

Changes in Artistic Aesthetics and Modernism in Design

Changes in Art were often times precursors to discoveries in the field of science, literature, and exposure to new cultures. Graphic Arts often considered the ugly step child of Fine Art due to its ties to 'crass' commercialism and the material world may also be considered the voice of reason in a career track which is often associated with humans of . . . shall we euphemistically call . . . flighty nature.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century when Graphic Design became a viable "trade," changes in aesthetics based on a wider world view combined with scientific and industrial 'revolutions' blew away the cobwebs of the parochial Fine Art community. Fine Art was historically perceived as reflecting ideals originating and built upon the Classical Greeks and Romans, which were later modified in the Renaissance, but which also purported to espouse universal ideas of beauty and truth.

Nations, as well as religions, began realizing the political importance of a visual identity and pursued artists to help them codify what made their circle of influence unique, and desirable for others to join (either by choice, circumstance or coercion). By the turn of the 18th century the world, the Royal Academy of Art in the UK along with the strength and influence exerted by the dominant French school, Académie des Beaux-Arts, Art was what they said it was. What *they said* was the end all and be all of the cultural community. This made the job of defining a culturally significant piece easy for the sheep of the planet: follow the herd leader. Other Western European, along with many other countries outside of Europe imitated what these pillars of 'good taste' defined as worthy of imitation.

That is until the early 19th century . . . and the advent of Modernism. The vision of Artists such as Courbet, Manet, and the rudely labeled "impressionists" eroded the influence of the established community to the point where their existence and formalism became increasingly anachronistic. This may have been part of an overall break with royalty in France with the French revolution, or the rising tide of democratic values which surfaced in the U.S., but the break in artistic convention turned the tide radically away from the world of verisimilitude to conceptual abstractions and self-referentiality.

A new more complex world overturned the programmed aesthetics which were formed, diced, mulched and codified over a five hundred year period following what royalty, upper class elites and religious potentates decided was Art. These rules were systematically peeled away by a few upstart artists and exposed as romantic idealism. That revolution in the art world along with the rise of middle class, and the middle class' subsequent access to schools and books made it more difficult to dictate "artsyness" (if I can make up the word) by upper class society.

Pinning down in an "objective" critique which piece of "art" is good and which is "bad" became a moving target. The new vision of the rebellious bohemian class of artists which refused to be bludgeoned into submission by the "art world" obliterated strict representationalism for a more abstract way of representing "universal truths." This creates a monumental task for any Art student to determine what the hell the instructor is driving at when she/he tells you that the piece you laboured over lacks . . . the, "je ne sais quoi," or a litany of other artsy fartsy terminology which leaves you bloodied, scarred, and too timid to attempt anything but opening a jar of peanut butter for fear of academic repercussions. A new breed of art dictator is born.

Defined historically, philosophically, objectively, technically and subjectively, but appar-

ently never definitively has been the maze that students have been forced to navigate. Making any artwork which you hope satisfies the instructor (let alone your own tastes) in an advanced level class becomes a monumentally frustrating task.

By defining trends, and understanding the concepts behind why one technique or approach over another may be desirable is the ultimate test of your personal approach to creating an 'advanced' communicative form. I will try to identify a few of the more recent approaches to design in an attempt to assist you in creating a loose template for creating your own work. We will first step out by taking a quick trip down the 20th century modernist memory lane.

Ideas developed by Cubists, through Braque and Picasso, altered perspectives based on the work of Manet, Cezanne and Matisse coupled with Sigmund Freud's theories on the mind, reaction against materialism in philosophy, the rise of national identity in the industrialized world, revolutions in physics, and the general rebellion against conventions in art, literature, and so on contributed to the increased the speed in which Art changed in the early 20th century.

This New Art demanded less rather than more. Japonisme, and Eastern cultures began to imprint themselves on Western thought. The thought which dominated the 19th century designer which relied on ornamentation and horror vacui was displaced by the concept that empty space was not "empty" in the sense that Euclidean geometry had in-grained in the western psyche. Rather the emptiness found in some Chinese and Japanese wood cuts and prints was leaving an opening for the creation and imagination of the viewer to fill the space with their own world. The space was integral to beauty. Placement on the canvas, the page whatever the format became as important as what occupied the space.

New principles of visual order were beginning to be formulated by the likes of Theo Van Doesberg, Alexander Rodchenko, and Jan Tschichold. Spawned by Kandinsky's vision which ironically was closely associated with mysticism, aka a spiritual point of view, this group of design luminaries that I mentioned espoused a jump toward complete objectivity. In Rodchenko's point of view art should be stripped bare of this mysticism.

Almost every Expressionist painter insisted on similar insight into the world as Kandinsky. Some in the literary world also agreed with Kandinsky's connection to the ethereal cosmos. "Mythic observation is to me the foundation of all art," said Ernst Barlach and Emil Nolde wrote in his autobiography that "for me, the highest value, the form of visible life, was always inward and spiritual".

Kandinsky fascinated by the occult teachings of Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society, and the Austrian mystic Rudolf Steiner, whose lectures he attended felt that Art association should be in concert with an outside presence that assists you in the creation of your work. Steiner argued that the "soul-and-spiritual" reality is accessible to the "seer".

