

The Fold
with
The Decline of the Empire:
Three Essays and a Letter

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Abstract

This thesis implements the principles of Gilles Deleuze's theory modeled in *The Fold* [1993]¹, a framework for presenting multiple perspectives simultaneously. The Deleuzian fold is established as a lens through which to view artists' approaches to their process of making, with complex linkages referencing aspects of their surroundings, their generation, and previous generations. The investigation focuses on the fold concept's analysis of the production of subjectivity—the process of shifting perspective recursively. The methodology builds on theories and critical literature to: define the fold; give visual context by presenting its role in Cubism; establish the fold's integral role to the way our brain works—the process that concurrently collects, edits, and stores information as comparisons—that is the fabric of the contemporary arena; present examples of its applications in contemporary artists' processes and the significance of folding and unfolding within my work.

The thesis is structured in two sections: 'The Fold' and 'Artists Background and Imagery'. 'The Fold' establishes theory surrounding principles of the Deleuzian fold, the way it coincides with the Cubist movement, and its application in the art-making processes of contemporary artists. 'Artist's Background and Imagery' is structured to present 'The Fold' research's relevance to my background and application in my practice. The multiple perspectives I have lived as son to immigrants—mother a refugee from Baghdad to Israel, father rooted ten generations in Jerusalem—and first in my extended family to attend college, constitutes the borderless, imbricated placement of thought that founds my imagery and institutes my making process.

The act of folding is the act of evolving possibilities. The subject of the fold suggests—as the aspiration of a work of art—that witnessing a work of art is witnessing the profound act of life.

¹ Deleuze, Gilles. *The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque*. Trans. Tom Conley. London: Athlone Press, 1993.

Acknowledgments

Nothing tells more than trying to earn the respect of those whom one respects.

A respectful, thankful, and passionate tug to the woman who preserves belief in the heart, because she has shown me with hers.

The first two words of all this should really begin, Dear Kevin. It would be absurd to end with Thank you, Aithan, and not because this is not a letter, but the words Thank you do not describe. It has been a gift growing together, from our failures. You have been my greatest teacher. Evan, Ashley, Jon, Esme, and Josh, you have made this possible.

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Raschel, Norman, and Noah Gray, forever in the words of an Irish parting blessing, *may the road rise to meet you*. You have truly touched me.

This is written with love and memory for my grandmothers, Parha Kugeman, and Esther Shapira, and in honor of my humbling grandfather, Moshe Shapira, to the most beautifully transparent people I know, Sara Shapira, my mother, and Arie Shapira, my father. And to my brother, Michael, whose heart is bigger than his mouth, arms are open always, and I am so very grateful to have.

Dedication

For Saba^{*},

You turn eighty-five as I write this.
This celebrates you.

With love and appreciation,
Aithan

^{*} (Hebrew translation: Grandpa)

Introduction

How does the Deleuzian fold reflect processes of art-making? Gilles Deleuze theorizes a recursive framework for presenting multiple perspectives simultaneously in *The Fold* [1993]². This research applies his structure to characterize the way cubist artists approached interchanging relationships between different aspects of the same event. Reflected in current studies of how our brain functions in the contemporary setting, the cascading process of making relationships is instrumental to art-making processes in contemporary culture.

Whether buried or at the surface, a singular work of art collapses within itself: a series of decisions through its creation; changes to its formal aspects over time; consideration of historic influences and influences of its time; references related to its materials and tools used to create it; the artist's background and unique moment in life during the period of its making. The viewer's gift is in the unpacking. Time-based art—music, film, dance, poetry, performance—is unraveled using a beginning, middle, and ending, whereas two-dimensional works of art—paintings, prints, drawings—expose all details at once. However, the artist's gift is in the packing. This thesis discusses the artist's process of packing information into a work of art—the aforementioned process of making expressive visual, theoretical, historical linkages across a subject in order to describe it most definitively. The Deleuzian fold models alternating perspectives of a single point existing simultaneously, and is thus an effective vehicle to analyze art-making as a series of decisions matching the bedrock of contemporary culture—the collecting, sorting, sifting, and presentation of information.

Consider a scenario: you walk into a room and see your mother. The simplicity is deceiving for the remarkable complexity behind what happens. Everything arrives at once for you to process, like turning a corner in a gallery or museum and seeing a painting. You have seen her thousands of times, from numerous angles, different times of day, in different places. You know what she feels like and what she smells like. Collective meaning, memories, emotions emerge and influence one another and the present. She is familiar, but there is also uniqueness to this time, the room, yourself. It is the same legion of conscious and subconscious

² Deleuze, Gilles. *The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque*. Trans. Tom Conley. London: Athlone Press, 1993.

influences and considerations that embed each movement, each decision in the art-making process. In considering David Hockney's *My Mother I, Yorkshire Moors*, 1985 (figure 37), this thesis focuses on how Hockney himself would have arrived at the product.

Deleuze's Fold is a model for the process of linkage and relationships—a complex structure of comparisons—expressed as “the discovery of new combinations—new ways of folding the world ‘into’ the self, or more simply, new kinds of subjectivity” in *Various Entries in The Deleuze Dictionary* [2005]³. It is an effective model to narrate the art-making process, because it mirrors the way our schizoanalytic mind—one which edits as actively as it collects—navigates a subject. Deleuze expresses the ‘Baroque’ not as a period of inventing things, but rather the fruitful production of folds and the unfolding of Classical, Greek, Roman thoughts that celebrates limitless permutations. This research considers the contribution of theorists who have contextualized frameworks for presenting multiple perspectives simultaneously. Concepts of dialogism, polyphonic text, multi-voiced, and multi-level in Mikhail Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination* [1981]⁴ offer insight. Anna Chave's *Constantin Brancusi: Shifting the Bases of Art* [1993]⁵ further supports that the key to the art-making process is where an artist positions the reference points. The Cubist movement, whose artists used multiple perspectives to represent a subject in greater context, further sustains the Deleuzian Fold argument. Rosalind Krauss' *The Picasso Papers* [1998]⁶ offers critical analysis of the multi-layered discourse, and Walter Benjamin's *The Arcade's Project* [1999]⁷ expands the subject to fractured and multi-layered discursive fields—a kaleidoscopic break up of time that articulates the central questions behind how we perceive, and therefore, how we make.

Researching woven relationships is increasingly relevant to contemporary culture, because of the overwhelming amount of input that has permeated Western

³ O'Sullivan, Simon. *Various Entries in The Deleuze Dictionary*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, June 2005; p 105.

⁴ Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Trans. Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

⁵ Chave, Anna. *Constantin Brancusi: Shifting the Bases of Art*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

⁶ Krauss, Rosalind. *The Picasso Papers*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998.

⁷ Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999.

culture—the internet is indicative. Looking at contemporary internet’s applications and direction shows a global trend in need to order, or personalize, the increasing amount of data we are exposed to. The term Web 2.0 has been used to describe the shift in the primary application of the World Wide Web since 1999-2004. The Web’s original public purpose was to serve as repository for information that users could consume. However, with the birth of personal websites, blogs, and social media, it turned to two-way communication where the user could contribute content. Tim O’Reilly, leader of the open sources movement, describes such sites as providing more user-interface—user-created web sites, self-publishing platforms, tagging, social bookmarking—all through their browser, an “architecture of participation” that encourages users to “add value” to an application as it is being used.⁸ While accessibility has added value, it has also added data.

It follows that Web 3.0 is a vacillating term used to define the present and upcoming application of the Internet. However swaying, its target is clear: personalization and the Semantic Web, a collaborative movement that allows data to be used across applications in order for computer-aided tasks to be processed on behalf of users—essentially methods of filtering and sorting. The contemporary feast of matrices and platforms for information has implored leading neuroscience research to study the ways we process information. Neuroscientist Dr. Rodrigo Quian Quiroga, Professor and Director of the Bioengineering Research Centre at the University of Leicester, equates processing the “hodgepodge of ideas, images, bits of news, coming at us relentlessly, incoherently”⁹ with the creative process in studies that reveal the contemporary brain is fueled by making generalizations and abstraction, a process congruous with making folds to form perception.

Neuroscience research from the past five years has emphasized research that interprets the fundamental way our mind works—how our brain converts information to comprehension and memory. It is furthermore interesting the extent of publications released on the topic by researchers in the past two years alone that substantiate, and in fact credit, artists—visual, literary, and musical artists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—with evidenced discoveries and applied

⁸ O’Reilly, Tim. "What Is Web 2.0". *O’Reilly Network*. Web. Sept. 30, 2005.

⁹ Quiroga, Rodrigo Quian. *Borges and Memory*. Trans. Juan Pablo Fernandez. Boston: MIT Press, 2012; forward ix.

knowledge of the human mind fifty years prior to discoveries neuroscientists are only making now.

Jonah Lehrer, who worked in the lab of Nobel Prize-winning neuroscientist Eric Kandel, uses examples including Marcel Proust, George Eliot, Paul Cézanne, and Igor Stravinsky to describe the mind's propensity, encouraged by complex weaving of information, to inspire unique conclusions. In his words, "our genome is defined not by the certainty of its meaning, but by its linguistic instability, its ability to encourage a multiplicity of interpretations"¹⁰. It comes as no surprise that the brain's process defined by science imitates the process of making art.

Dr. Rodrigo Quiroga studies the scientific interlocking of memories across multiple localized brain cortexes and lobes, and like Lehrer's homage to artists he embraces blind Argentinian writer—who navigated the world through memory and its intricacies translated to his literature—Jorge Luis Borges' works when explaining these compilations of memories¹¹. Quiroga grasps at the phenomena of our brain's capacity to form abstractions in order to make memories. Rather than remembering everything at once, we abstract, or collapse details into generalized concepts. For example, we don't remember all events from childhood, they are abstracted, and often a trigger, stored with a sense or object such as a crib, retrieves the details. The Deleuzian fold emulates this process of forming and accessing relationships that are abundant in Borges' writing, and the complex web by which these relationships are retrieved simultaneously is the root of Cubism. As art critic John Berger eloquently states about cubist works, "elements of any one form [are] interchangeable with another, whether a hill, a woman, a violin, a carafe, a table or a hand...the space between objects is part of the same structure as the objects themselves"¹².

Perhaps neuroscience's fascination with artists lies in their fundamental difference: science is founded in finding answers, while artists are in search of questions. By nature of their role, artists are comfortable in the unknown and it fuels the practice of permutation and experimentation, and their process directly reflects the human condition of making complex folds and juxtaposing relationships. Today's

¹⁰ Lehrer, Jonah. *Proust was a Neuroscientist*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007; p 43.

¹¹ Quiroga, Rodrigo Quian. *Borges and Memory*. Trans. Juan Pablo Fernandez. Boston: MIT Press, 2012.

¹² Berger, John. *The Sense of Sight*. New York: Vintage International, 1993; p 178.

generation is well-versed in processing volumes of folds simultaneously—in this way retaining Cubist principals—and this thesis will point to leading artists using them in the process of their practice to make eloquent connections and arrive at new conclusions. To these ends, the best (art)work of a generation reflects what and how that generation sees.

The thesis aims to establish the Deleuzian fold as a lens through which artists approach their making process with reference to their surroundings and link themselves in reference to their generation and previous ones. The methodology builds on theories, and critical literature to: define the fold; give visual context by presenting its role in Cubism; and establish the fold's integral role in the way our brain works—particularly in its relevance to the fabric of the contemporary arena—with examples of its applications in contemporary artists' processes, and the significance of folding and unfolding within my work.

I have structured the work into two sections: 'The Fold' and 'Artists Background and Imagery'. 'The Fold' discusses the theory I have introduced behind the Deleuzian Fold, the way it coincides with the Cubist movement, and its application to viewing the art-making processes of contemporary artists, specifically emphasizing: time-based artists Ori Gersht; still-life photographer Paulette Tavormina; printmaking duo Gert and Uwe Tobias; and David Hockney's photo-collages of the 80s and recent paneled paintings and nine-camera films. 'Artist's Background and Imagery' presents the research's relevance to my background and application in my practice. The multiple perspectives I have lived as son to immigrants—mother a refugee from Baghdad to Israel, father rooted ten generations in Jerusalem—and first in my extended family to attend college are embedded in the way I see and therefor form my imagery using modes of collage.

