Art of the Mentally Ill
(“Outsider Art”)

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ART BRUT

Raw art?
Crude art?

OUTSIDER ART

Related to …

• Children’s art
• Naive art
• Primitive art
• Folk art
Madge Gill
(1882-1961)

- A reclusive medium
The Quiz
Hans Prinzhorn
(1866-1933)

• Art historian and psychiatrist
• 1922 Artistry of the Mentally Ill
Henrich Muller  
(1865-1930)  
• schizophrenia
Carlo Zinelli
(1916-1971)
Gaston Duf
(1920-?)

• schizophrenia
Ways of looking at this art

Does it tell us about mental illness?
Does it tell us about art?
About creativity?

How is this person expressing him/herself?
Is there anything communicated?
Adolf Wolffli
(1864-1930)

• Hospitalized for 35 years
  (20 in solitary)
August Walla
(1916-2001)

• Resident at Gugging Hospital
Some characteristics of “The Art of the Mentally Ill”

- untrained
- spontaneous, often driven
- decorative and colorful
- Dreamlike (nightmares?)
- Meticulous – horror vacui
Lack of evolution in style
Art production starts and stops suddenly

Francis Palanc
a borderline situation
Aloise Corbaz
(1886-1964)

• Hospitalized from age 32
James Hampton

The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations Millennium General Assembly
(1950-1964)
Henry Darger
Chicago, 1892-1973

• The Saga of the Seven Vivian Girls
The End