The point is, according to Kandinsky, the proto-element (proto meaning the earliest or original) of painting, its antithesis is the line. The point means rest, the line creates tension by movement. The boundary between the line and the plane is indefinite and mobile, but "even the straight line... carries within it with its other characteristics the desire... to give birth to a plane".

Kandinsky's understanding of synthesis had been established in pre-war texts, the most important of which was *On the Spiritual in Art*, published in 1911. There he describes how each of the arts attends to its own materials, 'weighing on a spiritual balance the inner worth of those elements out of which their art is best suited to create.'²

He writes that this distinguishes each art from the others, but that it simultaneously draws them together in terms of their 'inner strivings.' This leads to the possibility of synthesis: 'And so, finally, one will arrive at a combination of the particular forces belonging to different arts. Out of this combination will arise in time a new art, an art we can foresee even today, a truly monumental art.'³

Consistent throughout his writings is the notion of 'inner necessity', a spiritual, somewhat romantic, demand that the artist express an 'inner experience' that emanated from the soul. In his essay 'On the Question of Form' published in the almanac *The Blue Rider* in 1912, he writes that the artist may use any forms 'in order to express his inner emotions and experiences ... exercising his right to make use of any form that is internally necessary for him.'⁹ The painter can thus use realist or abstract form, or whatever medium is necessary in order to articulate his inner world. T "Point and Line to Plane" (Wassily Kandinsky)

The difference between architects and artists is that architects, by nature of their profession, are NOT required to turn themselves inside out. Sol Lewitt in his "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" spells out the distinction in part: Architecture and three-dimensional art are of completely opposite natures. The former is concerned with making an area with a specific function. Architecture, whether it is a work of art or not, must be utilitarian or else fail completely. Art is not utilitarian. When three-dimensional art starts to take on some of the characteristics, such as forming utilitarian areas, it weakens its function as art. When the viewer is dwarfed by the larger size of a piece this domination emphasizes the physical and emotive power of the form at the expense of losing the idea of the piece.

I disagree with both of these yahoos. There are numerous examples, e.g., Baroque movement (at the time when artists were architects, and architects were artists), Zen garden and teahouse works (in the Oriental tradition there is no difference between art and craft). Lewitt and Kandinsky's ideas of Art lend themselves to those of us which would prefer to believe in Santa Claus, but hide an underlying desire to feel special by associating their work with a gift or talent that cannot be taught. As Mary Poppins would say, if she existed, "stuff and nonsense."

The Arts regardless of the form is guided by observation, an inquisitive mind on how things are constructed and a desire to recreate in a new way which follows our own personal life track, but as Plato observed (not in a good way, I might add) it begins with mimicry. Humans have evolved into mimicking machines. It is part of our DNA to mimic. Our civilization was built upon it. What students can learn and adapt to their work in Communication Design is the will to practice repeatedly what design skills that they decide are important but guided by professional standards, and to inquire into processes that work for them, all the while honing those skills which support their objective.

1920 Le Corbusier:

Towards a new architecture: guiding principles
Le Corbusier (b. 1887 in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, d.1965 in Roquebrune, Cap-Martin, France) was already well known outside France when in 1920-1 those programmatic notes appeared in the periodical *L'Esprit Nouveau* which in 1923 he published in book form under the title *Vers une Architecture*. In 1910 Le Corbusier had worked for a few months with Peter Behrens in Berlin, knew the work of the *Deutscher Werkbund* (which, against van de Velde's protest was already concerning itself with standardization and the problems of industrialization), had since 1917 travelled all over Europe and was now, from 1920, evolving an aesthetic of mass-production building.

The engineer's aesthetic and architecture

The Engineer's Aesthetic and Architecture are two things that march together and follow one from the other: the one being now at its full height, the other in an unhappy state of retrogression. The Engineer, inspired by the law of Economy and governed by mathematical calculation, puts us in accord with universal law. He achieves harmony.

The Architect, by his arrangement of forms, realizes an order which is a pure creation of his spirit; by forms and shapes he affects our senses to an acute degree and provokes plastic emotions; by the relationships which he creates he wakes profound echoes in us, he gives us the measure of an order which we feel to be in accordance with that of our world, he determines the various movements of our heart and of our understanding; it is then that we experience the sense of beauty.

Three reminders to architects

Mass

Our eyes are constructed to enable us to see forms in light. Primary forms are beautiful forms because they can be clearly appreciated. Architects today no longer achieve these simple forms. Working by calculation, engineers employ geometrical forms, satisfying our eyes by their geometry and our understanding by their mathematics; their work is on the direct line of good art.

Surface

A mass is enveloped in its surface, a surface which is divided up according to the directing and generating lines of the mass; and this gives the mass its individuality.

Architects today are afraid of the geometrical constituents of surfaces. The great problems of modern construction must have a geometrical solution. Forced to work in accordance with the strict needs of exactly determined conditions, engineers make use of form-generating and form-defining elements.

They create limpid and moving plastic facts.

Plan

The Plan is the generator.

Without a plan, you have lack of order and wilfulness.

The Plan holds in itself the essence of sensation.

The great problems of tomorrow, dictated by collective necessities, put the question of 'plan' in a new form.

Modern life demands, and is waiting for, a new kind of plan, both for the house and for the city.

Regulating lines

An inevitable element of Architecture.