'The Fold' comprises five chapters I have organized to most effectively frame the Deleuzian fold model as it is incorporated in contemporary art-making processes.

The first chapter will introduce the basic principle behind making a fold and its function. The second chapter, 'The Origami Method,' is a visual model I constructed to illustrate and embellish on the theory as a making process. The diagram describes relationships between past and future to the present with context to T.S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" [1920]¹³, and considers the

¹³ Eliot, T. S. "Tradition and the Individual Talent". *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1920.

changing reference point of the present as the relationships are folded against one another—or considered at the same time.

Chapter three, ‘Science of Abstraction,’ shows exponents of possibilities in the process of abstracting to form a concept. Lehrer’s and Quiroga’s studies in neuroscience from the past two years shape the content and illustrate concepts of the fold as they are used in artist’s processes—specifically Lehrer’s explanation of neurogenesis driving the brain’s urge for complex weaving, and Quiroga’s study of abstraction as a process of comprehension and creating memory using the brain’s system of linking to match Borges’ use of syllogistic reasoning in his writing.

The scientific foundation for how our mind works sets the stage for a parallel assertion in chapter four—the tie between Deleuze’s fold and Cubism. ‘Deleuze’s Fold and Cubism’ employs the Cubist artists’ concerns—framed by Benjamin, Krauss, and Bakhtin—for assembling a nexus of relationships over formal spatial rules as the core structure of the art-making process.

Chapter five, ‘Applications in the Contemporary Arena,’ first shows application of the Deleuzian fold in a variety of contemporary artists’ processes. For example, Gersht’s trilogy of videos, *Pomegranate*, 2006 (figure 1), *Blow Up*, 2007 (figure 5), and *Falling Bird*, 2008 (figure 3), make folds by recreating famous still life paintings by Juan Sanchez Cotán, Henri Fantin-Latour, and Jean-Siméon Chardin, respectively. Here is how: elements within the works, the still life objects in this case, fold the past against the present; juxtaposed mediums between hi-res digital film and painting reference the times; Gersht work is aware of moments of violence in his current environment, while its reference, Chardin’s mallard, was painted amidst Napoleonic terrors. The chapter also focuses on Hockney’s further investigation of cubist questions that had abruptly stopped in 1914 with World War I. Hockney’s photo-collages in the 80s initiated a process of placing numerous shifting perspectives over a period of time beside one another simultaneously to achieve some totality of the subject. Furthermore, his 2012-13 traveling exhibit, *A Bigger Picture*, at the Royal Academy, London, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Museum Ludwig, Cologne display paneled paintings and nine-camera films that make multitudes of folds and approach cubist questioning with vigor.

‘Artist’s Background and Imagery’ is structured in three distinct chapters to present the ‘The Fold’ research’s relevance to my background and application in my practice.

Opening this section, chapter six, ‘A Background in Multiple Perspectives,’ speaks of my personal and professional background, from which circumstances necessitated filtering the world through multiple perspectives simultaneously. Leading my family’s communication in English since the age of seven, I have lived a practice of translating my family’s immigrant roots into foreign culture—mother refugee from Baghdad to Israel in 1951 and father ten generations in Jerusalem including founders of the State of Israel and survivors of the Holocaust. The collage of viewpoints—supported by fieldwork observing an Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory, Australia and drawing from ancient ruins in the outskirts of Jerusalem over the course of this study, and studies earning a Masters in Printmaking at the Royal College of Art and Masters in Painting at Boston University—have collectively influenced my imagery and informed my process: expressing a subject by juxtaposing these multiple viewpoints through which I see to reveal its core.

The underlying sentiment of hope woven through my past ten years’ work and heritage which has strongly influenced the current direction of my paintings and prints is the subject of chapter seven, ‘Hope—Permutations of the Symbol.’ Over the period of this research, I have been drawing through symbols that reflect my personal background but also speak to the current global significance of hope. This chapter reviews my process applying abstraction to symbols significant of hope, such as the life preserver.

The concluding chapter in this section, ‘Applications—Methodology Matching Imagery,’ presents examples of the fold within my process and work. A series of nine-panel collography prints submitted in conjunction with this paper demonstrate a unique process exemplary of my enquiry. The chapter closes with a written work, “*The Decline of the Empire: Three Essays and a Letter*,” that I take the liberty of introducing as a written painting, as it was arrived at with the same distinct process of editing and comprehensive approach. Engaging in such writing is invaluable to helping understand the thought and art-making process in another light.

The search for roots to the principles of the fold is the topic of this thesis, my practice, research, and overall ontology—which started as folding paper over a drawn line that went through many drafts and was left as a sketch of an idea to reinforce over twelve years of research; reading; looking at art, careful looking by drawing from relevant works at museums, galleries; fieldwork visiting locations the artists worked from; as well as my personal background founded in multiple

perspectives. Pruning the manuscript, much like editing when painting, has shown me how Deleuze's fold is a reflection on making art, a premise upon which I now hope to build.

The Fold

1. Introducing a Fold
2. The Origami Method
3. Science of Abstraction
4. Deleuze's Fold and Cubism
5. Applications in the Contemporary Arena

1. Introducing a Fold

Gilles Deleuze's theory modeled in *The Fold* [1993]¹⁴ punctuates the school of our era—the way in which we study our world today—as one engaged in seeing multiple perspectives simultaneously. Discussing modes of its application, from the ever relevant endeavors of the Cubist movement to contemporary neurological studies of how our brain processes information into comprehension and memory, provides insight to framing the Deleuzian fold as a reflection of contemporary artists' approach to their practices.

The fold's basic principle is a reflexive one. For instance, if a mark is made on a piece of paper as a reference and the paper is folded, one can describe the mark either as the inside or outside of paper depending on the direction of the fold. While the paper is folded, if a new, matching mark is traced onto an opposing surface, the two marks suppose a relationship that can be interpreted either as polarized on the outsides or analogous on the insides as guided by folds and shifting perspective. Furthermore, the definition of one mark is joined to the description of the other.

The concept of the fold is a critique that “allows Deleuze to think creatively about the production of subjectivity”¹⁵—the process of shifting perspective. Simon O'Sullivan, Lecturer in Visual Culture at Goldsmith's College, London, whose writing has been exclusively dedicated to Deleuze, Guattari, and art, examines an account of shifting the reference point across a set of comparisons in which Deleuze “presume[s] a simple interiority and exteriority—for the fold announces that the inside is nothing more than a fold of the outside”¹⁶. Deleuze's illustration of a Renaissance madman in a ship at sea. The subjectivity shifts from the man as a passenger, or ‘prisoner’ in the interior of the ship to the exterior—the fold of the sea¹⁷. O'Sullivan's own example offers a correlation between the fold and expression: “The world of a tick for example is different to that of a human, involving as it does

¹⁴ Deleuze, Gilles. *The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque*. Trans. Tom Conley. London: Athlone Press, 1993.

¹⁵ O'Sullivan, Simon. *Various Entries in The Deleuze Dictionary*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, June 2005; p 105.

¹⁶ O'Sullivan, 103.

¹⁷ Deleuze, Gilles. *Foucault*. Trans. Séan Hand. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986; p 103.

just the perception of light, the smell of its prey and the tactile sensation of where best to burrow. This is not the tick's representation of the world but the latter's expression"¹⁸. Deleuze illuminates the discussion through art, exploring El Greco's paintings through folds, that "seem to be rid of their supports—cloth, granite, or cloud—in order to enter...an infinite convergence, as in El Greco's *Christ in the Mountolive Garden*, 1590 (figure 40) (that of the National Gallery). Or then, notably in *The Baptism of Christ*, 1600 (figure 39), the counter-fold of the calf and knee, the knee as an inversion of the calf, confers on the leg an infinite undulation, while the seam of the cloud in the middle transforms it into a double fan"¹⁹.

It is important to note the subtle contrast between Deleuze's rhizome presented in *A Thousand Plateaus* [1987]²⁰ and the fold. Whereas the rhizome concentrates on branching a single idea into others, the subjectivity behind the fold looks at a single structure from multiple, varied angles to change its shape. The rhizome offers a knowledge-base system in which a single point can be added to from multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points, such as a spreading body of water growing towards available and new spaces or after its botanic root that defines a rhizome by its ability to grow perpendicular to gravity, and the ability of each of its shoots to propagate a new plant. The fold, however, creates knowledge by reforming a single point by looking at it from another perspective.

Exiting interior folds within a painting, art critic John Berger's *Sense of Sight* [1993]²¹ considers the exterior viewer's changing perspective. "What is depicted is unchanging: the same milk flowing from the same jug, the waves on the sea with exactly the same formation unbroken, the smile and the face which have not altered." However, the significance of the image may change "as a result of either historical or personal developments"²². Berger's consideration of changes from the viewer's perspective establishes a relationship to imagery that O'Sullivan's fold model explained through a human's 'expression' of a tick—shifting the reference point is a

¹⁸ O'Sullivan, 104.

¹⁹ Deleuze. *The Fold*, 38.

²⁰ Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Brian Massumi. London and New York: Continuum, 1987.

²¹ Berger, John. *The Sense of Sight*. New York: Vintage International, 1993.

²² Berger, 205.

process of perception, and furthermore, positioning the reference point is an expressive process.

The expression intrinsic to positioning folds narrates the art-making process. Deleuze expresses the ‘Baroque’ not as a period of inventing things, but rather the fruitful production of folds and the unfolding of Classical, Greek, Roman thoughts that celebrates limitless permutations. Defining the fold, he writes, “the Baroque invents the infinite work or process”²³ and retains his concept to an ‘unlimited finity’—a fold in which a finite number of components produce an infinite number of combinations, that O’Sullivan calls “the radical discovery of ‘man’s potential’”²⁴.

A series of examples instituted by artists and theorists that articulate the Baroque, “the discovery of new combinations—new ways of folding the world ‘into’ the self, or more simply, new kinds of subjectivity”²⁵, exhibit the fold’s critical role in expression and the process of art-making. One example is *The Arcades Project* [1927-40]²⁶, in which Walter Benjamin collected a history of freely associated fragments—quotations, reflections, published resources—from thirteen years in the arcades of nineteenth-century Paris that he then meticulously arranged into categories: Fashion, Boredom, Dream City, Photography, Catacombs, Prostitution. Benjamin’s evolved rubrics of comparisons represent a history of changing subjectivity, folds that he expressed as categories. A tribute to the monumental complexity of folds in Benjamin’s work, American philosopher and intellectual historian Susan Buck-Morss’ *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* [1991]²⁷ orients Benjamin’s intellectual axes between Moscow, Paris, Berlin, Naples with his references of physical objects and locations within Paris. An example that celebrates infinite permutations, the inventive process in making folds, is Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s symphonic suite, “Scheherazade, Op. 35” [1888]²⁸ which continually changes directions—the meters are not symmetrical and every time a

²³ Deleuze, 39.

²⁴ O’Sullivan, 104.

²⁵ O’Sullivan, 102.

²⁶ Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999.

²⁷ Buck-Morss, Susan. *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991.

²⁸ “Scheherazade, Op. 35” by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, 1888.

point of arrival nears harmonically, the melody claims a new counterpoint. The musical folds told through the singing violin match the tale of Scheherazade—originating from the old Persian book, *The 1001 Nights*—who told ever-changing, woven stories to enchant the Persian king and keep herself from being beheaded. Another example where changing the reference point is part of the artistic process is sculptor Constantin Brancusi’s practice of shifting works around such that the socle, or base, vacillates the perception of his pieces between sculpture, sculpture as furniture, and furniture as architectural construct. In praise of Anna Chave’s *Constantin Brancusi: Shifting the Bases of Art* [1993]²⁹, art historian Roxana Marcoci, Curator of the Department of Photography at the Museum of Modern Art, analyzes Brancusi’s *groupe mobile*—“conceived as independent works...assembled by the artist only to be photographed, then dismantled, and dispersed to be used as part of other groupings”³⁰. O’Sullivan and Stephen Zepke’s *Deleuze and Contemporary Art* [2010]³¹ punctuates the example of Brancusi’s practice that identifies a reference point to make creative relationships as a process of invention by the artist that furthermore translates to viewers. They write, “Perhaps what is new...is our attitude as participants...capturing art within our already set up temporal frames and systems of reference, we have become attentive to art’s own logic of invention and creation”³².

