

Modernism in three parts for Glasfryn seminars Allen Fisher

slide 1: title: Modernism in three parts for Glasfryn seminars

slide 2. title: No way Jose or Not on your Nellie:

the overall thesis of Modernism: synoptic, short, 10 minutes.

slide 3. Harry Thubron, *Untitled Collage*, 1975-76.

part 1:

The overall thesis of my groups of thought and responses here could be summarised under the idea of stretches, shifts in facture, stretches in ways of constructing and deciding about results; what is produced, which is a consequence of and leads to muscular shifts in the body and brain cells in new positions. These new positions are in flux and are necessities for engaged living, and, from my point of view, that would mean an engagement with where you are locally and on the planet, in responsibility to both, to both others and the self that each of us are continually in the process of constructing.

For today's seminar I will use a simplified, twelve-part synoptic analysis of Modernist painting practice, followed by a brief history. After that I will take one early twentieth-century example and provide an exegesis of it. Before I lay the analysis out, here are some introductory words which make use of some of my mentors or precedents.

In 1951, Theodor Adorno noted that 'Modernity is a qualitative, not a chronological, category.'¹

In 1995, Peter Nichols noted, 'The beginnings of modernism, like its endings, are largely indeterminate, a matter of traces than of clearly defined historical moments.'²

Adorno also noted that, 'Just as (Modernity) cannot be reduced to abstract form, with equal necessity it must turn its back on conventional surface coherence, the appearance of harmony, (and) the order corroborated merely by replication ..'³

The precedents for certain aspects of the history of twentieth-century criticism can be charted through rather clear genealogical patterns: Clive Bell and Roger Fry read by Alfred Barr and Clement Greenberg who were read by Michael Fried and Rosalind Krauss, by T.J. Clark and Victor Burgin.⁴

¹ Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia, Reflections from Damaged Life*, translated by E.FN. Jephcott, London: Verso, 1974: 218.

² Peter Nichols, *Modernism, A Literary Guide*, Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1995: 1.

³ Adorno 1974: 218.

⁴ Paraphrased from Joanna Drucker, *Theorizing Modernism, Visual Art and the Critical Tradition*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994: 3.

Let's start with three themes:

- attitudes toward the spacetime of modernism as representation;
- assumptions about the ontology of the object;
- theories regarding the production of subjectivity.
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These are:

- attitudes towards the social, literal and metaphorical;
- assumptions about aesthetic formalism and deconstructionist interpretation;
- theories regarding the artist and the viewer in relation to the artefact.

I imagine that the diachronic lineage of formalism and the synchronic analysis of art as ideological formation set against an examination of critical issues in modern art according to a rhetoric of representation.

Baudelaire concluded that 'Modernity', 'is the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent'; it is one half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable'.⁵

Baudelaire uses the work of the conservative Constantin Guys 'as an occasion for a series of connected meditations on the theme of modernity. Part of his purpose here is to overcome the neo-classical fetish of the antique and to argue the case for the modern as legitimate artistic subject-matter. 'The pleasure which we derive from the representation of the present', he claims, 'is due not only to the beauty with which it can be invested, but also to its essential quality of being the present.'⁶ The neo-classical ideal of unchanging beauty is complicated here by a vivid sense of the flux and movement of life in the present.

Following an itinerary of Modernist art movements, Charles Harrison, a late member of *Art-Language*, notes, 'On the one hand there is relatively widespread agreement that (a whole range of different works) ... deserve to be considered as forms of 'modern art'. On the other hand these same works have on the whole remained incomprehensible and in many cases unattractive to the great majority of people, who would no doubt see themselves in all other respects as qualified inhabitants of the modern world (such as readers of the poetry and poetry reviews in *The New Statesman*, *The Guardian*, the *TLS* and *The Spectator*.) How is it that a difficult and largely unpopular art has played so substantial a part in deciding the cultural self-image of the century?'⁷

'The first point to note' continues Harrison, 'is that the practice of art is necessarily conducted within the context of some tradition of art and with regard to other works of art. Even among the more abstract productions of the early twentieth-century avant gardes there occasionally occur forms of quotation and reference by which the works of previous artists are conjured up.'⁸

⁵ Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, edited and translated by Jonathan Mayne, London: Phaidon Press: 1964: 13.

⁶ Baudelaire 1964: 1.

⁷ Charles Harrison, *Modernism*, London: Tate Publishing, 1997: 10.