The necessity for order. The regulating line is a guarantee against wilfulness. It brings satisfaction to the understanding. The regulating line is a means to an end; it is not a recipe. Its choice and the modalities of expression given to it are an integral part of architectural creation.

Eyes which do not see ...

Liners

A great epoch has begun.

There exists a new spirit.

There exists a mass of work conceived in the new spirit; it is to be met with particularly in industrial production.

Architecture is stifled by custom.

The 'styles' are a lie.

Style is a unity of principle animating all the work of an epoch, the result of a state of mind which has its own special character.

Our own epoch is determining, day by day, its own style.

Our eyes, unhappily, are unable yet to discern it.

Aeroplanes

The aeroplane is the product of close selection.

The lesson of the aeroplane lies in the logic which governed the tatement of the problem and its realization.

The problem of the house has not yet been stated.

Nevertheless there do exist standards for the dwelling house.

Machinery contains in itself the factor of economy, which make for selection.

The house is a machine for living in.

Automobiles

We must aim at the fixing of standard in order to face the problem of perfection.

The Parthenon is a product of selection applied to a standard.

Architecture operates in accordance with standards.

Standards are a matter of logic, analysis, and minute study; they are based on a problem which has been well 'stated'. A standard is definitely established by experiment.

Architecture

The lesson of Rome:

The business of Architecture is to establish emotional relationships by means of raw materials. Architecture goes beyond utilitarian needs. Architecture is a plastic thing.

The spirit of order, a unity of intention. The sense of relationships; architecture deals with quantities. Passion can create drama out of inert stone.

The illusion of plans

The Plan proceeds from within to without; the exterior is the result of an interior. The elements of architecture are light and shade, walls and space. Arrangement is the gradation of aims, the classification of intentions. Man looks at the creation of architecture with his eyes, which are 5 feet 6 inches from the ground.

One can only deal with aims which the eye can appreciate, and intentions which take into account architectural elements. If there come into play intentions which do not speak the language of architecture, you arrive at the illusion of plans, you transgress the rules of the Plan through an error in conception, or through a leaning towards empty show.

Pure creation of the mind

Contour and profile are the touchstone of the architect.

Here he reveals himself as artist or mere engineer.

Contour is free of all constraint.

There is here no longer any question of custom, nor of tradition, nor of construction nor of adaptation to utilitarian needs.

Contour and profile are a pure creation of the mind; they call for the plastic artist.

Mass-production houses

A great epoch has begun.

There exists a new spirit.

Industry, overwhelming us like a flood which rolls on towards its destined ends, has furnished us with new tools adapted to this new epoch, animated by the new spirit.

Economic law inevitably governs our acts and our thoughts.

The problem of the house is a problem of the epoch. The equilibrium of society today depends upon it. Architecture has for its first duty, in this period of renewal, that of bringing about a revision of values, a revision of the constituent elements of the house.

Mass-production is based on analysis and experiment.

Industry on the grand scale must occupy itself with building and establish the elements of the house on a mass-production basis.

We must create the mass-production spirit.

The spirit of constructing mass-production houses.

The spirit of living in mass-production houses.

The spirit of conceiving mass-production houses.

If we eliminate from our hearts and minds all dead concepts in regard to the house, and look at the question from a critical and objective point of view, we shall arrive at the 'House-Machine', the mass-production house, healthy (and morally so too) and beautiful in the same way that the working tools and instruments which accompany our existence are beautiful. Beautiful also with all the animation that the artist's sensibility can add to severe and pure functioning elements.

Architecture or revolution (excerpt)

... In building and construction, mass-production has already been begun; in face of new economic needs, mass-production units have been created both in mass and detail; and definite results have been achieved both in detail and in mass. If this fact be set against the past, then you have revolution, both in the method employed and in the large scale on which it has been carried out.

... Our minds have consciously or unconsciously apprehended these events and new needs have arisen, consciously or unconsciously.

The machinery of Society, profoundly out of gear, oscillates between an amelioration, of historical importance, and a catastrophe.

The primordial instinct of every human being is to assure himself of a shelter.

The various classes of workers in society today no longer have dwellings adapted to their needs; neither the artisan nor the intellectual.

It is a question of building which is at the root of the social unrest of today: architecture or revolution.

Introduction: Neue Typographie (revisited)

"The 'form' of the New Typography is also a spiritual expression of our world-view. It is necessary therefore first of all to learn how to understand its principles, if one wishes to judge them correctly or oneself design within their spirit." (7)

"The illustrations in this book, with few exceptions examples of practical work, prove that the concepts of the New Typography, in use, allow us for the first time to meet the demands of our age for purity, clarity, fitness for purpose, and totality." (ibid.)