The Deleuzian fold effectively narrates the art-making process, because it mirrors the way our schizoanalytic mind—one which edits as actively as it collects—navigates a subject. Current scientific research on the human mind shows “cellular evidence that we evolve to never stop evolving”³³. Jonah Lehrer, who worked in the lab of Nobel Prize-winning neuroscientist Eric Kandel, relays this “cellular evidence” as neurogenesis, the process of newborn brain cells generated by the division of neural stem cells. The human brain’s “irrepressible plasticity”³⁴ is akin to the process

²⁹ Chave, Anna. *Constantin Brancusi: Shifting the Bases of Art*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

³⁰ Marcoci, Roxana. “Constantin Brancusi”. *Art Journal*. Vol. 54, No. 1. Spring, 1995.

³¹ Zepke, Stephen and Simon O’Sullivan. *Deleuze and Contemporary Art*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2010.

³² Zepke, 196.

³³ Lehrer, Jonah. *Proust was a Neuroscientist*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007; p 43.

³⁴ Lehrer, 44.

of making multiple Deleuzian folds, correlations that institute new discoveries. Lehrer's *Proust Was a Neuroscientist* [2007]³⁵ parallels specific artists and artwork against neuroscience research, calling neuroscience a "rediscovery" of artists' understanding of how the mind works. What is moreover fascinating is that another recent publication, *Borges and Memory* [2012]³⁶, written by neuroscientist Dr. Rodrigo Quian Quiroga who studies how memory works, also equates neuroscience with the creative process of Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges. Quiroga's fascinating account of Borges details how his writing applies the scientific interlocking of memories across multiple localized brain cortexes and lobes. Quiroga's research shows memory as a process of making abstractions, or forming multiple relationships, to comprehend and compartmentalize the overwhelming amount of information in the present generation. "We do not process images in our brains in the same way a camera does; on the contrary, we extract meaning and leave aside a multitude of details...This process of abstraction starts with perception"³⁷. Borges' writing process embeds multiple folds within the structure of his work that matches the brain's system of linkage to create memory. A proximate chapter, 'Science of Abstraction', relates with further detail, neuroscience research on the brain's urge for complex weaving, illuminated through syllogistic reasoning used in Borges' writing, to model the art-making process of making folds.

The web of Deleuzian folds, as used in Borges' constructions, is also framework for examining the packed relationships in the Cubist movement. The process, or questions, of the Cubist artists concerned assembling a nexus of relationships over formal spatial rules "so that the elements of any one form were interchangeable with another, whether a hill, a woman, a violin, a carafe, a table or a hand...The space between objects is part of the same structure as the objects themselves"³⁸. Critic Berger describes the discontinuity of space was in attempt for continuity of structure, "the interaction between different aspects of the same event, between empty space and filled space, between structure and movement, between the

³⁵ Lehrer, Jonah. *Proust was a Neuroscientist*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007.

³⁶ Quiroga, Rodrigo Quian. *Borges and Memory*. Trans. Juan Pablo Fernandez. Boston: MIT Press, 2012.

³⁷ Quiroga, 192.

³⁸ Berger, 178.

seer and the thing seen”³⁹. Berger’s description of cubist space as a matrix of relationships is congruous to the origami of multiple folds that Deleuze calls a “topology of...different kinds of folds”⁴⁰ in his description of the man on the ship in the fold of the sea⁴¹ and his meditation on the folds of El Greco’s works⁴². Deleuze describes the image in *Cinema 2* [1998]⁴³ much like a cubist, as “the system of the relationships between its elements, that is, a set of relationship of time from which the variable present only flows”⁴⁴. The purpose of the image, he continues “is to make perceptible, to make visible, relationships of time which cannot be seen in the represented object”⁴⁵.

A cubist work presents the matrix of relationships at the same ‘time’—the nature of viewing two-dimensional art is such that it is received without a beginning, middle, end, the interchanging relationships are seen at once. Within the same picture a viewer can see the myriad of relationships between forms and the collapse them to see the entirety of the space. While the approach to the art-making process and questions the cubist artists asked were complex, Cubism’s aim was to simplify—see all angles simultaneously to better understand the form. Scientifically describing this process of simplification as making abstractions, Quiroga translates “what really makes us human [is] reflection, the ability to distance ourselves from our surroundings so we can calmly ponder and try to understand even a tiny point, the universe”⁴⁶.

Chapter four, ‘Deleuze’s Fold and Cubism’ expands on the contribution of theorists who have laid frameworks that contextualize Deleuze’s fold as a model of the way artists of the Cubist movement used multiple perspectives simultaneously to

³⁹ Berger, 178.

⁴⁰ O’Sullivan, 270.

⁴¹ Deleuze, Gilles. *Foucault*. Trans. Séan Hand. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986; p 103.

⁴² Deleuze. *The Fold*, 38.

⁴³ Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

⁴⁴ Deleuze, xii.

⁴⁵ Deleuze, xii.

⁴⁶ Quiroga, forward ix.

represent a subject in greater context. It is valuable to orient the cast in regard to the fold here. The kaleidoscopic folds of Walter Benjamin's *The Arcade's Project* fracture time much like a cubist work. Associated confrontations between forgotten past memories and Paris' arcades "establish as a context both the personal and social history in which the project is embedded"⁴⁷, "a history of the origins" that Buck-Morss interprets "present historical moments which, while remaining largely invisible...determine [the] motivation for Benjamin's interest in the past"⁴⁸. She traces the folds Benjamin makes between personal and historical references as well as between "an external physical experience that paralleled the internal, mental experience"⁴⁹. *The Dialogic Imagination* [1981]⁵⁰, philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin's study of the word in literary language systems supports the analysis. He writes that "form for conceptualizing the world in words, specific world views, [is] characterized by its own objects, meanings and values. As such [words] may be juxtaposed to one another, mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically. As such they encounter one another and co-exist in the consciousness of real people-first and foremost, in the creative consciousness of people who write novels"⁵¹. Bakhtin's qualifications and intentions for the word in poetry further echo both the relationship Berger illuminates "between the seer and the thing seen"⁵² and Cubism's aim to exhibit at once the relationships between forms and entirety of the space. Bakhtin renders the poetic genre as a unique fragmented language, but also one that must reference language canons. In his words on the process:

Poetry also comes upon language as...[a] process of uninterrupted ideological evolution, already fragmented into 'languages!' And poetry also sees its own language surrounded by other languages, surrounded by literary and extraliterary heteroglossia. But poetry, striving for maximal purity, works in its own language as if

⁴⁷ Buck-Morss, 47.

⁴⁸ Buck-Morss, 47.

⁴⁹ Buck-Morss, 38.

⁵⁰ Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Trans. Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

⁵¹ Bakhtin, 291.

⁵² Berger, 178.

that language were unitary, the only language, as if there were no heteroglossia outside it...and does not approach too closely the borders of this language, where it would inevitably be brought into dialogic contact with heteroglossia; poetry chooses not to look beyond the boundaries of its own language. If, during an epoch of language crises, the language of poetry does change, poetry immediately canonizes the new language as one that is unitary and singular, as if no other language existed.⁵³

Presenting all perspectives of a subject at once presents an icon-like condition that encourages folds to be made fluidly, comparisons that reveal the totality of the subject. Art critic and theorist Rosalind Krauss turns to semiotics when critiquing Picasso's cubist collages. In the *The Picasso Papers* [1998]⁵⁴, she writes that a "semiologist would call [Picasso's *pastiche* works] an iconic condition—that of resemblance—to assume the ceaseless play of meaning open to the symbol"⁵⁵. Professor David Rodowick, who has written extensively on Deleuze and the cinema, conveys Deleuze's fold in semiotic terms, as an "understanding [of] the generation and linking of signs"⁵⁶. Philosopher Charles Peirce's Theory of Signs deduces that we create legible images into signs: I define a sign as anything which is so determined by something else, called its Object, and so determines an effect upon a person, which effect I call its interpretant, that the latter is thereby immediately determined by the former"⁵⁷. Oscillating between perspectives, Deleuze himself describes the fold as "keep[ing] the one—either subject or predicate—from being an attribute of the other"⁵⁸.

Deleuze describes the fold as an inclusive process, in that the identity of an event includes its predicate, and the following chapter, 'The Origami Method,' is a visual model contextualizing this aspect of Deleuze's fold theory. Specifically, the diagram illustrates what art theorist O'Sullivan resolves, that "the fold is developed in

⁵³ Bakhtin, 399.

⁵⁴ Krauss, Rosalind. *The Picasso Papers*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998.

⁵⁵ Krauss, 35.

⁵⁶ Rodowick, David Norman. *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*. Raleigh: Duke University Press, 1997; p 7.

⁵⁷ Peirce, C.S. *The Collected Papers*. Volumes 1–6. Eds. Hartshorne, Charles and Weiss, Paul. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931–36; p 478.

⁵⁸ Deleuze. *The Fold*, xix.

relation to another's work"⁵⁹. Literary critic T.S. Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" [1920]⁶⁰ is structured around an artist's folding and evaluation of historic context within his process. The brilliance of our generation is in the mastered skill of asserting folds in clever ways, practiced in a world of unceasing bombardment of information in fragments from advertisement, news, and the internet. The diagram is valuable to illustrate artists' reflexive engagement in seeing today, shifting between perspectives of a Deleuzian fold—one's work against his past experiences, the present, and the future, as well as folding one's work against the history of art, what one sees relevant in current affairs and among colleagues, and its contribution and position to the direction of art.

⁵⁹ O'Sullivan, 102.

⁶⁰ Eliot, T. S. "Tradition and the Individual Talent". *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1920.

2. The Origami Method

Deleuze describes the fold as an inclusive process in that the identity of an event includes its predicate. “Everything has a concept..‘All predication is grounded in the nature of things’; as a logical formulation: ‘Every predicate is in the subject,’ the subject or nature of the things being the notion, the concept of the thing.”⁶¹ In the process of making art, the artist is consistently making folds that redefine the predicate and the subject, changing the reference point of one’s work within personal folds of his past experiences, the present, and the future. At the same time within his process, the artist also considers his work against the history of art, what one sees relevant in current affairs and among colleagues, and its contribution and position to the direction of art—what art theorist O’Sullivan resolves, that “the fold is developed in relation to another’s work”⁶². The contemporary arena’s need for the ‘new’ is unreasonably guided by disassociation or foregoing relation with any predicate. This amnesia devalues the brilliance of our generation: our mastered skill of formulating newly combined associations that better navigate our world—practiced by means of contemporary culture’s access to seas of unceasing fragments of information in advertisement, news, and the internet. I have created ‘The Origami Method’, a diagram of seven steps to illustrate the process of evolving a subject by shaping its points of reference as oscillating relationships of its ever-altering present with its past and future. Building on Deleuze’s theory, the complex associations can be modeled as an origami of folds that collectively form a meaning that is constantly accumulating and re-informing itself. Literary critic T.S. Eliot’s essay “Tradition and the Individual Talent” [1920]⁶³ is referenced in Step #2 of the diagram and structures the method:

What happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it...whoever has approved this idea of order...will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past. ⁶⁴

⁶¹ Deleuze, 47.

⁶² O’Sullivan, 102.

⁶³ Eliot, T. S. “Tradition and the Individual Talent”. *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1920.

⁶⁴ Eliot, 86.

