

Art 1 Honors
Modern to Contemporary Art

Name _____

Due Date _____

You earned _____ out of 10 possible points

Reading Response #2 Breaking It Up



Willem de Kooning.
Woman I. 1950-52.



Barnett Newman.
Vir Heroicus Sublimis. 1950 -51.



Alberto Giacometti.
Man Pointing. 1947.

In his essay from 1940, *Towards a Newer Laocoon*, Clement Greenberg lays the framework for a formalist approach to modern abstract painting that would become highly influential. In the essay, the critic dismisses realism in clear favor of abstraction. What were Clement Greenberg's key arguments justifying modern abstraction as articulated in *Towards a Newer Laocoon*? Explain what Greenberg means when he writes, "There has been, is, and will be, such a thing as a confusion of the arts?" In Greenberg's view, how must art be "restored" in the modern era? How did Jackson Pollock's drip paintings serve this argument? In the *Pollock Answers to a Questionnaire* and later radio interview, how does the artist position his work in relation to Greenberg's theory?

Define existentialism. Why were the members of the New York School attracted to this philosophy? How did it relate to the kinds of works they created?

Compare and contrast Barnett Newman's **Vir Heroicus Sublimis**, Willem de Kooning's **Woman I** and Alberto Giacometti's **Man Pointing**. Each of these works considers the human body differently. Discuss these differences. What existential notions are expressed in each of these works? In other words, how are these examples reflections of the influence of existential thought after WWII? Each of these works looks very different, yet all of the artists are considered Abstract Expressionists. Discuss the abstract qualities and the expressionist qualities in each of the above works. Do you think these artists should be grouped together in the same movement? Why or why not?