

**Zymoglyphic Art**  
**of the**  
**Modern Age**  
**The Traveling Exhibition**



## The Exhibition

This exhibition, hosted by the peripatetic Bimble Gallery, originates from the Zymoglyphic Museum, the world's only institution devoted to the study and display of the art and culture of the Zymoglyphic region.

### Overview of Art in the Zymoglyphic region

During the earliest era from which we have a significant cache of artifacts, the **Rust Age**, what we now think of as art was integrated into the cultural life of the community. Non-functional objects were prized for their spiritual power rather than aesthetic value.

The **Age of Wonder**, with its focus on the physical rather than spiritual world, became enamored of collecting, arranging, and displaying objects of interest from all over in curiosity cabinets; narratives flourished in baroque dioramas. Toward the end of this era, there was a fascination with Asian nature-based arts, such as tray landscapes and viewing stones. A natural found object, such as a sculptural rock, would be mounted on a stand. These "viewing stones" served as objects of contemplation.

In the **Modern Age**, Zymoglyphic art became more formalized and self-referential, more about art itself than serving any specific function in cultural life. We see a succession of art movements as each new trend pushes aside the old, establishing itself as the latest thing before becoming outdated itself. The development of "assemblage" as an art genre legitimized practices that date back centuries, and "surrealism" provided a theoretical basis for creating art intuitively and trying to find its meaning and purpose later.

Artists rejected the notion of well-crafted, narrative painting and sculpture (in a land of indolent dreamers, this was never very popular anyway, but it was now justified on theoretical grounds). Art in the Modern Age was initially based on abstraction, moving away from representation, looking at the basic qualities of form. This was intended as a democratizing factor, so that all citizens could appreciate it, regardless of their political leanings or educational levels. In practice, this lack of relatable content was often reviled and paro-

died by this target audience, often with the claim that they or their youthful offspring could do that just as well as a name-brand artist.

## **Art on Exhibit**

### **Natural Modernism and Readymades**

Satirical takes on modern sculpture led to a stereotype of a blobby shape with holes in it, perched on a plinth. A rallying concept for some artists was **TTLA**, short for “Things That Look Like Art.” This approach was to find objects that, when displayed against the pristine white walls of a gallery, resembled abstract sculpture.

Beach stones with holes in them (see cover for an example) were the first items to be displayed this way. This idea was later expanded to include other stones, various natural assemblages and industrial detritus, called “Readymades.” This process takes its inspiration from the viewing stones of the Age of wonder.

The main floor gallery in this exhibition displays a number of examples of these objects,

### **Biomorphic Abstraction**

Followers of the Biomorphic Abstraction school rejected the found object approach in favor of spontaneous application of color and form to a medium. They worked with minimal planning and relied on chance and natural processes such as the fractal nature of pigment deposition to determine the content of a painting.

Advocates of the amoeboid style eliminated the support medium altogether, seeking to capture the essence of the primordial ooze (a common metaphor for the primal creative force) in the modern medium of pure plastic, occupying a place somewhere between painting and sculpture.

### **Chemical Transformations on Copper and Plastic**

Pre-literate books were made in the Rust Age, consisting of natural or modified pages that seemed to hold some mysterious narrative. One form of these books were scrolls, made of hammered copper

and patinated with various chemicals such as cat urine. These modern versions are presented here as equivalent to abstract art.

Modern plastics are notoriously resistant to decay. However, Zymoglyphic artists have been known to attack any styrofoam that washes ashore until it resembles an art project, with two results on display here.

## **The Gallery**

The gallery within the Bimble Gallery was purpose built for this exhibition by the Zymoglyphic Industrial Group (ZIG) pursuant to a design provided by the Zymoglyphic Architectural Group (ZAG). The latter firm is noted for its adherence to reuse of found materials and intuitive design principles. The ZIG+ZAG partnership is uniquely positioned within the architectural community in that its final product is a architectural model, not a full scale edifice.

The main structure of the inner gallery is constructed from found materials, including foam core board samples and extruded polystyrene foam. It is inspired by such modernist principles as minimalist decoration and composition from asymmetrically balanced rectangles. The open plan interior and projecting cantilevered roofs connect the gallery spaces with the courtyard and create an ideal environment for viewing by full-size humans.

## **More**

For more information on the Zymoglyphic Museum and the region it represents, visit [zymoglyphic.org](http://zymoglyphic.org)!

The Bimble Gallery's wanderings may be followed on Instagram as "@bimblegallery"