In the essay, Eliot describes a circumstance in which one conflates the ‘best’ with the ‘never before seen’ in evaluating a poem: that if one were to mark the ‘best’ parts of a poem, he might circle what he considers the most ‘innovative’ parts, those which have never before been written. Eliot suggests that when removing such prejudice from the valuation, the evaluator might rather mark the ‘best’ parts of a poem as the most ‘individual’ parts of a work—a mixture of never before written and innovative reframing of the past where an artist asserts his influences. Translating the example to the visual, there are, for instance, strong relationships between Uccello’s *Battle of San Romano*, 1440 (figure 61) and the Cloisters’ (Metropolitan Museum of Art) Netherlandish unicorn tapestries, specifically *Unicorn at Bay*, 1495 (figure 77)—geometric relationships and use of limbs and lances to formulate space, compositional functions behind the shapes of the horses. ‘The Origami Method’ diagram is additionally relevant to chapter five, ‘Applications in the Contemporary Arena,’ presenting contemporary artists engaged in the reflexive way of seeing in Deleuzian folds today. The Deleuzian fold’s applications in the contemporary arena stretch beyond only the artist’s process to reflect what and how our generation sees, such as Artsy.com’s new “Art Genome Project”. The web platform, run by Founder and CEO Carter Cleveland and support of established curator, historian and critic John Elderfield, syncs with the current generation’s necessity to re-configure and re-frame—allowing individual ability to fashion the panoply of art into a personalized schematic based on individual inquiries.

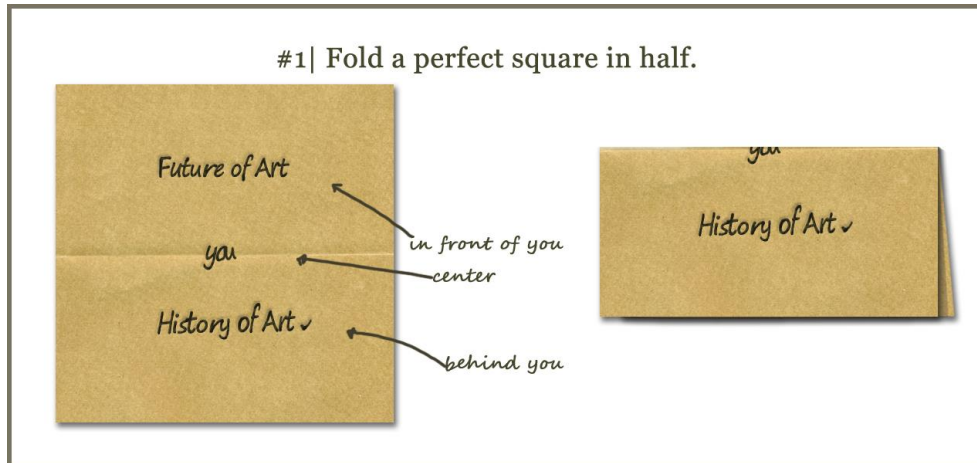
The Origami Method—Aithan Shapira
A Diagram for Art and Making it by Folding and Unfolding.
[Steps #1 - #7]

#1 | Fold a perfect square in half.

History of Art What you have seen | What you know | Influences, Mentors

Future of Art What you will see | What you will learn | What you will influence

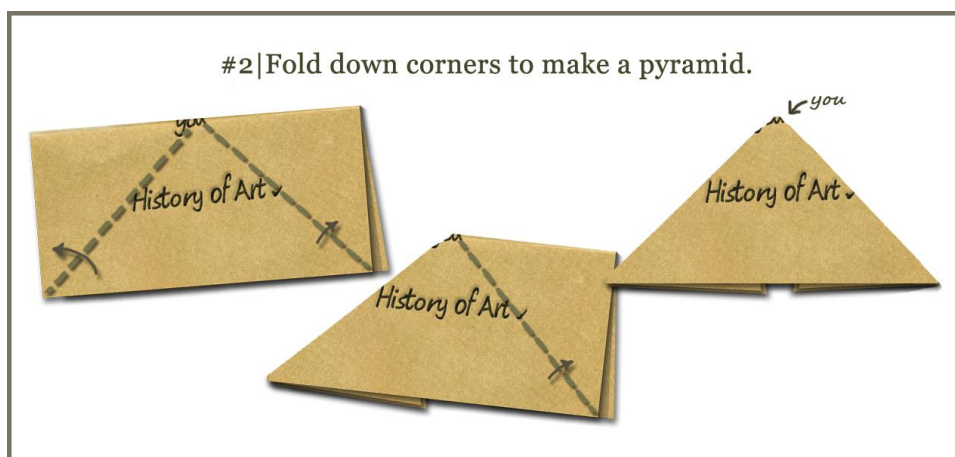
You The edge, the place where the two meet.



2 | Fold down corners to make a pyramid.

You A point at the top of the pyramid. The direction you lean re-forms the history of art.

T.S. Eliot writes in “Tradition and the Individual Talent” [1920]⁶⁵ that “what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it...whoever has approved this idea of order...will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past”⁶⁶.



⁶⁵ Eliot, T. S. “Tradition and the Individual Talent”. *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1920.

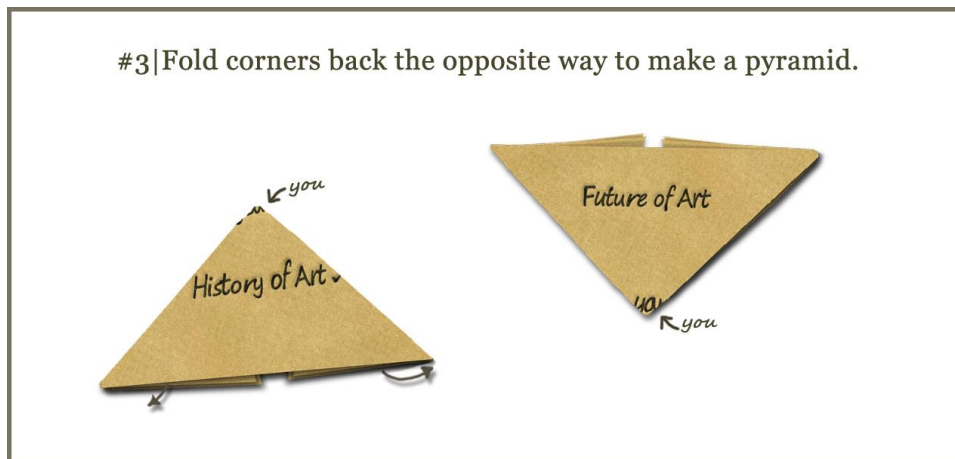
⁶⁶ Eliot, 86.

#3 | Fold corners back the opposite way to make a pyramid.

You A point at the bottom of the pyramid. The direction you lean forms the future of art.

An upside-down pyramid, the responsibility of the future weighs on your shoulders. You determine the future of art.

T.S. Eliot underlines his conclusions in “Tradition and the Individual Talent” regarding one’s influence on the history of art: “[one] who is aware of this will be aware of great difficulties and responsibilities”⁶⁷.

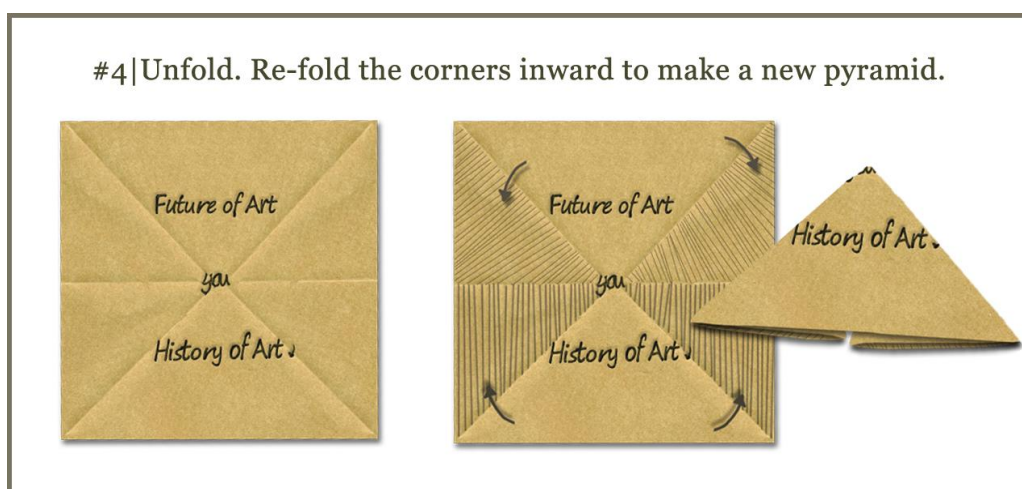


#4 | Unfold. Re-fold the corners inward to make a new pyramid.

You The pivot point.

Unfolded, you’ve creased Future and History pyramids to shape an hour-glass with yourself at the center. Your new responsibility is to make links across the two, and add to T.S. Eliot’s model.

Refolded, the hour-glass pyramids face one another, such that you can see clearly both at once.

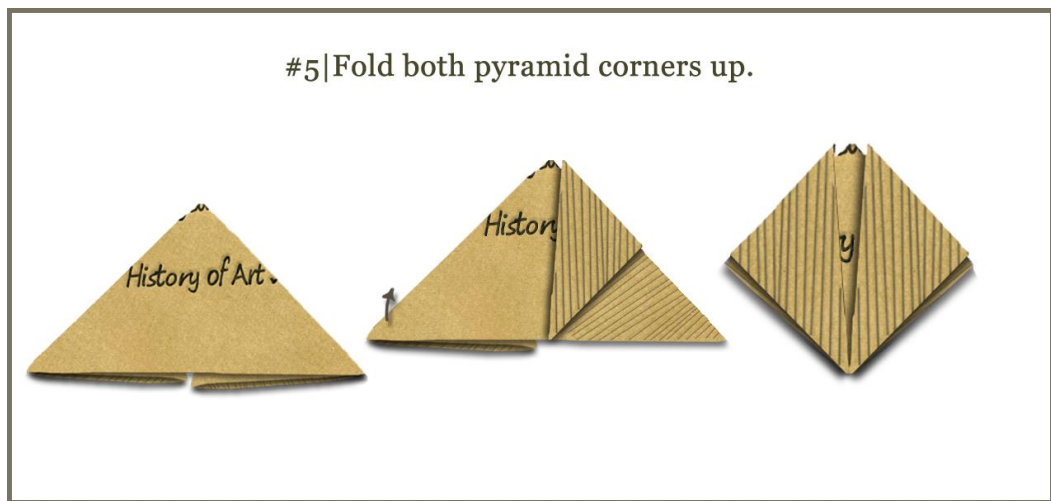


⁶⁷ Eliot, 86.

#5 | Fold both pyramid corners up.

Find the overlaps revealed as you fold them to the surface of both sides.

Notice the mirrored pyramids, a fold to one reveals something about the other.

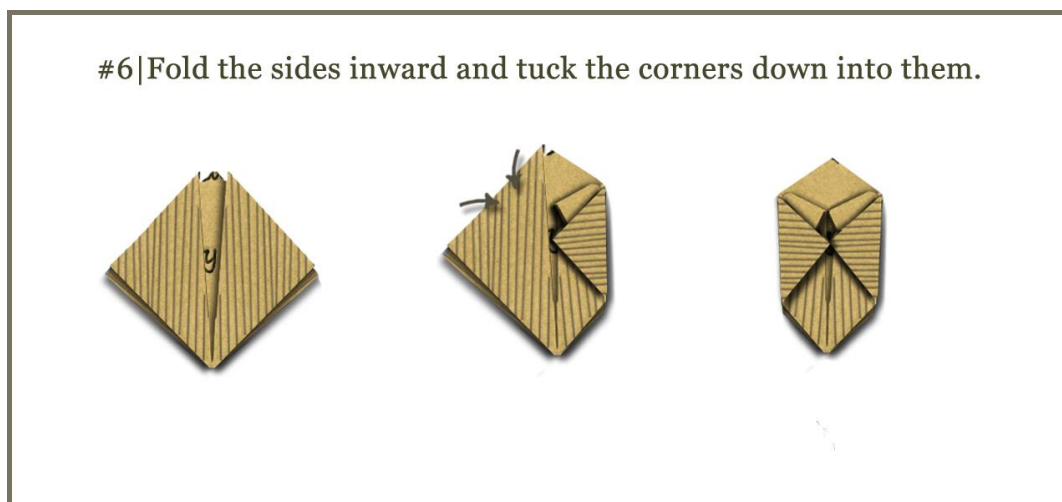


#6 | Fold the sides inward and tuck the corners down into them.