"Modern man, whose vision of the world is collective-total, no longer individual-specialist, needs no special reminder of the rightness of being closely aware of such related activities as modern painting and photography. I therefore thought it desirable to say something more about this new way of viewing our world, in which our spiritual conception of the new forms are linked with the whole range of human activity." (8)

Modern man has to absorb every day a mass of printed matter which, whether he has asked for it or not, is delivered through his letter-box or confronts him everywhere out of doors. At first, today's printing differed from that of previous times less in form than in quantity. But as the quantity increased, the "form" also began to change: the speed with which the modern consumer of printing has to absorb it means that the form of printing also must adapt itself to the conditions of modern life. As a rule we no longer read quietly line by line, but glance quickly over the whole, and only if our interest is awakened do we study it in detail. (p. 64)

b) The old typography (1440-1914), retrospective view and criticism:

"Aldus Manutius was the first to recognize that printed books had a character of their own and were different from manuscripts. Aldus can therefore be seen as the beginner of the new typographic age in book design; Gutenberg by comparison was more imitator of medieval manuscripts." (18)

"It is essential to realize today that the 'forms' we need to express our modern world can never be found in the work of a single personality and its 'private language'. Such solutions are impossible because they are based on a false, purely superficial grasp of the nature of form. The domination of a culture by the private design-concepts of a few 'prominent' individuals, in other words and artistic dictatorship, cannot be accepted." (28)

"Only anonymity in the elements we use and the application of laws transcending self combined with the giving up of personal vanity (up till now falsely called 'personality') in favour of pure design assures the emergence of a general, collective culture which will encompass all expressions of life -including typography." (28/29)

Growth and Nature of the New Typography

a) The new world view:

"Construction is the basis of all organic and organized form: the structure and form of a rose are no less logical than the construction of a racing car -both appeal to us for the ultimate economy and precision. Thus the striving for purity of form is the common denominator of all endeavour that has set itself the aim of rebuilding our life and forms of expression. In every individual activity we recognize the single way, the goal: Unity of Life!" (13)

"Typography too must now make itself part of all the other fields of creativity. The purpose of this book is to show these connections and explain their consequences, to state clearly the principles of typography, and to demand the creation of a contemporary style." (ibid.)

It was left to our age to achieve a lively focus on the problem of "form" or design. While up to now form was considered as something external, a product of the "artistic imagination" (Haeckel even imputed such "artistic intentions" to nature in his *Art Forms in Nature*), today we have moved considerably closer to the recognition of its essence through the renewed study of nature and more especially to technology (which is only a kind of second nature). Both nature and technology teach us that "form" is not independent, but grows out of function (purpose), out of the materials used (organic or technical), and out of how they are used. This was how the marvellous forms of nature and the equally marvellous forms of technology originated. (p. 65)

The essence of the New Typography is clarity. This puts it into

deliberate opposition to the old typography whose aim was "beauty" and whose clarity did not attain the high level we require today. **This utmost clarity is necessary today because of the manifold claims for our attention made by the extraordinary amount of print, which demands the greatest economy of expression.** (p. 66)

The New Typography is distinguished from the old by the fact that its first objective is to develop its visible form out of the functions of the text. It is essential to give pure and direct expression to the contents of whatever is printed: just as in the works of technology and nature, "form" must be created out of function. Only then can we achieve a typography which expresses the spirit of modern man. The function of printed text is communication, emphasis (word value), and the logical sequence of the contents. (pp. 66-67)

Working through a text according to these principles will usually result in a rhythm different from that of former symmetrical typography. Asymmetry is the rhythmic expression of functional design. In addition to being more logical, asymmetry has the advantage that its complete appearance is far more optically effective than symmetry.

Hence the predominance of asymmetry in the New Typography. Not least, the liveliness of asymmetry is also an expression of our own movement and that of modern life; it is a symbol of the changing forms of life in general when asymmetrical movement in typography takes the place of symmetrical repose. This movement must not however degenerate into unrest or chaos. A striving for order can, and must, also be expressed in asymmetrical form. It is the only way to make a better, more natural order possible, as opposed to symmetrical from which does not draw its laws from within itself but from outside. (p. 68)

The New Typography, on the other hand, emphasizes contrasts and uses them to create a new unity. [. . .] The real meaning of form is made clearer by its opposite. We would not recognize day as day if night did not exist. The ways to achieve contrast are endless: the simplest are large/small, light/dark, horizontal/vertical, square/round, smooth/rough, closed/open, coloured/plain; all offer many possibilities of effective design. (p. 70)

Like everyone else, we too must look for a typeface expressive of our own age. Our age is characterized by an all-out search for clarity and truth, for purity of appearance. So the problem of what

typeface to use is necessarily different from what it was in previous times. We require from type plainness, clarity, the rejection of everything that is superfluous. [. . .] A good letter is one that expresses itself, or rather "speaks," with the utmost distinctiveness and clarity. And a good typeface has no purpose beyond being of the highest clarity.

Sanserif, looked at in detail, is admittedly capable of improvement, but there is no doubt that it is the basic form from which the typeface of the future will grow.

Other individual expressive possibilities of type have nothing to do with typography. They are in contradiction to its very nature. They hinder direct and totally clear communication, which must always be the first purpose of typography. (p. 78)

We today have recognized photography as an essential typographic tool of the present. We find its addition to the means of typographic expression an enrichment, and see in photography exactly the factor that distinguishes our typography from everything that went before. Purely flat typography belongs to the past. The introduction of the photographic block has enabled us to use the dynamics of three dimensions. It is precisely the contrast between the apparent three dimensions of photography and the plane form of type that gives our typography its strength.

The question, which type should be used with photographs, used to be answered in the most obvious way by choosing type that looked grey or was even printed in grey; also by using very thin or very individualistic types, and other methods. As in other kinds of work, the solution was superficial, reducing everything to one level: everything became a uniform grey, which hardly concealed the compromise.

