

VISCERAL PERCEPTION

1 Introduction (informal)

A horse is a horse and not art.

A spoon is a spoon and not art.

But if a hundred tiny horses are carved artfully in to the spoon, then it is a useless spoon and not art.

A mosaic, like an oil painting, is meant to be seen and not eaten.

If the mosaic is beautiful, however, then it is art.

Decorative art is when the stork brings a garland instead of a rectangle.

You can sit, lie, sleep, or stand on a rug.

Nonetheless a rug can be sublime art.

In such a case I would advise you to sit on something else.

- Jean Arp, 1955

The human eye is the most complex and specific sense organ the Human body has, it is also one which science knows much about, even so, much is taken for granted regarding its role in the perception of art. This collection of essays gets its start here, with the title Visceral Perception regarding to two topics: First, the much unaddressed physical nature of perception itself lying in the eyes direct connection to the brain, being in effect its outer most component along with the physiological roles the eye has in the various functions and inputs to the visual processing centers of the brain, and second, in addressing two and three dimensional art which being made somewhat recently, has as the most striking feature, a perceptual reading that is reflexive and concomittantly un-reflexive simultaneously.

I wish also to touch on how that eye/brain physiological connection ends up being an important metaphoric working model for Art.

of an unreflexive and visual and corporeal self consciousness which is to mean that while we view the work(s) it is aparant the presence of two mainthings: 1) a reading of autonomous materiality, while at the very same time a reading of one of many thing all of which have reflexivity as their main characteristic.

2 Why the need to write this essay. Its lack of remarcableness as art.

3 The Eye, The Outermost Part of the Brain.

4a. The Reflexive vs. the Unreflexive; Simultaneous Reflexivity and Unreflexivity. Just as we know that we are just only one being we thoroughly accept as "real" our dialogue with our self with its two distinct interlocutors.

b. The visual art piece that is consciously both Reflexive and Unreflexive simultaneously is new. David Ireland, Ryman,

What the work reflects back during its reflexive reading is a "self-conscious thingness", with my work it can be a nasty shape thingness, or tacit/oblique/latent evocative familiarity, part of its evocativeness coming from the pensive and frustrating "lack of disclosure" inherent and the other half coming from the connotations of the forms themselves.

It may also be the simple equivalent of a light being cast on some rare forms and materials. The formidableness of the reflexive unreflexive composite being enough to justify the piece.

c. Visceral, corporeal, spacial d. Abstract allegory, "the making (proc.)", Pre-metaphoric, Unrequited perception, Oblique familiarity, Mundane Evocation, The Extra Normal, Joeseph Bhoeyes- Lard, Felt, Lead, (inherent incarnate Mundane), Deflation as opposed to distillation & refinement.

5 Oblique Familiarity and Portent

6 The Pre-Metaphoric and Unrequited Perception

7 The Object and the Thing. Heidegger. Hans Arp on Thingness, "The Shape of Time"?

9 Viscera in Art, Things which read as Physicality.

10 a. The Drop, EST

b. The Rabbit Duck, Arnheim, pg. 236. Behrens?, Wittkenstein Philosophical Investigations ;

11 Can there be communication without subject? Just look into a dogs eyes. Do we project all that? Yes of course, it takes an ear for there truly to be sound, otherwise there is only the vibrations of the air.

12 The "Self" as Two. Bodily as one, (the mind is body of course) but perceptually it functions in dialogue

This internal dialogue is the conscious means by which we think thus these are the terms "anticipated" by (our percieving mind).