Make more complex folds, facing surfaces against one another.

Deleuze describes ‘unlimited finity’, a fold in which a ‘finite number of components produce an infinite number of combinations’ in his meditation on the fold.⁶⁸ Comparisons, links, and new patterns are made as surfaces meet, and the crease at which you fold becomes a reference point. Match the folds on all sides.

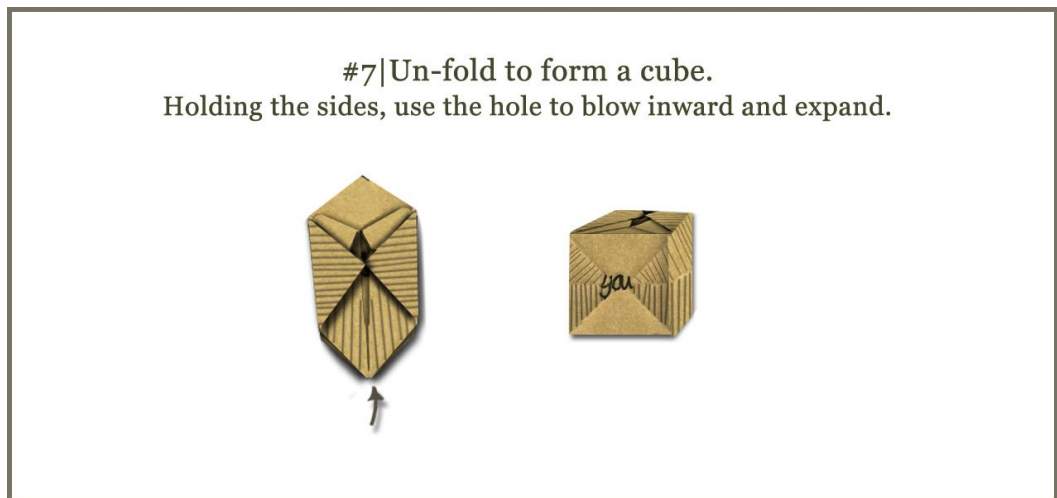
Notice the complex folding and tucking—threading across the web—has increased the strength of your form and made it smaller.



⁶⁸ Deleuze, Gilles. *Foucault*. Trans. Séan Hand. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986; appendix xii.

#7| Un-fold to form a cube. Holding the sides, use the hole to blow inward and expand.

You. A plane expanded from a point, one side of a cube formed and strengthened by folds.



Aithan Shapira, 2012

3. Science of Abstraction

The contemporary feast of matrices—the barrage of information occurring at dizzying speed that is barely manageable to digest—has implored leading neuroscience research to study the way in which we process information. Neuroscience of the past five years has emphasized research that attempts to unpack the process in which our brain converts information to comprehension and memory. Dr. Rodrigo Quian Quiroga’s *Borges and Memory* [2012]⁶⁹ and Jonah Lehrer’s *Proust Was a Neuroscientist* [2007]⁷⁰ demonstrate that processes of storing memory mirror the creative process of navigating a subject—collecting as actively as editing—the process of the Deleuzian fold.

Quiroga’s studies on how memory works reveal the contemporary brain is fueled by a process of making abstractions, or forming multiple relationships, to comprehend and compartmentalize the overwhelming amount of information in the present generation. Rather than remembering everything at once, we abstract, or collapse details into generalized concepts. “We do not process images in our brains in the same way a camera does; on the contrary, we extract meaning and leave aside a multitude of details...This process of abstraction starts with perception”⁷¹.

Perception and memory are inextricably linked. Quiroga states, “We cannot recognize an object if we do not remember it from before”⁷². The brain forms memories that can be cross-referenced when we see the same thing in a new setting. Unique details are stored to recognize a person, a tree, or a cup of tea, but the brain certainly does not make a record of everything. Quiroga explains, “we extract particular features that help us recognize these people and objects in very different circumstances...recognizing someone is only the beginning, the trigger that sets into motion a cascade of processes that involve memories and emotions”⁷³. Individual subjectivity behind which features we choose to record informs perception much like positioning the reference point in a Deleuzian fold. Furthermore, Quiroga relays that,

⁶⁹ Quiroga, Rodrigo Quian. *Borges and Memory*. Trans. Juan Pablo Fernandez. Boston: MIT Press, 2012.

⁷⁰ Lehrer, Jonah. *Proust was a Neuroscientist*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007.

⁷¹ Quiroga, 192.

⁷² Quiroga, 193.

⁷³ Quiroga, 193.

“starting with perception, the process of thinking requires making abstractions”⁷⁴; The process is much like making a fold, in that generalizations are stored in a way that can be cross-referenced to recognize the same people and objects in new settings. Both facets point to an expressive process, one of subjectivity, that translates directly in the process of making art.

A useful model Quiroga employs to describe the way our brain abstracts information in order to remember refers to two chessboard configurations beside one another: a left panel shows a configuration of chess pieces from an actual game, while a right panel depicts a random placement of the pieces on the board. A person who does not know how to play chess sees little difference between the two. However, a chess player will find it much easier to remember the left panel’s distribution of pieces from the real game—where the configuration is logical after a few moves—and the right panel will prove much harder to memorize, since the pieces are distributed randomly. Quiroga takes the analogy for our brain’s use of abstraction further: a chess player with high-level expertise will identify the logical configuration of the board in the left panel as a distinguished chess position—the Caro-Kann Defense—and concludes, “This result shows that we tend to remember the meaning of things, their general and abstract structure”⁷⁵. Unlike a beginner who is forced to compute the movements of every single bishop knight, or rook, when a chess master looks at the board’s general distribution he extracts meaning—a Sicilian Defense or a Queen’s Gambit—and plans a strategy as the game unfolds. The theory echoes Plato’s famous allegory of the cave, where Glaucon returns to the cave’s depths after seeing objects in light, and with a fire at his back, the shadows’ shapes have altered meanings.⁷⁶

Borges and Memory correlates the creative process with scientific understanding of the working of the brain. Glorifying Argentinian author Jorge Luis Borges, whose blindness stimulated a keen, practiced sense of memory that was infused across the perception of his characters and his descriptions in his writing, Quiroga suggests examples of Borges’ writing as discoveries about human memory fifty years prior to results of his scientific findings in 2010. A particular comparison artfully summarizes

⁷⁴ Quiroga, 193.

⁷⁵ Quiroga, 184.

⁷⁶ Plato. *Republic*. Trans. G.M.A. Grube. Indiana: Hackett Publishing Co., 1992. Originally written c.380 B.C.

the brain's capacity to abstract, and also introduces another form of the process' expressive subjectivity: intuition. In "Argumentum Ornithologicum," Borges writes:

I close my eyes and see a flock of birds. The vision lasts a second, or perhaps less; I am not sure how many birds I saw, was the number of birds definite or indefinite?...In this case I saw fewer than ten birds (let us say) and more than one, but did not see none, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, or two birds. I saw a number between ten and one, which was not nine, eight, seven, six, five, etc. ⁷⁷

Borges's display of birds shows the abstraction of information much like our brains would process the experience of a glance at the sky. Quiroga explains the phenomena without the scientific details for a moment, "we do not even count them; we see them as a flock...We do not know exactly how many birds there are or remember the position of each of them because we do not care; we do not want to process, think about, or store such information"⁷⁸. "Our capacity to intuit, to have impulses and gut feelings"⁷⁹ is what makes us human and comes into play if the person who experienced looking at the sky is asked to recall the number of birds. Quiroga explains, "we acquire this intuition based on our unique capacity for abstraction and generalization after seeing sets of a similar size countless times"⁸⁰. The gut feeling, developed over "years of training, of making abstractions"⁸¹—the brain's practice of generating meaning and concepts—is what allows a chess master to challenge a computer that reformulates all the possibilities with each move. Yet this celebrated "defect" is "what makes us human, imperfect, unpredictable and fascinating"⁸², and it is in this way that the brain's process illustrated by science imitates the process of making art. Both our mind's propensity to abstract—to make folds and shift perspective—and the way our mind recalls memory to intuit are expressive processes, matters of choice.

⁷⁷ Borges, Jorge Luis. *Collected Fictions*. Trans. Andrew Hurley. New York: Penguin Books, 1998; p 299.

⁷⁸ Quiroga, 192.

⁷⁹ Quiroga, 188.

⁸⁰ Quiroga, 188.

⁸¹ Quiroga, 187.

⁸² Quiroga, 185.

Quiroga's research reveals that memories are interlocked across multiple, localized brain cortexes and lobes. He finds the brain's system of linkage to store memory matching the way Borges' writing process embeds multiple folds within the structure of his work. The opening paragraphs of two Borges books illustrate his use of enumeration across the senses to describe "the essential traits of a character, thus bringing the reader immediately to the thick of a plot"⁸³. Borges begins "Funes, His Memory":

I recall him (though I have no right to speak that sacred verb—only one man on earth did, and that man is dead) holding a dark passionflower in his hand, seeing it as it had never been seen, even had it been stared at from the first light of dawn till the last light of evening for an entire lifetime. I recall (I think) the slender, leatherbraider's fingers. I recall near those hands a mate cup, with the coat of arms of the Banda Oriental. I recall the window of his house, a yellow straw blind with some vague painted lake scene. I clearly recall his voice—the slow, resentful, nasal voice of the toughs of those days, without the Italian sibilants one hears today.⁸⁴

And Borges' "The Maker" starts:

He had never lingered among the pleasures of memory. Impressions, momentary and vivid, would wash over him: a potter's vermilion glaze; the sky-vault filled with stars that were also gods; the moon, from which a lion had fallen; the smoothness of marble under his sensitive, slow fingertips; the taste of wild boar meat, which he liked to tear at with brusque, white bites; a Phoenician word; the black shadow cast by a spear on the yellow sand; the nearness of the sea or women; heavy wine, its harsh edge tempered by honey—these things could flood the entire circuit of his soul.⁸⁵

Perhaps Borges' tuned memory was elevated due to his blindness, but his wondrous gift portrays the artist's process of retrieving what the human mind has prodigiously stored in its folds. In a few lines, the collection of memories, like a fold, converges two entirely different characters: Funes, the peasant from Fray Bentos, Uruguay, and Homer the poet from ancient Greece. Quiroga writes, "We are our memories...instinct, imagination, and feelings"⁸⁶, explaining scientifically that visual

⁸³ Quiroga, 77.

⁸⁴ Borges, 131.

⁸⁵ Borges, 292.

⁸⁶ Quiroga, 79.

and auditory memories are stored in the temporal lobe, memories related to touch are processed in the sensory cortex, and memories of smells reside in the olfactory cortex. He concludes, “elaborate memories—think of a flower, with its smell, texture, shape, and color—would be distributed over different brain areas...Not all areas work in the same way when it comes to storing memories; rather, each one captures a different piece of the whole, be it Fune’s taciturn and aloof face, his sharp leatherbraider’s hands, or his voice, resentful, slow, and nasal, like they used to have along the riverbank”⁸⁷. Borges masterfully weaves them in folds that triggering a flow of consciousness.

Lehrer’s *Proust Was a Neuroscientist* discusses that the human brain’s elastic propensity encourages permutations that institute new discoveries. Considering the brain’s commitment to abstraction when forming and accessing relationships, he writes, “our genome is defined not by the certainty of its meaning, but by its linguistic instability, its ability to encourage a multiplicity of interpretations”⁸⁸. Neurogenesis, the process of newborn brain cells generated by division of neural stem cells, is “cellular evidence that we evolve to never stop evolving”⁸⁹. The idea that brain cells divide was only established as recently as Elizabeth Gould’s research in 1989. Lehrer, like Quiroga, accredits examples from Marcel Proust, George Eliot, Paul Cézanne, and Igor Stravinsky as scholars of the mind’s disposition to inspire unique conclusions that neuroscience is only now “rediscovering”. Esteeming George Eliot’s writing, he explains “as she wrote in *Middlemarch* [1872]⁹⁰, the ‘mind [is] as active as phosphorus.’ Since we each start every day with a slightly new brain, neurogenesis ensures that we are never done with our changes. In the constant turmoil of our cells—in the irrepressible plasticity of our brains—we find our freedom”⁹¹. Based on their function, to collect information and form synapses, the generation of new brain cells is the scientific explanation for the brain’s inherent craving for something new and drive to reshape complex threads of folds. Eliot herself described her writing process as “simply a set of experiments in life” in a

⁸⁷ Quiroga, 99.

