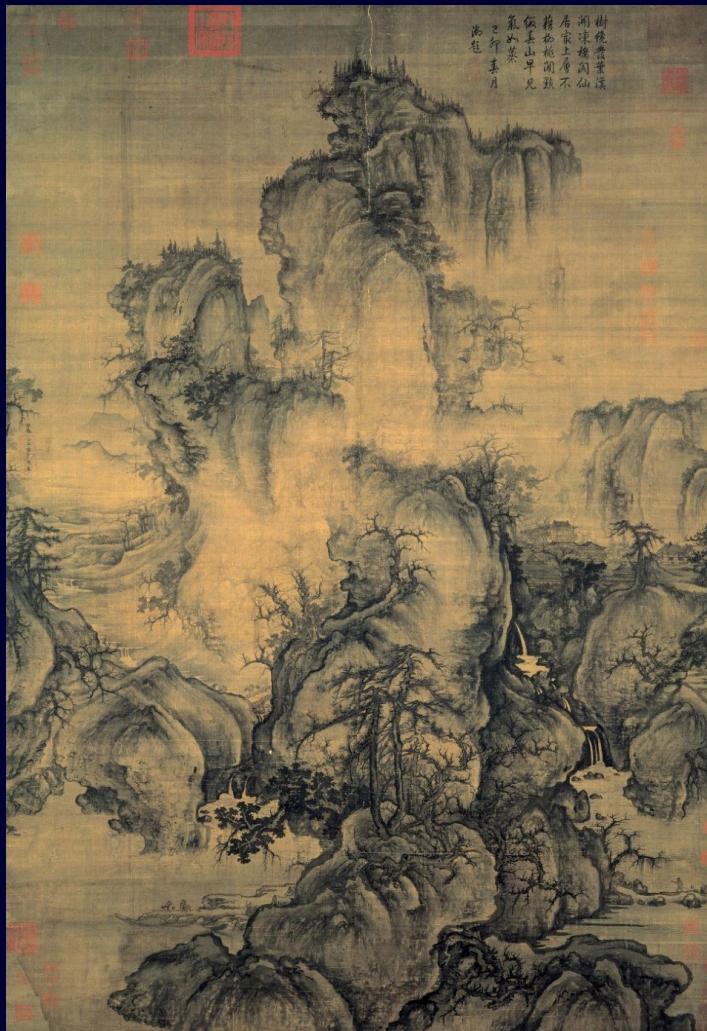


# Asian Art (traditional)

The copy can itself be art

If copied extremely well  
the copy can be very cherished  
highly valued, valuable

Guo Xi 郭熙  
*Early Spring* 早春  
(1072)



# Copyright Laws?

Laws intended to protect those in power?  
To perpetuate the status quo?

(a la Foucault)

# Lawrence Lessig (Harvard & Stanford Law)

• *Remix* (2009), *Free Culture* (2004), other books

## RO culture vs. RW culture

### Read Only culture

- maker/artist → consumer/viewer
- unidirectional

### Read/Write culture

- maker/artist ↔ consumer/viewer
- multi-directional

# “Creative Commons”

- Reject copyright (RO) approach
  - was useful in an earlier age
    - protect rights of makers/artists
  - inconsistent with the way we function now
- New model for protection = Creative Commons
  - Artist shares and...
    - specifies what is or isn't allowable
  - No fees, no lawsuits

# Limited Editions

Appropriate today?

Relevant to digital work?

