

**Hans & Bessie, Herb & Dorothy:
European and American Collecting of Modern Art**

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Synopsis

This unit is intended to teach AP Art History students about Modernism and Post-Modernism by comparing the collections of Hans and Bessie Bechtler (from a European well-to-do economic situation) with Herbert and Dorothy Vogel (who live in the United States and have modest incomes).

The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art houses part of the collection of the Bechtlers from Zurich, Switzerland. This collection was introduced to the city of Charlotte as a gift in 2010 by their son, Andreas Bechtler. Studying a collection of art in the flesh is an amazing gift and privilege and especially exciting. The collection has many works from the earlier half of the twentieth century.

In comparison with the Bechtler collection we will also look at the Vogel collection to gain a view of later twentieth century Modern and Post-Modern movements. The Vogels have donated their first collection to the National Gallery of Art and currently are donating a subsequent collection of fifty works each to art institutions in the fifty United States.

Students will investigate multiple definitions of Modernism to come up with a new twenty-first century definition of Modernism.