⁸⁸ Lehrer, 43.

⁸⁹ Lehrer, 43.

⁹⁰ Eliot, George. *Middlemarch*. New York: Bantam, 1992.

⁹¹ Lehrer, 43.

letter to Dr. Payne in 1876⁹², “an endeavor to see what our thought and emotion may be capable of”⁹³.

Researching woven relationships is increasingly relevant to contemporary culture as we gasp through the overwhelming amount of input that has permeated Western culture. Quiroga claims we are “served a hodgepodge of ideas, images, bits of news, coming at us relentlessly, incoherently, and we end up in a virtual world that alienate us ever more and takes us further away from what really makes us human: reflection, the ability to distance ourselves from our surroundings so we can calmly ponder and try to understand even a tiny point, the universe”⁹⁴. The global need to order, or personalize, the increasing amount of data we are exposed to is telling of the trends in contemporary internet applications and direction.

With Web 2.0 encouraging a reality of engaged users in interacting, collaborating, and employing the internet as a universal data platform, the ability to sift, sort, and manipulate that influx of data quickly for personalized needs has driven a storing- and querying-minded culture. For example, Artsy.com’s “Art Genome Project,” the web platform run by Founder and CEO Carter Cleveland with much support from critic, historian, and Chief Curator Emeritus of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, New York John Elderfield, allows individual ability to fashion the panoply of art into personalized schematics based on individual inquiries. Much like what Pandora.com has done with music, artwork can be filtered by sets of ‘genes’. With other websites such as ARTstor.org and artnet.com that have an immense database of images, a user needs to know what to search for, a keyword such as an artist’s name or title of a piece. The ‘gene’ process of searching presents associated pieces by a similar color, size, era, location, subject matter, and price range. Once a user’s preferences and interests are recognized, the search results and information from the site are set to match. Currently, the ‘genes’ are being designated and input by teams of people, and perhaps computer-generated genes will surface next. Regardless, the concept is vibrant—forming complex Deleuzian folds that sync with the current generation’s necessity to re-configure and re-frame.

⁹² Eliot, George. *The George Eliot Letters*. 9 vols. Ed. G. S. Haight. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954-78; VI, 216.

⁹³ Paris, Bernard J. *Experiments in Life: George Eliot's Quest for Values*. Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1965; preface vii.

⁹⁴ Quiroga, forward ix.

Today's generation is well-versed in processing volumes of folds simultaneously—in this way retaining cubist principles. Neuroscience's motivated quest for how the human brain makes abstractions to embed memory and comprehend has found direct reflections in the art-making process. The artist's search for questions is practiced in making subjective permutations, a process with a propensity for juxtaposing relationships to arrive at new conclusions. To these ends, the (art)work of a generation reflects what and how that generation sees. Chapter 5, 'Applications in the Contemporary Arena' discusses contemporary artists engaged in the reflexive way of seeing in Deleuzian folds today.

4. Deleuze's Fold and Cubism

“Cubism was the art which reflected the possibility of this...world”⁹⁵ writes critic John Berger. “Thus, in a certain sense it was the most modern art—as it was also the most philosophically complex—which has yet existed...The vision of the Cubist moment still coincides with what is technologically possible”⁹⁶. The configuration of folds structures the architecture for examining the “possibilities”—the packing of relationships—in cubist space. The density of interwoven relationships should not be confused with Cubism’s aim to simplify; The discontinuity of space was an attempt for continuity of structure—in other words, seeing all angles simultaneously in order to better understand the form. Without adhering to formal rules of perspective, it is possible in Deleuze’s terms, “to make perceptible, to make visible, relationships...which cannot be seen in the represented object”⁹⁷.

Berger describes that in a Cubist picture “the complexity of the forms and the ‘discontinuity’ of the space remind [the spectator] that his view from that place is bound to be only partial”⁹⁸, suggesting that totality has not yet been achieved by artist or viewer. Walter Benjamin unpacks this concept in his *Moscow Diary* [Dec. 6, 1926—Feb. 1, 1927]⁹⁹, eloquently showing that assembly of partial views is essential to discovery, full comprehension, and complete recognition:

One only knows a spot once one has experienced it in as many dimensions as possible. You have to have approached a place from all four cardinal points if you want to take it in, and what’s more, you also have to have left it from all these points. Otherwise it will quite unexpectedly cross your path three or four times before you are prepared to discover it¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ Berger, John. *The Sense of Sight*. New York: Vintage International, 1993; p 185.

⁹⁶ Berger, 185.

⁹⁷ Deleuze, Gilles. *The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque*. Trans. Tom Conley. London: Athlone Press, 1993; xii.

⁹⁸ Berger, 180.

⁹⁹ Benjamin, Walter. *Moscow Diary*. Ed. Gary Smith. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987.

¹⁰⁰ Benjamin, 25.

Meticulously, over the next thirteen years, Benjamin constructed a monumental anthology of fragments—quotes, reflections and published sources—passing through the theater of Paris’ arcades in *The Arcades Project* [1927-40]¹⁰¹. His compilation of relationships between fragments from cluttered shops in the arcade interiors represented and critiqued the nineteenth-century bourgeois experience from all its angles. His kaleidoscope commodified everything embedded in the spaces of things and between them in the ways the Cubist artists had approached space—folding elements of the arcade shops against the exterior streets and historical time looking out the shops’ glass roofs. Intellectual historian Susan Buck-Morss who recompiled Benjamin’s work writes, “In fragmentary images the essences appear concretely, but it is the philosophical construction that, even if invisible, gives support and coherence to the whole”¹⁰². His artistic process had modes of expression both in subjectivity behind selecting objects and then in his reframing of the broken pieces into categories—Fashion, Boredom, Dream City, Photography, Catacombs, Advertising, Prostitution, Baudelaire, Theory of Progress—much the way Quiroga describes the way the human brain weaves the storing of memories. Buck-Morss praises the assemblage as a constellation that mirrors our consciousness. In her words, the “constellation of historical origins...has the power to explode history’s “continuum.” In the era of industrial culture, consciousness exists in a mythic, dream state, against which historical knowledge is the only antidote”¹⁰³. The relationships formed in Benjamin’s process of categorizing his collective history is what establishes a context for “both the personal and social history in which the project is embedded”¹⁰⁴. Benjamin’s subjectivity in selecting points of correlation within the montage is both expressive and progressive, in Buck-Morss’ words because it “interrupts the context into which it is inserted”¹⁰⁵. An example written at the same time in a humorous way is Borges’ “The Analytical Language of John

¹⁰¹ Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999.

¹⁰² Buck-Morss, Susan. *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991; p 77.

¹⁰³ Buck-Morss, preface x.

¹⁰⁴ Buck-Morss, 47.

¹⁰⁵ Buck-Morss, 77.

Wilkins” [1937-1952],¹⁰⁶ in which a Chinese Encyclopedia of Impossibilities orders animals by: those that belong to the Emperor; embalmed ones; those that are trained; suckling pigs; mermaids; fabulous ones; stray dogs; those included in the present classification; those that tremble as if they were mad; innumerable ones; those drawn with a very fine camelhair brush; others; those that have just broken a flower vase; those that from a long way off look like flies. Buck-Morss latches onto Benjamin’s seemingly infinite permutations and inventive process of associations in *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* [1991]¹⁰⁷, and orients Benjamin’s plotting of the arcades and his references of physical objects and locations within Paris, aligning them to his intellectual axes based in Moscow, Paris, Berlin, and Naples. She concludes, “The way the past confronted one in these neglected arcades as freely associated, long-forgotten images, was an external physical experience that paralleled the internal, mental experience”¹⁰⁸.

Benjamin’s construction of fractured elements is a valuable introduction to discussing Cubism. Theorist Rosalind Krauss critiques Picasso’s cubist collages as a similar hall of mirrors. In *The Picasso Papers* [1998]¹⁰⁹ she makes reference to the fold in her evaluation: “[Picasso] could see himself entering into the logic of the “fold,” the logic of the facet, the logic of the binary in which as the sign circulates it constantly reattaches itself to meaning: cygne/signe, white/black”¹¹⁰. Looking at his collages *Violin*, 1912 (figure 73) and *Bottle on a Table*, 1912 (figure 74) she elaborates, “literally speaking, the back side of the material from which the other was cut, the circulation of the sign produces this...condition...semiologically, at the level of the sign: front, solid, shape; behind, transparent, surround”¹¹¹. Krauss uses semiotic terms to articulate the “iconic condition—that of resemblance” in Picasso’s cubist *pastiche* works since by definition a sign offers linkage, “the ceaseless play of meaning

¹⁰⁶ Borges, Jorge Luis. *Other Inquisitions*. Trans. Ruth L.C. Simms. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1937-1952.

¹⁰⁷ Buck-Morss, Susan. *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991.

¹⁰⁸ Buck-Morss, 38.

¹⁰⁹ Krauss, Rosalind. *The Picasso Papers*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998.

¹¹⁰ Krauss, 30.

¹¹¹ Krauss, 28.

open to the symbol”¹¹². Cubism’s “iconic condition” matches Deleuze’s model for continuous play across a fold that “keep[s] the one—either subject or predicate—from being an attribute of the other”¹¹³. In the cubist space Picasso constructs, each piece of paper submits itself to individual and collective meaning within the frontal rectangle of the canvas. Krauss’ transcription of the viewer’s experience contextualizing the elements shows “this is how the little fragment, in itself indeterminable, for it might be almost anything—bubbles of soda, stripes of shadow, rays of sun—hardens and solidifies, its lines of writing now posturing as the graining of wood...Together they produce a meaning: the density, the opacity of a physical object, here, a violin”¹¹⁴. Similarly, the artist’s process of making is much like thinking, in which the modern subject is nomadic—always in the process of becoming—where fragments retain their individual value “just enough to produce the motion of conversation, the play of relations, the sociability of the group”¹¹⁵.

A fundamental value in constructing a web of relationships is what the comparisons relay back about the composition of the individual pieces. Physics similarly employs String Theory—a search that began in the 1960s by physicists Geoffrey Chew and Steven Frautschi—to identify the one basic, ‘fundamental’ particle—a one-dimensional string—that is the building block out of which the world is made. The calculated unit can then be reinterpreted in different manifestations or scaled in perspective to unify relationships between what is seen through a microscope and in outer space. Krauss described the newsprint fragments in Picasso’s collages retain their individual value as paper and type, “representing talk itself and the shifty character of words”¹¹⁶, particularly in the text of the news of the time. However, not enduringly so; as the print pieces butt against each other, the “sign re-forms and the meaning shifts. From the buzz of tiny letters, black flecks on white, which in imitating the look of scumbled paint conjure the effect of air...[or at] the crisply cut edge of an adjoining (or even of the same) sheet...hardens into the

¹¹² Krauss, 35.

¹¹³ Deleuze, xix.

¹¹⁴ Krauss, 28.

¹¹⁵ Krauss, 26.

¹¹⁶ Krauss, 27.

solid of a porcelain dish”¹¹⁷. Once meaning is derived from its constituents, unfolding from the whole imposes meaning back onto its elements.

The Cubist artists, led by George Braque and Picasso, were influenced greatly by Cézanne. His late paintings became more eloquently filled with blank space, which was similar to the way he shaped light in fragments in his watercolors—their “incompleteness” relied on the relationships between the fragments. Researcher Lehrer relates the metaphor to the process of sight, saying “Cézanne was trying to figure out what the brain would finish for him...Cézanne wanted to paint only the essential elements, the necessary skeleton of form”¹¹⁸—so he had to be precise. The cubists took the folded relationships to incongruous conclusions; By removing formal spatial rules, the Cubist space—and the artists’ process itself—could be structured by assembling rubrics of relationships between the objects. Specifically, Braque’s concern was to define an object by its relation to another. His cubist work removes the formal spatial convention of perspective, which is structured and established to relate objects as they get farther away from the spectator. By eliminating the convention of perspective as it converses with the spectator, his work is structured in relational discourse between the objects themselves such that each object in Braque’s work is formed by its relation to others and its surroundings. This approach reduced forms to simpler shapes which articulated planes and edges, “so that the elements of any one form were interchangeable with another, whether a hill, a woman, a violin, a carafe, a table or a hand...The space between objects [was] part of the same structure as the objects themselves”¹¹⁹. The discontinuity of space was in attempt for continuity of structure, as Berger further writes, “the interaction between different aspects of the same event, between empty space and filled space, between structure and movement, between the seer and the thing seen”¹²⁰.