Uninhibited and so contemporary, the New Typography found the solution at once. Since its aim was to create artistic unity out of contemporary and fundamental forms, the problem of type never actually existed: it had to be sanserif. And since it regarded the photographic block as an equally fundamental means of expression, a synthesis was achieved: photography + sanserif!

At first sight it seems as if the hard black forms of this typeface could not harmonize with the often soft greys of photos. The two together do not have the same weight of colour: their harmony lies in the contrast of form and colour. But both have two things in common: their objectivity and their impersonal form, which mark them as suiting our age. This harmony is not superficial, as was mistakenly thought previously, nor is it arbitrary: there is only one objective type form—sanserif—and only one objective representation of our times: photography. Hence typo-photo, as the collective form of graphic art, has today taken over from the individualistic form handwriting-drawing.

By typo-photo we mean any synthesis between typography and photography. Today we can express ourselves better and more quickly with the help of photography than by the laborious means of speech or writing. (p. 92)

d) The history of the new typography:

"It is to a 'non-technician,' the Italian poet F. T. Marinetti, the founder of Futurism, that the credit must be given for providing the curtain-raiser for the change-over from ornamental to functional typography." (53)

"[from El Lissitzky's Topography of Typography] [. . .] 8. The printed page transcends space and time. The printed page, the infinity of the book, must be transcended. THE ELECTRO-LIBRARY." (60)

"The break from the old typography, made complete by the new movement, means nothing less than the total discarding of decorative concepts and the turn to functional design. This is the fundamental mark of the modern movement; and the New Typography, no less than the new technology, the new architecture, and the new music, is not a mere fashion but the expression of a newly opening epoch of European culture. Its aim, to design every job as completely and consistently as possible with contemporary means, introduces a fresh attitude towards all work; since techniques and requirements are in a state of constant change, fossilized rigidity is unthinkable. This is the starting-point for new developments: these are based not so much on artistic experiments as on the new methods of reproduction which together with social needs created the new requirements." (64)

e) The principles of the new typography:

"Both nature and technology tells us that 'form' is not independent, but grows out of function (purpose), out of the materials used (organic or technical), and out of how they are used. This is how the marvellous forms of nature and the equally marvellous forms of technology originated." (65)

versions of UTOPIANISM

MARX AND ENGLES 1848-COMMUNIST MANIFESTO (excerpt)

Historical action is to yield to their personal inventive action, historically created conditions of emancipation to fantastic ones, and the gradual, spontaneous class-organization of the proletariat [def: social class comprising those who do manual labor or work for wages] to the organization of society specially contrived by these inventors. Future history resolves itself, in their eyes, into the propaganda and the practical carrying out of their social plans.

In the formation of their plans they are conscious of caring chiefly for the interests of the working-class, as being the most suffering class. Only from the point of view of being the most suffering class does the proletariat exist for them.

The undeveloped state of the class struggle, as well as their own surroundings, causes Socialists of this kind to consider themselves far superior to all class antagonisms. They want to improve the condition of every member of society, even that of the most favored. Hence, they habitually appeal to society at large, without distinction of class; nay, by preference, to the ruling class. For how can people, when once they understand their system, fail to see it in the best possible plan of the best possible state of society?

Hence, they reject all political, and especially all revolutionary, action; they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means, and endeavor, by small experiments, necessarily doomed to failure, and by the force of example, to pave the way for the new social Gospel.

The Futurist Manifesto

F. T. Marinetti, 1909

We have been up all night, my friends and I, beneath mosque lamps whose brass cupolas are bright as our souls, because like them they were illuminated by the internal glow of electric hearts. And trampling underfoot our native sloth on opulent Persian carpets, we have been discussing right up to the limits of logic and scrawling the paper with demented writing. Our hearts were filled with an immense pride at feeling our-

selves standing quite alone, like lighthouses or like the sentinels in an outpost, facing the army of enemy stars encamped in their celestial bivouacs. Alone with the engineers in the infernal stokeholes of great ships, alone with the black spirits which rage in the belly of rogue locomotives, alone with the drunkards beating their wings against the walls.

Then we were suddenly distracted by the rumbling of huge double decker trams that went leaping by, streaked with light like the villages celebrating their festivals, which the Po in flood suddenly knocks down and uproots, and, in the rapids and eddies of a deluge, drags down to the sea.

Then the silence increased. As we listened to the last faint prayer of the old canal and the crumbling of the bones of the moribund palaces with their green growth of beard, suddenly the hungry automobiles roared beneath our windows.

'Come, my friends!' I said. 'Let us go! At last Mythology and the mystic cult of the ideal have been left behind. We are going to be present at the birth of the centaur and we shall soon see the first angels fly! We must break down the gates of life to test the bolts and the padlocks! Let us go! Here is the very first sunrise on earth! Nothing equals the splendor of its red sword which strikes for the first time in our millennial darkness.'

We went up to the three snorting machines to caress their breasts. I lay along mine like a corpse on its bier, but I suddenly revived again beneath the steering wheel - a guillotine knife - which threatened my stomach. A great sweep of madness brought us sharply back to ourselves and drove us through the streets, steep and deep, like dried up torrents. Here and there unhappy lamps in the windows taught us to despise our mathematical eyes. 'Smell,' I exclaimed, 'smell is good enough for wild beasts!'