*presumed abstr narrative
Abstract narrative
implied
discourse -*

The interest here lies in how consciousness, and subsequently, reflexive self-consciousness, "Ontologies," as well as, equivocality as expressed in the vanguard art tradition of the west, is founded in the corporeal nature of perception (here referring to the eye and the perceptual field itself being made up of common visceral matter & subject to our interpretative bias) and,

Science knows a great deal about the human eye, it is the most complex and specific sense organ the body has, even so, much is taken for granted regarding its role in the perception of art. It is generally assumed that the eye operates camera, efficiently gathering optical information which becomes processed in the brain where it gets interpreted, when in fact the workings of the eye in its function of gathering chroma, value, and deliniation is dependant upon the limitations of the design, construction, and function of crucial parts such as the optical receptors. The limited capacities of these receptors to distinguish, color, value and line are in turn handled by the various precedence giving functions of the cerebrum locus of the brain. It has its own capacities and strong subjection to influences of visual memory, present context while seeing, and our subjective psychological and physiological make up.

Gaston Bachelard speaks of a Materialist imagination in his Poetics of Space.

Graham? Beckett? Sartre! l. imaginaire.

Madam Blavatsky the founder of the Theosophic movement, etc. connection to Kandinski, Mondrian, etc. The case is made for Thought Forms, Mondrian.

In how these subjects have been used by artists in works which manifest the effects of an unrequited perception or denatured erotic.

In a book influential to the first generation of "abstract expressionists" it says "These forms that live in space and in matter live first in the mind. Indeed, is it not that they live truly, as it were, uniquely, in the mind, and that their external activity is but the projection of some inner process?"- 1948, Henri Focillon's 'The Life of Forms in Art.

The eye, truthfully can be thought of as the outermost part of the brain (an appropriate metaphore for this collection of essays). Thinking of the eye this way leads us to the implications and manifestations of a visceral perception.

~~Thingness & Body Empathy~~

IN THE Philosophical Study of Being (ONTOLOGY) A THING

It is generally agreed in the area of Philosophical Ontological study that

a Thing: Is that which is, at all, and is something which is, in any way;

the meaning of which varies with the interpretation.

Immanuel Kant ~~all~~, that which is, becomes an object of a representing

that occurs in the self-consciousness of the human ego. That object-in-itself,

apart from its human representation and having no subjective reading of a

past or future, it is of-itself and by-itself, opaque.

It is noticed that we feel queazy when seeing a particularly gory photograph or carnal scene, this could be considered a kinesthetic body responce to the photograph.

We assume that only physical forces, such as the muscles flexing etc., can react to various perceptions and can inturn effect our experience due our exposure to them. Though this is the extent we usually go with these thoughts there is evidence that in fact that the cerebral locus (the perceptual center) of the brain undergoes corresponding physiological changes which may be equivalent in structure to the visual experience of which ~~we~~ ^{they} are exposed to. If this is the case, it is reasonable to assume that the "body/mind" composit which comprises us becomes "loaded" with these equivilant physical manifestations of our visual experiences. Correspondingly we might "identify" with some of these manifestations more than with others and possibly, in turn have empathetic responcees with certain items in the world while not having them with others.

The perceptual theoretician Rudolf Arnheim, in 1966 writes, "a drawing of a rectangle, at which the observer is looking- when projected on the pertinent brain field, will arouse in that field a corresponding pattern of physiological forces. Thus the static stimulus pattern will be translated into a dynamic process governed by the principal of balance, and the resulting tensions in the physiological field will have their counterpart in visual experience"- (the rest of the physical world)- Toward a Psychology of Art. Michael Jackson didn't know how right he was in singing We Are The World and that this we, is a visceral we.

If we more fully come to know that perception is actually of, our body, it

seems then, that we would more fully make use of its strongly - but at the moment tacitly- exploited: marketing, evocating, identifying, eroticizing, socializing, etc., and metaphoric role-model everywhere in the world around us, a world witnessed by a physical self that pours its various individual psychological and physical identities & bias all over it.

* Materialism & Selfconsciousness *

Rodchenko, Malevitch, and Wladyslaw Strzeminski, are some of the first artists to clearly address perception, ontology, and self-consciousness in the "movements" termed suprematism, and unism. Since their time it has played extensive roles in the work of various arts groups such as "Dada," "constructivism," "Bauhaus," "futurism," "Art Povera," "fluxus," "Minimalist," and "Conceptual." *EXISTENTIALISM. AS OPPOSED TO RELATIVITY.*
is A WORKING Definition of Selfconsciousness
 In 1807 Hegel, in The Phenomenology of the Spirit, declares that self-consciousness, "exists in itself and for itself, in that, and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness", meaning that it can exist only by being "acknowledged or recognized", thus its existence depends upon its not being finite, but rather, equivocal in its structure, this due to, its simultaneous opposition to the "determinateness in which it is fixed". Therefor self-consciousness has with it another self-consciousness, it exists beside itself.