⁸ Harrison 1997: 12 and 14.

‘The second point to bear in mind is that the value of modernism is established in practice as a kind of intentional *difference* with respect to other current forms and styles and practices. In many cases modern work will invite comparison with some similar but more conservative manner of treating of a given subject, as if it is precisely through what is *not* shared – through the remainder that is left when all common features have been excluded – that its real meaning is to be found.’⁹

‘... to call a work of art *modernist* ... is to register its appearance as significant of certain critical commitments and attitudes maintained by the artist with regard both to the larger culture of the present and to the art of the recent past.’¹⁰

At the end of the chapter before his conclusion to *Farewell to an Idea, Episodes from a History of Modernism* in 1999, T.J. Clark, removed some of the supports the works, ‘It seems I cannot quite abandon the equation of Art with lyric. Or rather – to shift from an expression of personal preference to a proposal about history – I do not believe that *modernism* can ever quite escape from such an equation. By “lyric” I mean the illusion in an artwork of a singular voice or viewpoint, uninterrupted, absolute, laying claim to a world of its own. I mean those metaphors of agency, mastery, and self-centredness that enforce our acceptance of the work as the expression of a single subject. This impulse is ineradicable, alas, however hard one strand of modernism may have worked, time after time, to undo or make fun of it. Lyric cannot be expunged by modernism, only repressed. Which is not to say that I have no sympathy with the wish to do the expunging. For lyric in our time is deeply ludicrous...’¹¹

Like many of his contemporaries and mine, he is mistaken about this, but it would take an extended discussion of the construction of the self and a different understanding of æsthetic reception to develop that. For the purposes today I would like to continue into an analysis of Modernism in painting.

⁹ Harrison 1997: 14.

¹⁰ Harrison 1997: 14.

¹¹ T.J. Clark, *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999: 401.

part 2. The Twelve Stretches of Modernism:
including a succinct set of examples, about 20 minutes.

slide 4. Modernism : 'The Twelve Stretches'

FUNCTIONAL DERIVATION →	A Æsthetic and Perceptual theories	B Psychological theory	C Social and Political theories
FACTURE ↓			
1 Figurative edges Descriptive and Expressive line Flatness	<i>Aspects of Expressionism and Futurism</i> e.g. Henri Matisse, <i>Blue Nude</i> , 1907.	<i>Aspects of Expressionism, Dada and Surrealism</i> e.g. Ernst Kirchner, <i>Shadow of Life</i> , book with 50 woodcuts, 1924.	<i>Aspects of work by Max Beckmann and by Pablo Picasso</i> e.g. Max Beckmann, <i>Beginning</i> (triptych), 1949.
2 Measured line, Designed order 'Natural forms' Cohesion	<i>Aspects of Cubism, Constructivism, Abstraction and the Conceptual Shift</i> e.g. Marcel Duchamp, <i>The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even</i> , 1923.	<i>Aspects of Expressionism and Abstraction</i> e.g. Piet Mondrian, <i>Pier and Ocean, Composition No. 10</i> , 1915.	<i>Aspects of Constructivism and Futurism</i> e.g. Wassily Kandinsky, <i>Improvisation 31 (Sea Battle)</i> , 1913.
3 Attentions to Colour: both Intensity of colour and reduced colour	<i>Aspects of Constructivism and Futurism, work by Max Beckmann and Cubism</i> e.g. Natalia Goncharova, <i>The Flowers</i> , 1912.	<i>Aspects of Expressionism and Abstraction</i> e.g. Georgia O'Keeffe, <i>Red Sky Yellow Tree</i> , 1952.	<i>Aspects of work by Max Beckmann and by Pablo Picasso</i> e.g. Pablo Picasso, <i>Guernica</i> , 1937.
4 Collage, Disparate fields Damage Disruption	<i>Aspects of Cubism and the Conceptual Shift</i> e.g. Pablo Picasso, <i>Still Life with Cane-chairing</i> , 1912.	<i>Aspects of Dada and Surrealism</i> e.g. Max Ernst, <i>Oedipus Rex</i> , 1922.	<i>Aspects of Dada, Surrealism, and work by Max Beckmann and by Pablo Picasso</i> e.g. Hannah Höch, <i>Cut with the Kitchen Knife through the Beer-Belly of the Weimar Republic</i> , 1919.

