

Robert Motherwell was born in 1915 in Aberdeen, Washington. He received a BA from Stanford University in 1937, and went on to do post-graduate work in philosophy at Harvard. Motherwell briefly studied at Columbia University with the renowned art historian Meyer Schapiro, who encouraged him to pursue painting. He became one of the seminal figures of the American Abstract Expressionist movement.

His work may be found in such permanent collections as the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; the Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, New York; Museo Guggenheim Bilbao, Bilbao, Spain; Museo de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA; the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; the Tate Modern, London, England; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Motherwell was the recipient of numerous awards including the Guggenheim International Award of Merit in 1964, Mayor's Award of Honor for Arts and Culture of the City of New York, in 1981, the Edward MacDowell Colony Medal in 1985, National Medal of Arts in 1989, La Medalla de Oro de Bellas Artes, Spain in 1989. He was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1970.

Robert Motherwell died in 1991 at the age of 76 in Provincetown, Massachusetts.