

Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923-97) – Artist Resources



Lichtenstein, 1967

[Roy Lichtenstein Foundation](#): biography, artwork database, exhibition history, publications.

Artspace returned to a [1963 interview](#) with Lichtenstein in conjunction with the [Tate Modern Liverpool exhibition](#), *Roy Lichtenstein in Focus*. “[Pop Art] is an involvement with what I think to be the most brazen and threatening characteristics of our culture, things we hate, but which are also powerful in their impingement on us. I think art since Cézanne has become extremely romantic and unrealistic, feeding on art; it is utopian...Pop art looks out into the world; it appears to accept its environment, which is not good or bad, but different—another state of mind.”

“I’m interested in portraying a sort of anti-sensibility that pervades the society,” explains Lichtenstein in a [1966 video interview](#) about his style and materials, Warhol, and the Pop Art movement. “A kind of maybe gross oversimplification. I use that more as style than as actuality. I really don’t think that art can be gross and oversimplified and remain art. It must have subtleties and it must yield to an aesthetic unity or else it’s not in the realm of art.”

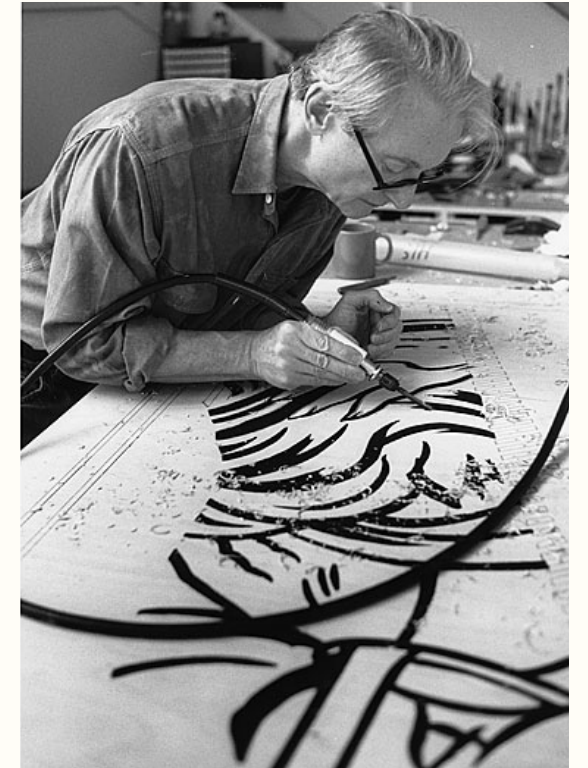
[David Sylvester interviews Lichtenstein](#) in 1966 about cartoons and cliché. “This highly restrictive quality in art is what I’m interested in. And the cliché – the fact that an eye, an eyebrow, a nose, is drawn a certain way – is really the same kind of restriction that adds a tension to the painting.”

[BOMB Magazine](#) talks with Lichtenstein in 1989 about process, politics, and style.

In 1998, David Bowie spoke with Lichtenstein for [Interview Magazine](#) about the artistic intention and reception. “My things seem to be very exacting,” Lichtenstein tells Bowie, “but they’re really not done that way. I allow for a lot of latitude. I want the look very blatant, and to come on in a strong way, but you want to let the painting simply be unresolved in order to do this.”

[The Morgan Library & Museum](#) showcased a series of 55 large-scale drawings from the 1960s, brought together for the first time, to explore the role of drawing in Lichtenstein’s practices.

In 2012-13, the [Tate Modern](#) in partnership with the [Art Institute of Chicago](#) brought together over 120 of Lichtenstein’s paintings and sculptures, drawings, and collages in a comprehensive retrospective. [A Tate film](#) brought together archival footage of the artist at work, interviews, and remembrances from friends. “I think people mistake the character of line for the character of art.” Lichtenstein reflects in the film. “But it’s really the position of the line that’s important. The position of anything, any contrast. No the character of it.”