Ludwig Wittgenstein ~~probably has the first clear understanding and analysis of his "aspect seeing", its principal addressed in his Blue & Brown books.~~

Merleau-Ponty states, "what I really see must surely be what is produced in me by the influence of the object'- then what is produced in me is a sort of copy, something that in its turn can be looked at, can be before one; almost something like a materialization."

Along with the extensive returns to more typical formats for two and three dimensional art works after the occupation of "conceptual" and "earth works" art in the Avant guard forefront, there has come an increase in artworks works which continue to investigate themes of ontology, although these themes have shed the idealism contained in the work of their predecessors.

In Visions of Excess, Georges Bataille alludes to a new meaning for the Materialists Philosophic movement, in it he writes, "When the word materialism

is used, it is time to designate the direct interpretation, excluding all idealism, of raw phenomena, and not a system founded on the fragmentary elements of an ideological analysis".

* Duckrabbit *

Dr Ua C b K b i t

The Aztecs devoted themselves to art & torture simultaneously, treating sacrifice and flower arrangement with similar reverence- Ken Heyman, They Became What They Beheld, 1970.

A by now classic example of "aspect seeing"- first shown in the humorous German weekly Die Fliegenden Blatter- the picture of the rabbit & duck impossible to see as both simultaneously, led Wittgenstein to say, "We see, not change of aspect, but change of interpretation," and, "The flashing of an aspect on us seems half visual experience, half thought."- ibid.

"Perceptual equivocality, of interest to Ludwig Wittgenstein in his blue and brown books, was termed by him, 'aspect seeing'. The effects of aspect seeing, have been exercised by several generations of artists, starting with Malevitch's Suprematism, and Strzeminski's Unism and continuing up to this present day with its most recent use in art which proffers various ciphers as stand ins for content.

Right at this point of half perceiving and half thinking there manifests a conundrum which when used by artists causes an effect of unrequited perception, deflation or stultification by virtue of the "jamming" of what we expect from our seeing.

A single form in which two or more mutually exclusive visual readings are possible to "see" but one at a time has had much attention in the field of Philosophy and Perceptual studies, though not comparably so in how its structure has been used in the Visual Arts.

In the works of late Ad Reinhardt, Rothko, Lucio Fontana, Josef Albers, and Duchamp, use of this "aspect seeing" principal became manifested in the simultaneous equivocal expression of both un-reflexive material form, and-reflexive self-consciousness.

ressuscitation

* Deflation/Resuscitation *

A separation occurs at around 1918-1920 when of this "perceptual equivocality." With Duchamp, it took a turn in the type of evocation it results in, becoming one which is "body" based, meanwhile its extending use by abstract painters continued on its course, eventually yielding such unexpected likenesses as the work of Milton Resnick with the work of Jules Olitski.

In Duchamp's' exploitative use of our erotic/physiological anticipations, he opened up a field in art which came to bare a wide range of body/perception "issues". In his tableau known as 'Ettone Donne' he effected denatured erotics simultaneously with un-requited perception and reflexive equivocality. Three dimensional, body/perception based works, by Duchamp and those who have followed: Johns, Nauman, Bouys, Morris, and Gober, can surround the viewer with a sense of the bodies exploitation, incarceration (in lack of a better word for the apposing subject of freedom (I am not content with the word "power" in this context)), erotic let down, paradox, perceptual deflation, are some other common effects of the work, in which, physiological metaphors are everywhere to be found.

Scientific American Article

The Drop/great deflators/est

Breakdown of what characteristics this work shares. Outline? Concomitt