How Modern Is the

MoMA?

The Museum of Modern Art's mission is to be the foremost museum of modern art in the world, and one way it does that is continously expanding its permanent collection. Recently, the institution released a research dataset on Github with works that have been officially added to its collection and cataloged in its database.

Let's see what's in the MoMA!

200,000

Median Year

1962

created

Works of art in

Almost

MoMA's collection

When a work was

138,000

Over

Works represented in MoMA's public dataset

Median Year

1982

acquires it

When MoMA

Over

Works on display as of August 2020

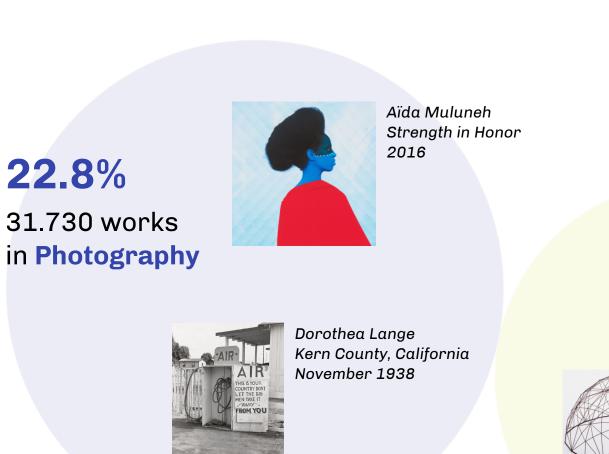
Median Gap

2,100

21 Years

From when a piece was created to its acquisition

Not all works in the dataset have dates for both creation and acquisition. 129,000 records have both - about 93% of the dataset.



This includes architectural drawings, models, design objects, and graphic design.

14.2% 19,734 works in Architecture & Design

Geodesic Dome 1952

The collection covers modern and contemporary disciplines in art and design.

The only category from MoMA's dataset that doesn't have its own dedicated curatorial department is the Fluxus Collection, as it spans different artistic media.

Mark Bradford James Brown is Dead 2007

2015

Chorus Line 2008

Prints

2.8% 3,906 works in Painting &

Scuplture

2.1%

Media &

recorded.

2,952 works in

Performance

MoMA defines this as

art that could be live or

contemporary time-based

2,444 works in **Film** 1.5%

1.8%

The Fluxus was an international experimental art movement that formed in the 1960s.

2,020 works in

the Fluxus

Collection

Kara Walker 40 Acres of Mules

54.8% 76,204 works in Drawings &

Over time, the collection's composition is 130K getting more varied as new art movements and media emerge. 120K-The entirely of MoMA's Fluxus Collection was The MoMA adds to its collection in bulk a few times a year, through added in 2008, donated by Gilbert and Lila 110Kdonations from art collectors, contributions from the artists Silverman. themselves, and independent purchases. 100K-90K-**Artwork Count** 80K 70K-Cumulative **Media and performance** work start to appear in 60K-1975. The museum was established in 1929 with 50Kits first acquisitions in drawings and prints. 40K-Paintings and sculptures were added in 1930. In 1964, the Louis E. Stern **Architecture and design** Collection added 11,139 30K-Drawings, prints, and followed in 1932. illustrated books and photography are prints, the largest consistently the largest Photography was added acquisition to date. categories. This makes 20Kthe same year. sense, considering the small size and large Films appeared in the production scale relative 10Kcollection in 1935. to other media. 0K 1925 1930 1935 1940 1945 1950 1955 1960 1965 1970 1975 1980 1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015 2020 Year

At the same time, the collection is gradually becoming less modern.

The gap between when a piece is created and acquired is widening — the MoMA's adding older works to its collection over time.



Links to Sources