What is compelling about the treatment of elements in Cubist works, is that they can be both intellectual and sentimental. For example, Berger notes regarding Braque’s *La Portugais*, 1911 (figure 41) that, “even in some of the most ‘hermetic’

¹¹⁷ Boxer, Sarah. “The Con Artist” *New York Times*. Web. 8 March, 1998.

¹¹⁸ Lehrer, Jonah. *Proust was a Neuroscientist*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007; p 114.

¹¹⁹ Berger, 178.

¹²⁰ Berger, 178.

paintings...you can find naturalistic allusions to details of the subject's appearance, such as the buttons on the musician's jacket, buried intact within the construction"¹²¹. Establishing conventions of cubist space as having both intellectual and sentimental elements, it would not be a stretch to consider El Greco the first cubist. His *Baptism of Christ*, 1600 (figure 39) merges perspectives of looking up to heaven and out to earth in the same two-dimensional work, like the Greek *reon aei* (translation: always flowing), Heraclitus' description of the soul¹²². Furthermore, regarding the sentimental, El Greco skews both perspectives such that the viewer can still see the tops of Christ and the Saints' feet. Over three centuries later, David Hockney's photo-collage *My Mother, Bolton Abbey, Yorkshire*, 1982 (figure 38) takes on the same format and the same questions. Hockney's cubist collage positions a collection of photographs taken from different angles beside one another to complete the image. Each photo, with its unique perspective, supports a network of relationships with others around it as well as informs the whole to understand the totality of the space in greater context.

Standing out among Hockney's 1980s photo-collages is *Mother I, Yorkshire Moors*, 1985 (figure 37), for how the cubist presentation of multiple angles simultaneously reflects sentimental relationships. Hockney evokes the complex weaving of folds that emerge in the instance of looking at one's mother. The orchestration of photos simultaneously reference and complete one another, presenting the folding and unfolding process—collective meanings and memories from numerous angles, at different times of day, in different places over a lifetime—that arrives at once.

Hockney's photo-collages addressed time displaying the many angles of their subject together the way Cubist artists had confronted the historic two-dimensional artwork's problem with time. The painted portrait, unlike a photograph, portrays a figure suspended over time. While Picasso also dismantled space in order to show the figure from multiple sides—to portray the figure in greater totality—in unison on the same surface, the fractured perspectives also allowed Picasso to display simultaneously the supersession of succeeding moments during his observation of

¹²¹ Quiroga, Rodrigo Quian. *Borges and Memory*. Trans. Juan Pablo Fernandez. Boston: MIT Press, 2012; p 183.

¹²² Heraclitus. "Time and Interpretation in Heraclitus" Post Structuralist Classics, Ed. A. Benjamin. London: Routledge, 1988.

the figure as he moved around it. In *Du "Cubisme"* [1912]¹²³, critics and artists Metzinger and Gleizes credit the Cubist sense of time to multiple perspectives after philosopher Henri Bergson's notion of 'duration', to which life is subjectively experienced as a continuum. The viewer of a cubist work such as *Portrait of Wilhelm Uhde*, 1910 (figure 42) can observe, over the mosaic of perspectives, Picasso's process of nurturing relationships over the duration of his experience observing the figure.

Henri Matisse introduced his *Red Room*, 1908 (figure 33) during the Cubists' conversation between 1907 and 1914. The hierarchy of spatial perspectives in the piece suggests a different reconstruction of broken spatial rules that make sense as a whole. Evaluating the work, if one were to enter a room and look down at a table to his left and see a plate, following formal rules in perspective he would see the plate frontally, as nearly a full circle. From the same position, the clock almost directly across the room would also appear nearly frontal, a painting leaning against the side wall would get smaller following the top edge to its vanishing point away from you, and a chair beside you would also get smaller toward its farther edges though less so because it was closer. When contemplating the painting up close, the broken perspectives conflict with one another, however, standing a few steps away in front of the *Red Room* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (figure 34)—from where Matisse most likely stood when painting it—the perspectives align with the perception of standing at the entrance of a room and looking down, out, and around at the separate objects. Additionally, the unified red color field with thin delineations between forms allows all the relationships between them to emerge and vacillate at the surface.

The restrained range of colors allowed both the Cubists and Matisse to focus more fully on the construction, or deconstruction, of pictorial form, yet Matisse disassembled and reassembled the whole even more radically in response to Cubism with his *Nude with a White Scarf*, 1909 (figures 35, 36). The matrix of folds he called "methods of modern construction" was revolutionary experimentation that celebrated his brilliance—as though looking at the figure, he juxtaposed twenty questions with twenty answers then ordered and categorized them in symphony. Looking at the representational whole, an observer can distinctly alternate between the separate formal aspects of the painting such as light, line, and form as well as

¹²³ Gleizes, A. and J. Metzinger. *Du "Cubisme"*. Paris: Edition Figuière, 1912.

Matisse's observations of the figure's flesh, structure, and composition and follow Matisse's process of reassembling them as they relate to one another.

Abstraction through relationships that reframe one another continued to lead artists' questions onto promising cubist developments that abruptly ended with World War I. The Analytic Cubism movement that lasted only seven years seemed more like a moment and the few years' attempts of Synthetic Cubism could also not survive the War. If those same questions about relationships that reframe one another were addressed in terms of different perspectives on a given point folded against each other, the content remains quite vibrant in the art history that followed and particularly relevant in the culture of easily accessible and changeable information of today. Such roots are alive in Constantin Brancusi's *groupe mobile* (figure 56) which were "conceived as independent works...assembled by the artist only to be photographed, then dismantled, and dispersed to be used as part of other groupings"¹²⁴. Historian Roxana Marcoci considered the "aphoristic and fragmented character" of Brancusi's studio, filled with mobile arrangements and groupings of sculptures as "a site of constant disassemblage and reassemblage"¹²⁵. Her *Art Journal*¹²⁶ article in 1995 reviewed Brancusi's custom of "working in the interstices of aesthetic categories, and his sustained interest in hybridization—such as in his practice of shifting works around"¹²⁷ as a pregnant process of reframing the form. In her words, the vacillating socle or base would also alternate being "read as sculpture, sculpture as furniture, and furniture as architectural construct"¹²⁸.

Anna Chave's *Constantin Brancusi: Shifting the Bases of Art* [1993]¹²⁹ uses an analysis of Brancusi's work to describe reflective association in which a work of art is compared to "the self". Drawing on feminist theory, she describes the scramble of sexual signifiers in *Princess X*, 1916 (figure 75), *Leda*, 1920 (figure 76), and *Torso of a*

¹²⁴ Marcoci, Roxana. "Constantin Brancusi". *Art Journal*. Vol. 54, No. 1. Spring, 1995.

¹²⁵ Marcoci. *Art Journal*. Spring, 1995.

¹²⁶ Marcoci, Roxana. "Constantin Brancusi". *Art Journal*. Vol. 54, No. 1. Spring, 1995.

¹²⁷ Marcoci. *Art Journal*. Spring, 1995.

¹²⁸ Marcoci. *Art Journal*. Spring, 1995.

¹²⁹ Chave, Anna. *Constantin Brancusi: Shifting the Bases of Art*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

Young Man, 1920 (figure 77) as his confused sexual identity in the “modernist crisis of masculinity”¹³⁰—much the way Plato described beauty and form reflexively in *Cratylus*¹³¹ as *aei estinoion estin* (translation: always the same as itself). Chaves explains how seeing one’s own image in the polished bronze surface of Brancusi’s *Young Bird*, 1928 (figure 78) invites narcissistic reflection:

As long as I stand near the bird, my image is inextricable from its image, and when I photograph the sculpture, I photograph myself photographing it. Though I intend to contemplate something other than myself, the sculpture consistently returns me to myself. Trapped in the narcissist’s predicament, I cannot escape my gaze. I am implicated throughout in my observation of this sculpture; whatever I say about it will somehow reflect myself.¹³²

Philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin’s *The Dialogic Imagination* [1981]¹³³ similarly qualifies the intentions for words as variants of a “double-voiced discourse”, a discourse reflective of the reader. He writes that words within literary language systems conceptualize meaning and value when they “juxtapose one another, mutually supplement one another, contradict one another,” but also when they “interrelated dialogically...and co-exist in the consciousness of real people first and foremost, in the creative consciousness of people who write novels”¹³⁴. Bakhtin renders the poetic genre as a unique fragmented language that is, however, surrounded by a cannon of other languages—literary and extraliterary heteroglossia¹³⁵—that it references. His discourse expresses the activity in comprehending a work of art, literature in his particular evaluation, folded against the changing nature of the reader—the reader gives context to words as the words relay context to the reader. A series of words in poetry can consist of professional and social dialects, world views, and individual artistic works juxtaposed on a common

¹³⁰ Chave, 16.

¹³¹ Plato. *Cratylus*. Trans. C.D.C. Reeve. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1989.

¹³² Chave, 60.

¹³³ Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Trans. Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

¹³⁴ Bakhtin, 291.

¹³⁵ Bakhtin, 399.

plane, and their intentionality must be comprehended within context of their generation's socio-ideological profiles. In Bakhtin's words, "A stylistic analysis of the novel cannot be productive outside a profound understanding of heteroglossia, an understanding of the dialogue of languages as it exists in a given era."¹³⁶

"Cubism reminds us," writes Berger, "that if we are to be representative of our century—and not merely its passive creatures—the aim of achieving that end must constantly inform our consciousness and decisions"¹³⁷. As triumphed in the Cubist movement, art-making in contemporary culture reflects the increasing need to order, or personalize, the increasing amount of data we are exposed to. With greater, and immediate, access to the panoply of art through databases such as ARTstor.org, artnet.com, Artsy.com, and hi-resolution imagery on individual gallery and museum websites, artists have a greater pool from which to draw correlations and propel forward with these complex folds to new conclusions. The following chapter discusses applications in contemporary artists' practices that celebrate the cascading process of generating folds and making relationships, reflective of the current generation's necessity to re-configure and re-frame. Global culture's need to analyze and link, or make abstractions today as explained by John De Goes, CEO of Precog, a major contributor to Apple, Twitter and Oracle shapes the internet's trend to personalize the massive amounts of social and interactive data being collected by web sites and mobile applications. In his words, "Analyzing massive amounts of data to find patterns is what makes the best websites—from Amazon to Netflix—work as well as they do"¹³⁸. Artists today make through the lens of implementing Deleuzian folds in the same way. What they offer the world mirrors what De Goes suggests of innovative trends in internet technology, "The whole point of those analytics is to give [us] the ability to understand what people are doing, how they are doing it and how to direct them"¹³⁹.

¹³⁶ Bakhtin, 417.

¹³⁷ Berger, 186.

¹³⁸ Pot, Justin. "Intelligent data 'not just for the Amazons and Netflixes of the world'" *Boulder iJournal*. Web. 4 Feb. 2013.

¹³⁹ Pot. *Boulder iJournal*. 2013.