And we hunted, like young lions, death with its black fur dappled with pale crosses, who ran before us in the vast violet sky, palpable and living.

And yet we had no ideal Mistress stretching her form up to the clouds, nor yet a cruel Queen to whom to offer our corpses twisted into the shape of Byzantine rings! No reason to die unless it is the desire to be rid of the too great weight of our courage!

We drove on, crushing beneath our burning wheels, like shirt-collars under the iron, the watch dogs on the steps of the houses.

Death, tamed, went in front of me at each corner offering me his hand nicely, and sometimes lay on the ground with a noise of creaking jaws giving me velvet glances from the bottom of puddles.

Let us leave good sense behind like a hideous husk and let us hurl ourselves, like fruit spiced with pride, into the immense mouth and breast of the world! Let us feed the unknown, not from despair, but simply to enrich the unfathomable reservoirs of the Absurd!

As soon as I had said these words, I turned sharply back on my tracks with the mad intoxication of puppies biting their tails, and suddenly there were two cyclists disapproving of me and tottering in front of me like two persuasive but contradictory reasons. Their stupid swaying got in my way. What a bore! Pouah! I stopped short, and in disgust hurled myself - vlan! - head over heels in a ditch.

Oh, maternal ditch, half full of muddy water! A factory gutter! I savored a mouthful of strengthening muck which recalled the black teat of my Sudanese nurse!

As I raised my body, mud-spattered and smelly, I felt the red hot poker of joy deliciously pierce my heart. A crowd of fishermen and gouty naturalists crowded terrified around this marvel. With patient and tentative care they raised high enormous grappling irons to fish up my car, like a vast shark that had run aground. It rose slowly leaving in the ditch, like scales, its heavy coachwork of good sense and its upholstery of comfort.

We thought it was dead, my good shark, but I woke it with a single caress of its powerful back, and it was revived running as fast as it could on its fins.

Then with my face covered in good factory mud, covered with metal scratches, useless sweat and celestial grime, amidst the complaint of staid fishermen and angry naturalists, we dictated our first will and testament to all the living men on earth.

MANIFESTO OF FUTURISM

We want to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and rashness.

The essential elements of our poetry will be courage, audacity and revolt.

Literature has up to now magnified pensive immobility, ecstasy and slumber. We want to exalt movements of aggression, feverish sleeplessness, the double march, the perilous leap, the slap and the blow with the fist.

We declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing automobile with its bonnet adorned with great tubes like serpents with explosive breath ... a roaring motor car which seems to run on machine-gun fire, is more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace.

We want to sing the man at the wheel, the ideal axis of which crosses the earth, itself hurled along its orbit.

The poet must spend himself with warmth, glamour and prodigality to increase the enthusiastic fervor of the primordial elements.

Beauty exists only in struggle. There is no masterpiece that has not an aggressive character. Poetry must be a violent assault on the forces of the unknown, to force them to bow before man.

We are on the extreme promontory of the centuries! What is the use of looking behind at the moment when we must open the mysterious shutters of the impossible? Time and Space died yesterday. We are already living in the absolute, since we have already created eternal, omnipresent speed.

We want to glorify war - the only cure for the world - militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of the anarchists, the beautiful ideas which kill, and contempt for woman.

We want to demolish museums and libraries, fight morality, feminism and all opportunist and utilitarian cowardice.

We will sing of the great crowds agitated by work, pleasure and revolt; the multi-colored and polyphonic surf of revolutions in modern capitals: the nocturnal vibration of the arsenals and the workshops beneath their violent electric moons: the gluttonous railway stations devouring smoking serpents; factories suspended from the clouds by the thread of their smoke; bridges with the leap of gymnasts flung across the diabolic cutlery of sunny rivers: adventurous steamers sniffing the horizon; great-breasted locomotives, puffing on the rails like enormous steel horses with long tubes for bridle, and the gliding flight of aeroplanes whose propeller sounds like the flapping of a flag and the applause of enthusiastic crowds.

It is in Italy that we are issuing this manifesto of ruinous and

incendiary violence, by which we today are founding Futurism, because we want to deliver Italy from its gangrene of professors, archaeologists, tourist guides and antiquaries.

Italy has been too long the great second-hand market. We want to get rid of the innumerable museums which cover it with innumerable cemeteries.

Museums, cemeteries! Truly identical in their sinister juxtaposition of bodies that do not know each other. Public dormitories where you sleep side by side for ever with beings you hate or do not know. Reciprocal ferocity of the painters and sculptors who murder each other in the same museum with blows of line and color. To make a visit once a year, as one goes to see the graves of our dead once a year, that we could allow! We can even imagine placing flowers once a year at the feet of the Gioconda! But to take our sadness, our fragile courage and our anxiety to the museum every day, that we cannot admit! Do you want to poison yourselves? Do you want to rot?

What can you find in an old picture except the painful contortions of the artist trying to break uncrossable barriers which obstruct the full expression of his dream?

To admire an old picture is to pour our sensibility into a funeral urn instead of casting it forward with violent spurts of creation and action. Do you want to waste the best part of your strength in a useless admiration of the past, from which you will emerge exhausted, diminished, trampled on?