Precedents for these 'stretches' in the period 1850-1905 and the developments in the later period, after the 1950s, have not been included.

The twelve stretches evident in Modernism's changes to paradigms from preceding approaches to facture, are underpinned by theories of aesthetics and perception, by psychological theory and by social and political theories. The changes in approaches to facture affect the use of line and the use of colour and the attention to the design field. They are informed as much by changes in mathematics, physics and chemistry as by the changes introduced by the theory of evolution, the theory of capital and the developments in human psychology.

Stretches 1A, 1B, 1C.

The first three stretches of Modernism derive from the use of the descriptive or expressive line in painting, drawing and printing. This line has precedents in nineteenth-century Symbolism, in, for example, Van Gogh's *Bed* and in the Expressionist work of Munch, such as *Love is Strange* and *The Scream*, developed by Matisse's *Blue Nude* and Picasso's *La Vie*.

5. Henri Matisse, *Blue Nude*, 1907.

Stretch *1A*, the painted line is used by Expressionists like Matisse to signify the shape of human form and by some of the Futurists to signify speed and movement. It is the idealised line invented by artists to facture three dimensional forms and was previously prevalent in drawing practice. It features as a 'Stretch' in painting after Monet and Berthe Morisot's *Impressionism* and is strongly evident in work as diverse as that of Edgar Degas' portraiture and Paul Cézanne's *Mont Saint-Victoire*.

6. Ernst Kirchner, *Shadow of Life*, book with 50 woodcuts, 1924.

The use of this line in Stretch *1B* plays a part in the psychological attention to the human form, its dances and its anguish, and is evident also in Expressionist landscapes. The line is further emphasised in Expressionist wood-cuts. Whilst many aspects of Surrealism use figurative depiction from nineteenth-century and some earlier attentions, other aspects of Surrealism derive from these Expressionist traits.

7. Max Beckmann, *Beginning* (triptych), 1949.

In Stretch *1C* Mac Beckmann's use of line exaggerates the Expressionist line making it an overtly political statement and indeed, in late Modernist Picasso it is self-evidently combining the psychological emphasis with the political, as for example in *Guernica*. Part of the background of these Expressionist uses of line derive directly from medieval painting and illustration. There is also a response to the arts of Romanesque and African sculpture.

Stretches 2A, 2B, 2C.

The second set of Stretches in Modernism are exemplified by the measured line, the designed order and ideas of ideal symmetries and proportions in 'natural forms'.

The emphasis on aesthetic and perceptual theories in Stretch *2A* are so strongly emphasised in the Bauhaus designs from 1919 until 1933 were given precedence in Braque and Picasso's Cubist work of 1907-14. There were direct links in the earlier work to aspects of the Expressionist line, exemplified by parts of Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* in 1907 and in Kandinsky's abstractions after 1910.

8. Marcel Duchamp, *The Bride Stripped Bare of Her Bachelors, Even*, 1923.

The emphasis on order in so much of this work lent itself to considerable interests in conceptual order and led eventually into the ideas of Conceptualisation in Duchamp's *Large Glass* 1915-23. Indeed the use of the measured line and the multiplicity of fragmented views of the same forms provided the grounding for *Constructivist* thought and Duchamp's eventual practice.

9. Piet Mondrian, *Pier and Ocean, Composition No. 10*, 1915.

In Stretch *2B* the attention to the idealisation of 'natural forms' takes on a psychological importance given to Kandinsky's 'spiritual' excursions and Mondrian's abstractions.

10. Wassily Kandinsky, *Improvisation 31 (Sea Battle)*, 1913.

It is a quick segue to Stretch *2C* with the political and moral ramifications of Kandinsky's '*Battles*' and the ideology of Futurist egotistical proposals.

Stretches 3A, 3B, 3C.

The third set of Stretches shows attention to both intensity of colour and reduced colour. The heightened and symbolic power of colour in Gauguin and Van Gogh and then in the work of the Fauvists is radically contrasted to the Cubist work of Braque and Picasso from 1909 and until 1914.

11. Natalia Goncharova, *The Flowers*, 1912.

These uses of colour, both the intensified and the reduced, in Stretch *3A* bring about or are a consequence of a new æsthetics and new theories of perception. It is first exemplified by Matisse, Derain and Braque and then differently developed by Braque and Picasso. The use of intensity is further developed by the Futurists and by Max Beckmann.