# Different art forms ↔ Different approaches to credits

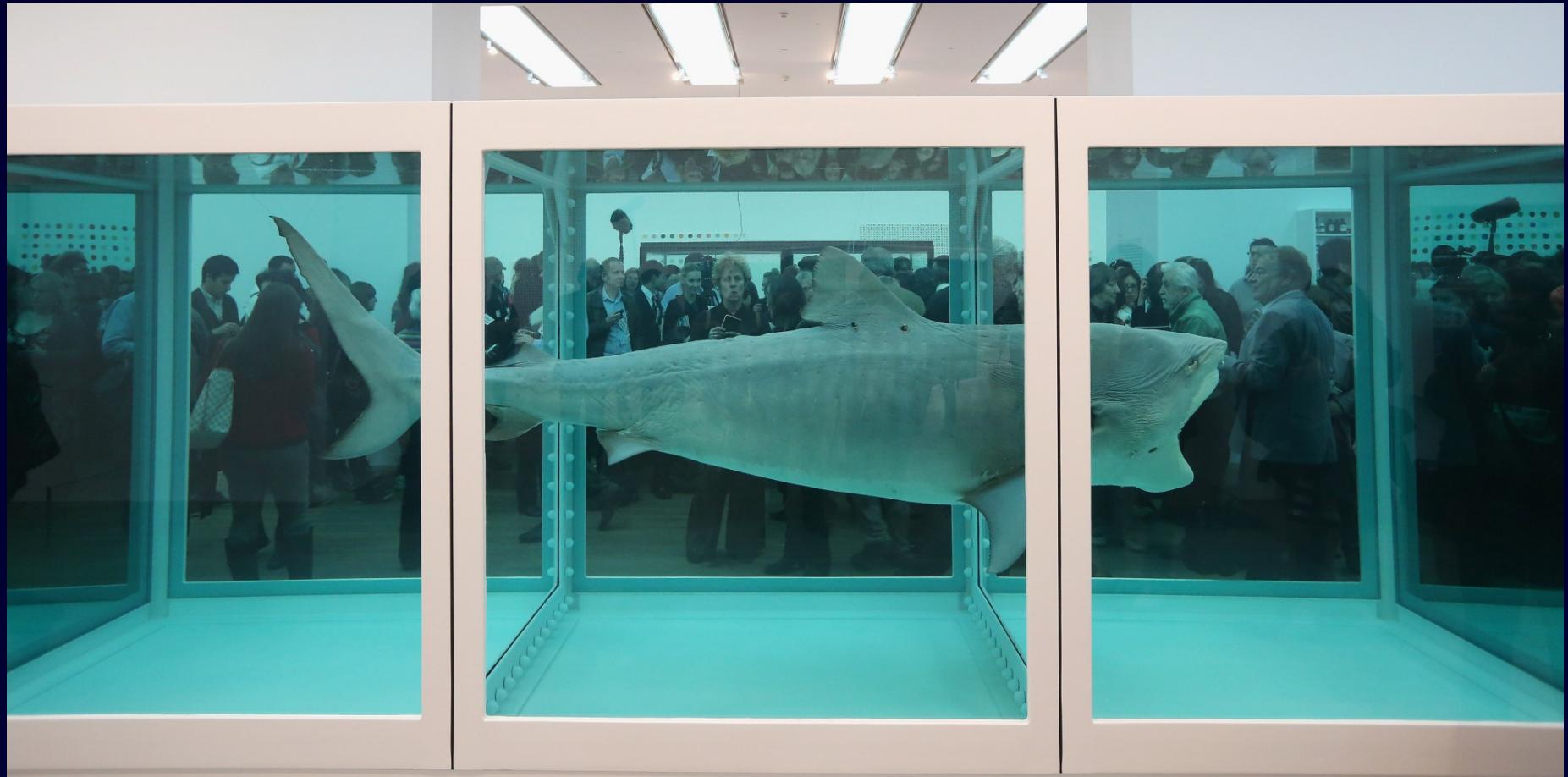
- Film
- Painting
- Poetry
- Theater
- Architecture

# Famous contemporary artists

# Jeff Koons



# Damien Hirst



# Frank Stella

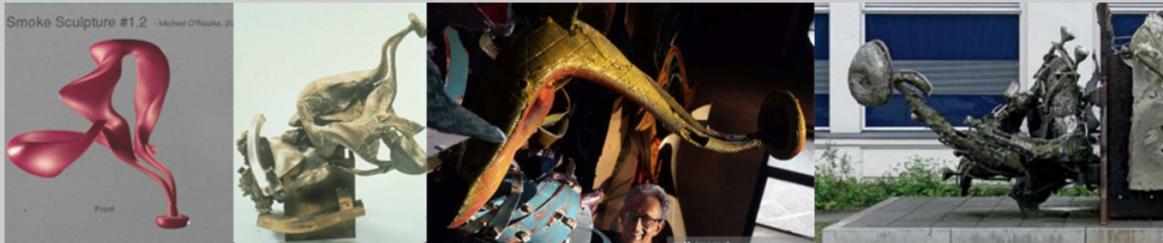


## *Sculpture & Graphics for Frank Stella*

*by  
Michael O'Rourke*

*Click on the images below to see more images and more information, both about the processes and the uses Stella put my work to.*

### ***Smoke Sculptures (1990 - 1992)***



Between 1990-1992, I did an extensive series of sculptural work for Frank Stella. This work was sometimes later known as the "smoke sculptures" of Frank Stella. The work began with me digitally modeling a number of sculptural forms, from those producing small-scale physical sculptures, and then producing construction-drawing information to permit large-scale sculptures. Click for more information about the [sculpture](#), or click the image above.

### ***Smoke Ring Graphics (1991 - 1992)***



In addition to using my [graphics](#) as fabrication drawings for his sculpture, Stella used the drawings I produced, sometimes known as his smoke drawings, very extensively as a central and recurring motif in his paintings and prints for the next ten years. His *Moby Dick*, *Deckle Edge*, and *Imaginary Places* are among the series that relied especially heavily on these drawings.

# Frank Gehry



Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain

# Famous contemporary artists

Solo/individual?

Collaborators?

Contributors?

Assistants?

Solitary genius?

Production company?

“Brand”? (Gucci = Stella = Gehry = Nike)

# Contemporary Collaborative/Communal Work?

Explicitly collaborative

*De facto* collaborative

– even if not spoken

Author vs. Contributor vs. Collaborator?

# Different art forms ↔ Different approaches to credits

- Film
- Painting
- Poetry
- Theater
- Architecture

# “Communal” Work

Nina Paley, animator  
*Sita Sings the Blues* (2009)



# Art collectives...

*Fabrica*



# Harlem Artist Collective

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#miamilife #neverstop

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