Indeed daily visits to museums, libraries and academies (those cemeteries of wasted effort, calvaries of crucified dreams, registers of false starts!) is for artists what prolonged supervision by the parents is for intelligent young men, drunk with their own talent and ambition.

For the dying, for invalids and for prisoners it may be all right. It is, perhaps, some sort of balm for their wounds, the admirable past, at a moment when the future is denied them. But we will have none of it, we, the young, strong and living Futurists!

Let the good incendiaries with charred fingers come! Here they are! Heap up the fire to the shelves of the libraries! Divert the canals to flood the cellars of the museums! Let the glorious canvases swim ashore! Take the picks and hammers! Undermine the foundation of venerable towns!

The oldest among us are not yet thirty years old: we have therefore at least ten years to accomplish our task. When we are forty let younger and stronger men than we throw us in the waste paper basket like useless manuscripts! They will come against us from afar, leaping on the light cadence of their first poems, clutching the air with their predatory fingers and sniffing at the gates of the academies the good scent of our decaying spirits, already promised to the catacombs of the libraries.

But we shall not be there. They will find us at last one winter's night in the depths of the country in a sad hangar echoing with the notes of the monotonous rain, crouched near our trembling aeroplanes, warming our hands at the wretched fire which our books of today will make when they flame gaily beneath the glittering flight of their pictures.

They will crowd around us, panting with anguish and disappointment, and exasperated by our proud indefatigable courage, will hurl

themselves forward to kill us, with all the more hatred as their hearts will be drunk with love and admiration for us. And strong healthy Injustice will shine radiantly from their eyes. For art can only be violence, cruelty, injustice.

The oldest among us are not yet thirty, and yet we have already wasted treasures, treasures of strength, love, courage and keen will, hastily, deliriously, without thinking, with all our might, till we are out of breath.

Look at us! We are not out of breath, our hearts are not in the least tired. For they are nourished by fire, hatred and speed! Does this surprise you? it is because you do not even remember being alive! Standing on the world's summit, we launch once more our challenge to the stars!

Your objections? All right! I know them! Of course! We know just what our beautiful false intelligence affirms: 'We are only the sum and the prolongation of our ancestors,' it says. Perhaps! All right! What does it matter? But we will not listen! Take care not to repeat those infamous words! Instead, lift up your head!

Standing on the world's summit we launch once again our insolent challenge to the stars!

1935-Schrodinger's Cat: and Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle:

Classical physics was on loose footing with problems of wave/particle duality, but was caught completely off-guard with the discovery of the uncertainty principle.

The uncertainty principle also called the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle, or Indeterminacy Principle, articulated (1927) by the German physicist Werner Heisenberg, that the position and the velocity of an object cannot both be measured exactly, at the same time, even in theory. The very concepts of exact position and exact velocity together, in fact, have no meaning in nature.

Ordinary experience provides no clue of this principle. It is easy to measure both the position and the velocity of, say, an automobile, because the uncertainties implied by this principle for ordinary objects are too small to be observed. The complete rule stipulates that the product of the uncertainties in position and velocity is equal to or greater than a tiny physical quantity, or constant (about 10^{-34} joule-second, the value of the quantity h (where h is Planck's constant). Only for the exceedingly small masses of atoms and subatomic particles does the product of the uncertainties become significant.

Any attempt to measure precisely the velocity of a subatomic particle, such as an electron, will knock it about in an unpredictable way, so that a simultaneous measurement of its position has no validity. This result has nothing to do with inadequacies in the measuring instruments, the technique, or the observer; it arises out of the intimate connection in nature between particles and waves in the realm of subatomic dimensions.

Every particle has a wave associated with it; each particle actually exhibits wavelike behavior. The particle is most likely to be found in those places where the undulations of the wave are greatest, or most intense. The more intense the undulations of the associated wave become, however, the more ill defined becomes the wavelength, which in turn determines the momentum of the particle. So a strictly localized wave has an indeterminate wavelength; its associated particle, while having a definite position, has no certain velocity. A particle wave having a well-defined wavelength, on the other hand, is spread out; the associated particle, while having a rather precise velocity, may be almost anywhere. A quite accurate measurement of one observable involves a relatively large uncertainty in the measurement of the other.

COLLECTION OF TENETS OF POST MODERNISM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO COMMUNICATION DESIGN AND WHY POST MODERNIST THEORY MAY BE CRAPITOLANESE.

1. NEOPHILIA (SHOCK OF THE NEW)

The Post Modernist Artist loves anything new and/or novel. The approach to resolving a hypothetical design or “art” problem is more important than the solution since the “answer” is relative to cultural perspectives.

2. DEMOCRATIZATION : (The Dumbing Down of the Planet, Politicization of Art and the NEA?)

Since truth is subjective then so is knowledge, but supposing Art is the pursuit of truth then Art which is created for the masses must be inherently politically correct and thereby it loses its function as art. But if the “truth” offends the masses then it loses its aesthetic appeal, therefore ART is impossible to create for the general public. (The National Endowment for the Arts under the Reagan Administration, Suprematism under Stalin are both examples of politicization of Art which undermines its ability to inquire into delicate subject matter.)

3. SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY: (The Relativism of Facts)

“The postmodernist critique of science consists of two interrelated arguments, epistemological: the nature and scope of knowledge, and ideological: the range and point of the relationship of the subject of study to the observer. Both are based on subjectivity. First, can the subjectivity of the human object, anthropology, according to the epistemological argument be a science? Due to environmental and/or cultural biases of any given scientific community, this condition precludes the possibility of science discovering objective truth.