12. Georgia O'Keeffe, *Red Tree Yellow Sky*, 1952.

In Stretch *3B* the importance of the intense colour is given psychological value and avoids the clarity of colour theory for a return to contrasted colour.

13. Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*, 1937.

In Stretch *3C* Beckmann's use of intensity in contrasts of colour becomes a strident feature of his political polemic; in Picasso's *Guernica* the restraint of colour an equally strident device.

Stretches 4A, 4B, 4C.

This last set of stretches pays attention to the damage and disruption of nineteenth-century and preceding norms. It is already evident in aspects of fragmentation and frailty in some Impressionist painting, but first comes to a disruptive phase with Kandinsky's abstractions, and the following landscapes and figures by Braque and Picasso and their Cubist work before 1915. It is also strongly presented by the facture of collage, particularly when this is fully articulated through the Cubist paintings that led to the 1912 collages. It was then differently developed by Max Ernst, Hannah Höch and others from the Dada period into early Surrealism.

14. Pablo Picasso, *Still Life with Cane-chairing*, 1912.

Stretch 4A thus pays attention to the disruptive cohesion of the best Cubist works and the Conceptual leap these works provided the bases for. It is the disruption of multiplicity of represented spacetime and then the collages that introduce 'found materials' later developed into the 'found' work of Duchamp's conceptual programme.

15. Max Ernst, *Oedipus Rex*, 1922.

Stretch 4B recognises the considerable attachment to psychological theory in the work of early Surrealism through Breton, but also as a consequence of the earlier Dadaists and particularly some of the work of Max Ernst in which two spacetimes or realities, so to speak inner and outer, are part of the same spacetime of the picture plane.

16. Hannah Höch, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife through the Beer-Belly of the Weimar Republic*, 1919.

Stretch 4C emphasises how these developments were already in the political and social arenas and where their polemical practice should be recognised as social and political facts grounded in the æsthetic of these moments.

Late Modernism uses these twelve Stretches as the basis for its practice, which runs counter and in opposition to the second phase of post-modern practice, a practice that has been promoting what amounts to an un-stretched practice of normalising.

part 3.

Extended from the 'Stretches':

Collage and Simultaneity, a tract:

quite extended and probably 30 to 40 minutes

17. title: *Collage and Simultaneity: a tract.*

Both nineteenth and twentieth century productions of composite images can be said to be cento or patchwork, relying on a range of images or quotations. Nineteenth century and earlier productions of composite images can also be said to approach simulation of reality in the sense that they generally normalise all damaged or cut images into a plane of expectation and recognition; this mode of production in the nineteenth-century is usually named *Realism*. Twentieth century productions often signal a different nexus of thinking and feeling from nineteenth precedents. The twentieth century productions, which also use a range of images or quotations, rely on a range of conceptual apprehensions and methods of production. This range is concomitant with a variety of ideas about consciousness and the structure of language from William James and Lautréamont, Sigmund Freud and Henry Bergson, to Ferdinand de Saussure and André Breton. Ideas proposing a stream of

consciousness or sequential and cinematic thought are set, in the same period, against ideas of simultaneity in relativistic physics and displays of more than one idea or image, at once on the same picture plane. Ideas of simultaneity in twentieth century image production have often led to disruptive image compositions, distinctly opposed to the cento method, distinctly as a critique of nineteenth century *Realism*. One Modernist æsthetic for this engagement derives from the conceptual complexity of collage.

18. Pablo Picasso, *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, 1907.

In 1907 Picasso put together a set of painted images on a large lined canvas; for this work he relied on a large range of sketch book drawings from life and including a critique of nineteenth century representations of women painted by Ingres, facial features from Romanesque and West African sculpture in his studio collection and elsewhere in Paris, and emblematic forms evident, for instance, in Spanish, Apocalyptic manuscripts. This canvas has become known as *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* and now hangs in the Museum of Art, New York. The work was rejected in 1907 by those who were then buying his work (such as Leo and Gertrude Stein) and by many of his friends. On previous, but mainly subsequent occasions between 1907 and 1911, both Braque and Picasso made paintings and drawings of still lifes, portraits and dancing figures; the complexity of collage's simultaneous presentation of a multiplicity of spacetime and images was underway.

Collage is thus already evident in Modernist æsthetics in the decade and more before, and during World War One, in which collage became akin to a record of the consciousness consequent on a perception of more than one, and usually many plateaux, or planes of spacetime at once. Collage has become one of the major components of æsthetic practice in the twentieth century.