Lichtenstein, 1990
Photograph: Jim McHugh

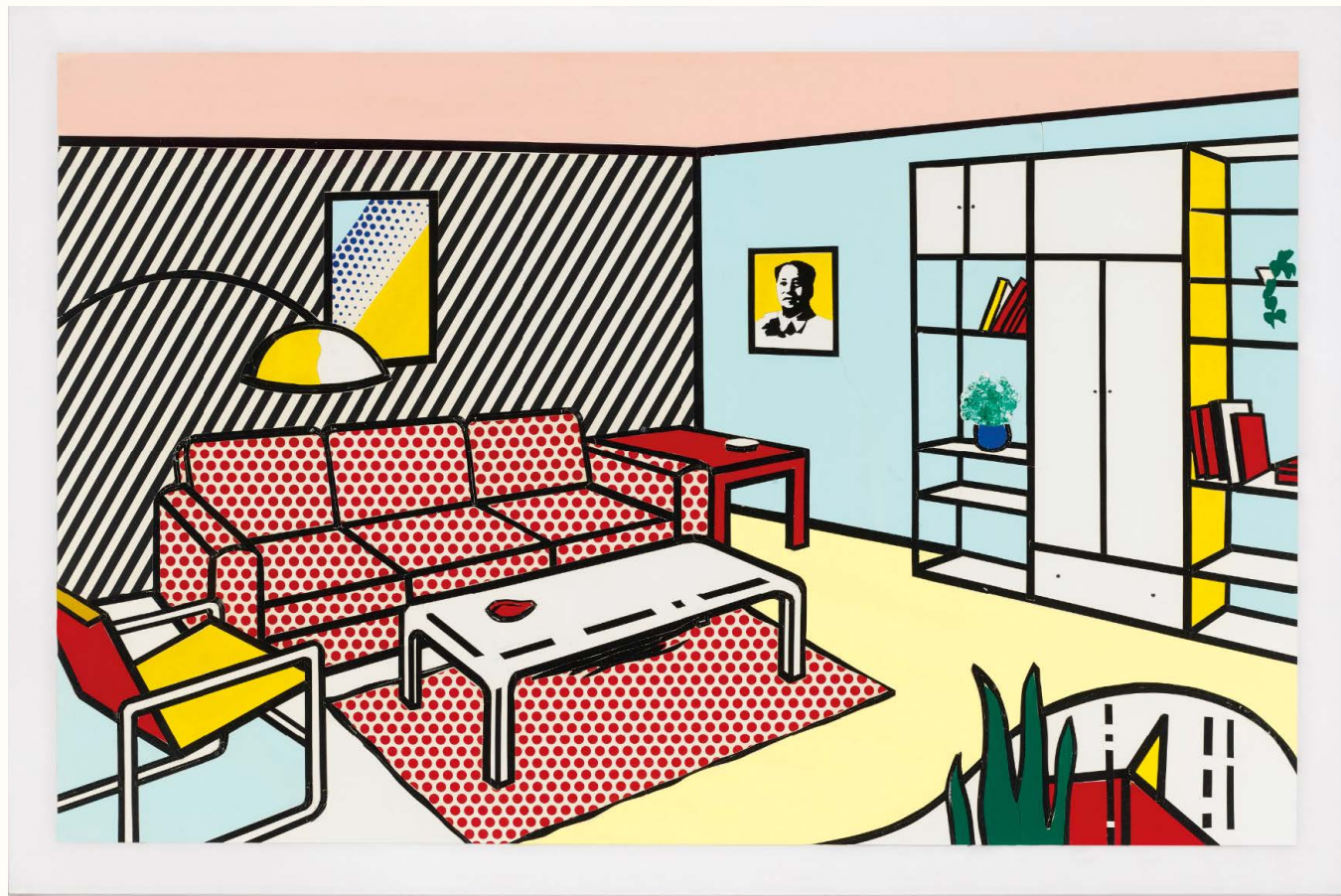
Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923-97)

Modern Room (Study), 1990

Acrylic, printed paper collage, graphite, ink and tape on paperboard

On loan from Collection of Dominic Ng; L2019:143.1

As an outstanding example of Pop artist Roy Lichtenstein's *Interior* series, **Modern Room (Study)** takes inspiration from the idealized domestic environments of billboard and phonebook advertisements. The series, painted during the final years of his life, represents a culmination of Lichtenstein's lifelong fascination with popular culture and the divide between "high" and "low" art. This monumental vision of a generic, middle-class living room features the artist's distinctive use of primary colors, thick black outlines, and Ben-Day dots – a commercial printing technique prevalent in comic books during the 1950s and 1960s that employs small, colored dots to create dimension and shading. Lichtenstein conflates the visual methods and conventions of "low" artistic mediums such as comic illustration and commercial advertisements with the "high" art of painting, using the motif of a modern domestic interior to comment on the consumerist quest for happiness through the purchase of mass-produced goods. The artist offers an additional, possibly ironic critique of capitalist culture by decorating the room with one of fellow Pop artist Andy Warhol's iconic, and endlessly reproduced, portraits of Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong.



On view January 8 – April 12, 2020