

What is Modernism?

Modernism was a global movement that aligned with the social upheavals brought on by the industrial revolution. Building on late nineteenth-century precedents, artists began reflecting on the realities, hopes, and fears they experienced in the modern world. From the early decades of the twentieth century through the 1960s, Modernist art encompassed a broad range of expressions while sharing a few underlying principles: rejection of traditional illusionistic styles and conservative values, formal experimentation and a tendency toward abstraction, and innovative materials and processes. Modernism was generally optimistic, driven by utopian ideals and a belief in linear progress.

- Susan Barnett, Curator, Yellowstone Art Museum



Isabelle Johnson, Montana's first Modernist painter.