19. Picasso, *Still-life with Chair-caning*, 1912.

Many historians of visual practice give its beginnings as Picasso's *Still-life with Chair-caning*, May 1912 (Musée Picasso, Paris), followed by Braque's papier collé, *Fruit-*

dish and Glass, September 1912 (Private Collection, exhibited in *The Essential Cubism 1907-1920* exhibition).

20. Georges Braque, papier collé, *Fruit-dish and Glass*, 1912.

Such precision of origins conceals the arts and æsthetics that preceded these works. Both Braque and Picasso had made paintings by 1908 that had used more than one plane of reality – more than one spacetime. Their oil paintings on canvas, that precede their papier collé innovations, can be understood as a reappraisal of the composite æsthetic already prevalent in Western easel painting.

21. Gustave Courbet, *The Painter's Studio, real allegory, resolving a phase of seven years in my artistic life*, 1855.

Composite painting had already been radicalised by Gustave Courbet's work The Painter's Studio, real allegory, resolving a phase of seven years in my artistic life. (1855)[now in the d'Orsay, Paris] in which the bringing together of many parts cannot be clarified by a unity of idealisation or realism (not idealised as it was, for example, in Thomas Couture's The Romans of Decadence [1847] [in the Louvre]

22. Thomas Couture, *The Romans of Decadence*, 1847.

and not realised or simulated as it was, for example, in Courbet's Burial at Ornans [1849-50][now in the d'Orsay]).

23. Courbet, *Burial at Ornans*, 1850.

24. Courbet, *The Painter's Studio ...*

In The Painter's Studio ... the viewer is presented with a juxtaposition of realist painting (made in the studio from earlier paintings, sketches and photographs) and allegorical and historical figure depictions from Courbet's invention. Precedents for the allegorical method were available in the work of Grünewald and later Reynolds in composite portraits.

25. Matthias Grünewald, *The Disputation of S. Erasmus and S. Maurice*, 1523.

26. Joshua Reynolds, *Mrs Siddons as the Tragic Muse*, 1784.

Precedents for historical paintings were still being factured in the 1850s by Manet's peer Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier, in the same ambience as Courbet and Charles Baudelaire and in the company of Sir Richard Wallace (who purchased work for his collection, for example Napoleon in Moscow [made 50 years after the event in 1864] [Wallace Collection, London])

27. Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier, *Napoleon in Moscow*, 1864.

Sir Edward John Poynter (who factured his own orientalist patchworks in London) and Gabriel-Charles Gleyre (himself a cento painter and who had been Poynter's tutor in Paris).

28. Edward John Poynter, *Israel in Egypt*, 1867.

29. Charles Gleyre, *Romans Under the Yoke*, 1858.

A century later, in the period after 1950, both allegorical and historical painting (factured by Larry Rivers and others) became characterised as simulation.

30. Larry Rivers, *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, 1953.

Composite æsthetics in painting can be seen to be active in all periods from which examples are still available to view. It is the method of the Dionysian murals in Pompeii, Ajanta temple paintings,

31. Hall of the Mysteries, Pompeii, AD 79 .

32. Master of Mahâjanaka Jâtaka, mural in cave 1, Ajanta, 460-480.

33. Empress Theodora and Attendants, mosaic in S. Vitale, Ravenna, 547.

34. Raphael, General view of Stanza della Segnatura frescoes, Vatican, 1510.

35. Titian, *The Flaying of Marsyas*, Kromêriz, 1575.

Mediæval European mosaics and panels; Renaissance frescoes and easel pictures. This is given a shift by the use of *grisaille* (for instance by Giotto, Mantegna and Titian) in which quotations (from *Ars Antiqua* [antique sculptures and reliefs]) or emblems (such as allegorical summaries from an emblem book) are distinguished from the other parts of the composition.

36. Giotto *Envy*, Arena Chapel, Padua, 1306.

37. Mantegna *grisaille*, *The Introduction of the Cult of Cybele at Rome*, London, 1505.

It might be useful, therefore, to identify at least two trends in collage before 1914 which overlap or which are sometimes identical with collage, and which may assist understanding of the complexity that the term 'collage' now potentially encompasses: (i) image collage, and (ii) papier collé.