“Second, since objectivity is an illusion, science according to the ideological argument, subverts oppressed groups, females, ethnics, third-world peoples (Spiro 1996).”

Postmodernism (For more information see Comments Section)

“Modern, overloaded individuals, desperately trying to maintain rootedness and integrity...ultimately are pushed to the point where there is little reason not to believe that all value-orientations are equally well-founded. Therefore, increasingly, *choice becomes meaningless*. According to Baudrillard (1984: 38-9), we must now come to terms with the second revolution, “that of the Twentieth Century, of postmodernity, which is the immense process of the destruction of meaning equal to the earlier destruction of appearances. Whoever lives by meaning dies by meaning” (Ashley 1990). What does this mean? If appearances are based on cultural ideals of beauty which has become established as factually true through scientific observation can “facts” be far behind? Can the act of scientific observation become clouded by subjective meanings colored by cultural context?

“Ryan Bishop, in a concise article in the Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology (1996), defines post-modernism as an eclectic movement, originating in aesthetics, architecture and philosophy. Postmodernism espouses a systematic skepticism of grounded theoretical perspectives. Applied to anthropology, this skepticism has shifted focus from the observation of a particular society to the observation of the (anthropological) observer” www.as.ua.edu/ant/Faculty/murphy/436/pomo.htm.

The observer and context of observation is no longer taken for granted. It is no longer assumed that the observer is dispassionate and uninvolved in the process. He goes on:

“Postmodernity concentrates on the tensions of difference and similarity erupting from processes of globalization: the accelerating circulation of people, the increasingly dense and frequent cross-cultural interactions, and the unavoidable intersections of local and global knowledge.

"Postmodernists are suspicious of authoritative definitions and singular narratives of any trajectory of events." (Bishop 1996: 993). Post-modern attacks on ethnography are based on the belief that there is no true objectivity. The authentic implementation of the scientific method is impossible."

According to Rosenau, postmodernists can be divided into two very broad camps, Skeptics and Affirmatives.

Skeptical Postmodernists- They are extremely critical of the modern subject. They consider the subject to be a "linguistic convention" (Rosenau 1992:43). They also reject any understanding of time because for them the modern understanding of time is oppressive in that it controls and measures individuals. They reject Theory because theories are abundant, and no theory is considered more correct than any other. They feel that "theory conceals, distorts, and obfuscates, it is alienated, disparated, dissonant, it means to exclude, order, and control rival powers" (Rosenau 1992: 81).

Affirmative Postmodernists- Affirmatives also reject Theory by denying claims of truth. They do not, however, feel that Theory needs to be abolished but merely transformed. Affirmatives are less rigid than Skeptics. They support movements organized around peace, environment, and feminism (Rosenau 1993: 42).

Here are some proposed differences between modern and postmodern thought.

society as a network of relations in which individuals are leveled into an abstract phantom known as "the public" (Kierkegaard 1962, 59). The modern public, in contrast to ancient and medieval communities, is a creation of the press, which is the only instrument capable of holding together the mass of unreal individuals "who never are and never can be united in an actual situation or organization" (Kierkegaard 1962 , 60). In this sense, society has become a realization of abstract thought, held together by an artificial and all-pervasive medium speaking for everyone and for no one. In Marx, on the other hand, we have an analysis of the fetishism of commodities (Marx 1983, 444-461) where objects lose the solidity of their use value and become spectral figures under the aspect of exchange value. Their ghostly nature results from their absorption into a network of social relations, where their values fluctuate independently of their corporeal being. Human subjects themselves experience this de-realization because commodities are products of their labor. Workers paradoxically lose their being in realizing themselves, and this becomes emblematic for those professing a postmodern sensibility.

We also find suggestions of de-realization in Nietzsche, who speaks of being as "the last breath of a vaporizing reality" and remarks upon the dissolution of the distinction between the "real" and the "apparent" world. In *Twilight of the Idols*, he traces the history of this distinction from Plato to his own time, where the "true world" becomes a useless and superfluous idea (Kaufmann (ed.) 1954, 485-86). However, with the notion of the true world, he says, we have also done away with the apparent one. What is left is neither real nor apparent, but something in between, and therefore something akin to the virtual reality of more recent vintage." 4 (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

(continued)

2. The Postmodern Condition

The term "postmodern" came into the philosophical lexicon with the publication of Jean-François Lyotard's *La Condition Postmoderne* in 1979 (English: *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, 1984), where he employs Wittgenstein's model of language games (see Wittgenstein 1953) and concepts taken from speech act theory to account for what he calls a transformation of the game rules for science, art, and literature since the end of the nineteenth century. He describes his text as a combination of two very different language games, that of the philosopher and that of the expert. Where the expert knows what he knows and what he doesn't know, the philosopher knows neither, but poses questions. In light of this ambiguity, Lyotard states that his portrayal of the state of knowledge "makes no claims to being original or even true," and that his hypotheses "should not be accorded predictive value in relation to reality, but strategic value in relation to the questions raised" (Lyotard 1984, 7). The book, then, is as much an experiment in the combination of language games as it is an objective "report."