(i) In as much as composite painting brings onto one plane images from others, as a work of imitation, collage continues part of this activity, noted by Aristotle as one of his *differentae*. But Modernist collage, as part of a change of paradigm, brings these images onto one plane without "counterfeiting" the appearance of facture. That is, Modernist collage presents a plane quite different from composite practice. It is in this sense that collage has origins in works made by Picasso and Braque in the period 1907-1912. It is also in this sense that image production is laterally radicalised by Max Ernst, Raul Hausmann, Hannah Höch and others in the following years, and by at least 1919, in the shift to "systematic displacement". Whilst systematic displacement clearly applies to the collages factured in the Dada period by Hannah Höch and others, it applies differently to Max Ernst. Ernst's scrupulous care with the integration of his images to heighten the counterfeit spacetime does not undermine,

but in fact enhances, his ability to present a defamiliarising sign structure. The viewer is not deceived but surprised. This radicalised spacetime, in works after the period of Cubist facture from 1907-8 and the first abstract compositions in 1910, can be seen to frequently use conventions from earlier conceptions of space and time, from conceptions with artificial perspectival and horizontal description, to metaphysical and vertical compositions in the works of *trompe l'oeil*. Indeed, this use of conventions serves as a hinge to analyse the radicalised facture of spacetime.

38. Max Ernst, *Oedipus Rex*, 1922.

39. Hannah Höch, *Cut with the Kitchen Knife through the Beer-Belly of the Weimer Republic*, 1919.

Different realities or spacetimes on one plane in collage are presented to the viewer without falsifying that spacetime into a naturalised unity.

40. Georges Braque, *Violin and Palette*, 1909.

Braque's *Violin and Palette* (Guggenheim, New York) of winter 1909-10, for instance, uses intersections of painted image planes on one material plane (the canvas) that relate to phase shifts in the process of perception. The painting includes flat *trompe l'oeil* constructions as well as depictions of a nail in perspective apparently carrying the weight of a palette.

41. Georges Braque, *Still-life with Bottle and Fishes on a Table*, London, 1910.

His *Still-life with Bottle and Fishes on a Table* of 1910 (in the Tate Gallery, London) is another example, this time using horizontal, depth perspective (note particularly the drawer and drawer knob on the front of the table) and shifts in viewpoint.

42. Georges Braque, *Clarinet and Bottle of Rum on a Mantelpiece*, London, 1911.

Braque's use of lettering in Clarinet and Bottle of Rum on a Mantelpiece, Summer 1911 (the Tate Gallery, London) clarifies a graphic flatness in juxtaposition to a variety of perspectival and overlapped representations.

(ii) *Papier collé* gives such an æsthetic approach a new expediency and vigour. Its history is quite distinct from that of collage painting. (A distinction that does not have significance after the initial Cubist period of this facture, by Braque, Picasso and Gris which stopped in 1914.) Histories of collage usually prefer to trace the origins of the æsthetic through the use, in the past, of pasted (glued) papers. This is a reasonable consideration because the word 'collage' derives from the French for 'pasted'. Meanings of words however shift and their etymological beginnings may not result in the contemporary meaning. To viewers, in the period after 1950, collage as a term can be applied to literature, painting, music, or pasted papers. It is because of this complex that the term needs a reappraisal.

43. Georges Braque, *Soda*, New York, 1911.

George Braque's painting Soda, 1911 (Museum of Modern Art, New York) is a collage of shapes derived from the perception of drinking glasses, cups, smokers' pipes, letters, music-scores and an advertisement for soda. In short, perception that could have been made in Braque's studio or in a café. The painting plane presents these shapes as a variety of intersecting and overlapping planes without any overt suggestion of a counterfeit spacetime. Whilst all the elements could be inferred by the viewer to be fragments from reports of perceptions of objects on a round table, a table with a glass top, Braque has not made any attempt to persuade the viewer that this may be so. On the contrary, his presentation as much implies a verticality as if the perception report was of objects fixed to a wall and prepared to provide a *trompe l'oeil* by a painter such as John F. Peto.

44. John F. Peto, *Fish House Door*, Dallas, 1905.

45. Georges Braque, *Soda*.

To the right of the centre the bowl of a smoker's pipe is suggested and a use of colour contrast implies the bowl's depth. The remainder of the picture plane consists

of lines and curves which balance and counter-balance the pattern of the smoker's pipe bowl.

In many places on the plane a music-score is signified using Braque's characteristic bar lines (usually less than five, but nevertheless signifying musical scores) which become ambiguous with the suggestion that perhaps the strings of a musical instrument are implied. The part circles sometimes appear as marks left by drinking-cups or glasses and sometimes appear as fragments from perception reports of those vessels. This pattern is shifted by the repeated inclusion of Bas Clefs. Other lines on the plane suggest parts of smokers' pipes, edges of planes and, particularly the more vertical and wavy lines, strips of wallpaper in Braque's now recognisable *faux-bois* (imitation wood). On some parts of the plane a depth perspective is hinted at through the use of angled cornered lines with shading. At one place, on the lower right, the word SODA has been painted and part of the "S" has been intersected and cut off by a white line which implies an overlapping plane. The overall picture plane is full and some of the lines approach the plane edges (particularly at the top and bottom and left hand side) which has the effect of controlling the array of shapes, of containing them into a pattern of connectedness. It is a pattern that connects intrinsically shape against shape and referent against referent; and because of the report of commonplace objects implied and particularly the "SODA" advertisement, connect extrinsically to everyday life in the society Braque participates in.

Through these relationships, both intrinsically and extrinsically, Braque presents an æsthetic complex that moves and delights the viewer and in addition signifies the manners of the society he appears to be in contemplation of: drinking and smoking his pipe in the presence of music. The mode of facture, however, adds to these considerations. All of the patterns of connectedness so far described might, hypothetically at least, have been derived from a variety of painting practices such as Realist, or naturalistic, Still-life, or even from Idealist *trompe l'oeil*. Braque's decision to facture in the mode of image-collage therefore ramifies the manners first extrapolated from the patterning.

The image-college, that this painting exemplifies, derives its patterning, the shapes made by Braque's facture with oil paint on canvas, from perceptions made in

Braque's daily life. The depiction of these perceptions have been deliberately fractured and fragmented. Such fragmentation can partly be understood as an activity of pattern-selection, in which Braque partly insists on his referents (for example the parts of the smoking-pipe) and partly insists only on the shapes necessary to carry out the overall pattern of his chosen circular canvas. But a much broader concern must now be considered. Braque's facture offers the implied depictions of many planes and also presents these implications as overlapping and intersecting, adding to the fragmentation already apparent from the selected parts of depicted objects. This intersecting and overlapping has the effect of fracturing the spacetime into many spacetimes, offering hints of counterfeit spacetime and immediately breaking any expectation from the hinting. It is an expectancy, perhaps, a viewer may have from having encountered other paintings, but it can never be naturalised. The frequent tendency in viewers to give anecdotal referentiality to picture planes as if they depicted natural spacetimes is prevented here by Braque's facture. The realism of the painting is the painting itself. The frequency of breakage, of broken expectations, of ambiguities in spacetimes, also leads to comprehending the work as part of an explicit programme of discovery. At the same time the presentation is not about discovery, but what has been found. It becomes an appraisal, and even in part a homage to, earlier paintings in that its innovation relies on the paradigmatic constellation of earlier art in order to break part of those paradigms and innovate into the production of a new paradigm. This innovation is in fact concomitant with parallel phase shifts in western humankind's comprehension of the world.

Image-collage of the kind described above is not George Braque's only mode of painting practice. If it was the above description would not alter. Because it is only one mode among others it may be worth considering the ramifications of this here. Many commentators view Braque's work of this period (which they usually label Cubist) as part of a progression such that each innovation presents a step towards a linear expansion. What works like Braque's Soda presents, however, need not be so considered. Soda is one of very many works in which Braque and Picasso are in conversation. Daily they exchange viewings and views in the period up until October 1914. Each new work presented what Braque or Picasso had found. In this sense they were innovating continually, but, as any viewer comparing the works of the

period will soon comprehend, many of their innovations are lateral, or double-back on work already factured in order to comment again, but anew, on innovations previously made. In short, their work of the period can be considered as contributions to a discourse on æsthetics which both painters continue, differently and divergently to some extent, after their collaborations together, in the larger studio of the world. Their works from this collaborative period are intense exchanges, sometimes in contemplation and sometimes in exuberance, between two sensitive thinkers aware of their presence in a unique phase of European understanding that has shifted the subsequent attentions so radically that no one (presumably) would dare suggest whether humankind will ever recover. Viewing works by these collaborators from this period can be continual pleasure, but as importantly, a learning process that appears to be without exhaustion.