5. Applications in the Contemporary Arena

It is strange to point to Cubism as a break in, or a break from, the history of art. More important than the fact it was a mere seven year period between 1907-1914, the questions it posed remain such an influence in contemporary culture within art and in the broader climate. The contemporary world—bombarded with information that is consistently being reframed and Googled—is navigated by symbiotic relationships and looks like a Braque painting, where each form requires the one next to it and the entire frame to be defined. Contemporary artists look at the world with the same discontinuity of space and continuity of structure to form coherent thought. I agree with Berger’s statement:

I find it hard to believe that the most extreme Cubist works were painted over fifty years ago. It is true I would not expect them to have been painted today. They are both too optimistic and too revolutionary for that. Perhaps in a way I am surprised that they have been painted at all. It would seem more likely that they were yet to be painted.¹⁴⁰

Contemporary work applying Deleuzian folds does not necessarily have the same visual attributes as the Cubist work—minimized palette, figuration reduced to geometric forms and planes—nor is there a pronounced, common pictorial idiom being pioneered as a school of our era, but the process of folding multiple viewpoints and creating recursive relationships re-approaches cubist questioning with vigor.

In the Braque-like world of woven comparisons, it is difficult to look at today’s art-making processes without considering the contemporary reflexive engagement in the act of seeing, shifting between perspectives of a Deleuzian fold—one’s work against his past experiences, the present, and the future, as well as folding one’s work against history of art, what one sees relevant in current affairs and among colleagues, and its contribution and position to the direction of art. The artist’s process today navigates the overwhelming amount of data much the way internet programmers are approaching the coming era with same challenge. John De Goes, CEO of Precog, a major contributor to Apple, Twitter and Oracle considers the contention in how we “take that vast amount of data, and make sense of it, and not

¹⁴⁰ Berger, John. *The Sense of Sight*. New York: Vintage International, 1993; p 159.

only analyze but use it to drive”¹⁴¹ and discusses the next step for the internet is to develop applications that offer “intelligent data”, analytical power that he calls “crunching services”¹⁴². The obstacle of vast data also highlights the brilliant capabilities of the human schizoanalytic mind—one which edits as actively as it collects—the contemporary brain’s propensity to generate permutations and trained capacity to make folds in a nexus of comparisons in order to comprehend and ultimately arrive at new developments. A key to expression is where we position the reference point along the fold, the subjectivity behind which folds are made. In this sense, the fold represents the style of a work of art.

‘The Origami Method’ diagram contextualized visually what T.S. Eliot’s “Tradition and the Individual Talent” [1920]¹⁴³ modeled as the artist having as much influence on history as history does on him based on the informed choices he makes. More information comes with more responsibility in the inclusive process, where the identity of a work of art includes preceding work. There are a number of contemporary artists whose process includes art theorist O’Sullivan structure that “art practices...do not however just involve this aesthetic impulse as I am calling it. Indeed, paradoxically, they also often involve the utilisation of signifying material, previous art for example, and indeed other aspects of popular and mainstream culture...new assemblages involves a recombination of already existing elements in and of the world”¹⁴⁴.

Still life photographer Paulette Tavormina’s works directly reflect, if not mimic, Dutch, Spanish, and Italian still lifes of the Golden Age. Her *Oysters and Lemon, after W.C.H.*, 2008 (figure 7) represents Claesz Heda’s *Still Life*, 1632 (figure 8)—the influence is even part of the title. She carefully recreates the arrangement in Heda’s painting that hangs at El Prado Museum, Madrid in her studio to photograph. Describing her process, she says, “It took an entire week to shoot this picture,

¹⁴¹ De Goes, John. “How Precog Is Mining Through Big Data” *TechRockies*. Web. 29 Oct. 2012.

¹⁴² Pot, Justin. “Intelligent data ‘not just for the Amazons and Netflixes of the world’” *Boulder iJournal*. Web. 4 Feb. 2013.

¹⁴³ Eliot, T. S. “Tradition and the Individual Talent”. *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1920.

¹⁴⁴ Zepke, Stephen and Simon O’Sullivan. *Delenze and Contemporary Art*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2010.; p 192.

arranging the crabs, adjusting the lighting, putting the crabs back in the refrigerator every night, taking them out in the morning and starting over”¹⁴⁵. The fold she creates using contemporary tools to recapture the seventeenth century food and vessels centers on the loaded term “still life,” set up to fool. Life cannot be still, it evolves. Historian and critic Wayne Andersen writes of Tavormina’s work, “the past cannot be relived but can be converted into meaning for the present”¹⁴⁶ What she has done is converted something intended as an illusion, a painted still life, back into something real in her studio. The still life subject by its nature suggests a contemplative slowing down to be present and concentrate on our surroundings, and invites a closer look.

The fold offers a series of comparisons that reflect one the other between art and food in both times. There are few contemporary differences to the food that are telling of the present in Tavormina’s replicated still life such as capers, which were foreign to Holland at the time and Tavormina’s peppercorns are pink, recently announced by scientists as a distinct genus. Furthermore, the piece juxtaposes the food and vessels Heda selected—characterizing the refined table and eating habits of the wealthy Dutch middle class—against their more common appearance in the contemporary setting: pepper was an exotic and expensive spice from the Far East; beer was common for the Dutch, so the elite drank imported wine; oyster came from the Indian Ocean and also represented high social status as well as their aphrodisiac properties associating pleasures of gastronomy and sex. Other juxtapositions present themselves across the centuries as well, including a comparison of upper-class table manners and of course the use of photography instead of painting—the paper she uses does not have a reflective layer or sheen, such that the photographed objects are perceived with the strongest presence, and painted sensibility. Interestingly, the watch is missing in Tavormina’s piece.

Israeli artist Ori Gersht’s trilogy of videos that have circulated major museums worldwide, *Pomegranate*, 2006 (figure 1), *Blow Up*, 2007 (figure 5), and *Falling Bird*, 2008 (figure 3), make folds by recreating famous still life paintings by Juan Sanchez Cotán, Henri Fantin-Latour, and Jean-Siméon Chardin, respectively. The videos present a number of folds the way Tavormina’s work mirrors the times as the

¹⁴⁵ Andersen, Wayne. “The Many Lives of Paulette Tavormina’s Still Lifes” *Exhibition Catalogue*. Vevey: The Alimentarium Museum, Switzerland. 2 May, 2013.

¹⁴⁶ Andersen, “The Many Lives of Paulette Tavormina’s Still Lifes”. 2 May, 2013.

still life objects fold the past against the present and juxtapose the mediums—hi-res digital film and painting. The way Gersht alters the work—by way of medium and action, literally shooting a bullet through the still life objects—uses the relevance of the historic paintings to arouse the present equivalents, and at once re-frames the significance of the historic pieces. Specifically, Gersht’s works reflect moments of violence in his current environment that fold against the climate of the times in which their references were made, such as Chardin’s mallard painted amidst Napoleonic terrors.

Part of defining the genre of still life, where attention is directed first and foremost to the things on display, is the absence of the human subject—both the artist contemplating the still life, the people in the world around him, and then the viewer at the time and years to come. A static work of art, one that does not change, offers viewers, who are evolving, the gift of recontextualizing the piece in relation to the transformed world. Considering Chardin painting a still life, perhaps what he had for lunch, in 1728 or Latour painting a bouquet in 1886 may not immediately spur gravity in subject matter beyond the domestic scene. After some thought, however, Fantin-Latour was exhibiting in the Salon des Refusés during the macabre sieging of Paris and the Paris Commune in 1871. Observing the vibrant vase of flowers in *The Rosy Wealth of June*, 1886 (figure 6), Latour may have been most aware of their inevitable wilting. Furthermore, it is no coincidence the colors of the flowers he chose were of the French tricolour introduced after the Revolution, a shared symbolism with the red, white, and blue of the British and American flags in Gersht’s *Blow Up*, 2007 (figure 5). The fold Gersht creates surfaces the violence these flags experienced at the time in which both pieces were made.

Considering Chardin’s still lifes were painted during the Napoleonic era where death was abundant and traveling was dangerous and regulated one might at first think he was dismissing the world around him and focusing on the contents of his grocery bag. Gersht’s *Falling Bird*, 2008 (figure 3) invites careful observation of *A Mallard Drake Hanging on a Wall and a Seville Orange*, 1728-30 (figure 4). Chardin’s light, nearly trembling touch of the canvas evokes quiet fear as he peers through light among darkness at an arrangement that is not immediately confrontational, yet within reach—the dead mallard becomes not about the stillness of life but about its transition to absence. Rather than ignoring his surroundings, Chardin’s work was arguably painting more about life and death than any of his contemporaries, except

for perhaps Tiepolo evoking the torrent in grandiose, mythological and royal skies in Italy and then Spain. Watching Gersht's mallard being lowered out of the frame reconstructs the silent revolution in Chardin's studio as it exhibits the same transformations from life to death that permeate contemporary world, particularly Gersht's biography as an Israeli artist that was London-based at the time he made the piece.

Violence renders contemporary news globally, especially that associated with Gersht's Israeli background, and confronts history dialogically with the folds he creates in *Pomegranate*, 2006 (figure 1) and *Blow Up*, 2007 (figure 5). Gersht's *Pomegranate*, 2006 (figure 1) records—in high-speed, high-definition video—a bullet exploding a pomegranate in his meticulous reproduction of Cotán's *Quince, Cabbage, Melon, Cucumber*, 1602 (figure 2). Frozen with liquid nitrogen, the fruit shatters and the viewer watches, in slowed motion, its transformation into bloody pulp. In Hebrew, Gersht's native language, the word for pomegranate—"rimon"—has a second meaning, it is also the word for grenade. The splatter of the pomegranate's bloody seeds echo in *Blow Up*, 2007 (figure 5), in which Gersht uses high-speed photographs to capture his unapologetic blow up of a bouquet of flowers arranged after Latour's *The Rosy Wealth of June*, 1886 (figure 6). The fold in both works reframe the conflict of high-speed moments of violence that suddenly breakup the calm, domestic scene in the present generation as they compare with their historic counterparts—suggesting acts of violence have not changed. Furthermore, the use of film and motion in *Pomegranate*, 2006 (figure 1) refigures the meaning of *Quince, Cabbage, Melon, Cucumber*, 1602 (figure 2). The sense of stillness in Cotán's painting—sparse bounty, hanging and decaying fruit—is converted to anticipation for motion: the promised movement of the hanging fruits from life to death is no longer only about decay—the pregnant silence fundamental to still life—but its interruption by violent destruction. Historian Kim Beil writes, "Gersht's dramatic destruction of these scenes actually seems to rescue the still life from the world of mere things because we can observe their transformation from organized calm to incoherence. They pass, like all living things at the end of life, from one state to another".¹⁴⁷

Printmakers and brothers Gert and Uwe Tobias's works also constitute folds that thread history. The very nature of contemporary work in the print medium

¹⁴⁷ Beil, Kim. "Ori Gersht: Lost in Time" *X-tra*. Vol.14 No. 2, Winter 2011.

carries folds reflective of its history, from Guttenberg's press, off-set lithographic magazines, to photocopies, and the digital era. However, a series of folds that relate in a similar way to the inherent history in using the printmaking medium can be traced beyond the surface—conversations across a history of formal attributes that structure the work.

Following Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" [1920]¹⁴⁸, one can trace a guided lineage in regards to color fields and line from Wassily Kandinsky—who lived through the Cubist movement—to Arshile Gorky, then Frank Lobdell and Gert and Uwe Tobias. The collective history has a structured vocabulary that has been built upon over the generations, but each artist in the progression has also influenced his predecessors with his contribution to the language. Tobias' installation at the Saatchi Gallery in 2009, *Untitled*, 2009 (figure 12) exhibited colored woodcuts on papers mounted on canvas in four panels displayed in a continuous format. Their process of carving woodcuts included making line and applying color fields against each panel (figure 13). Much like the printmaking process reversing the created image, the resulting pictures mirror the history of conversation between line and delineated color fields to create form.

Looking at Tobias' *Untitled*, 2007 (figure 10) and *Untitled*, 2005 (figure 14) with Gorky's *Garden in Sochi*, 1941 (figure 15) or *Battle at Sunset with the God of Maize (Composition No. 1)*, 1936 (figure 17) in mind presents a discourse between the use of color fields to separate foreground from background in order to emerge the form from its surrounding. The color fields in both Gorky pieces are often painted up to, or very near, one another in order to create a line, revealing the painted layer below. This layered approach to color fields, though painted, matches the Tobias' application of color using the woodblock. There are other players that can fold into the rich conversation, such as Frank Lobdell's *Bleeker*, 1993 (figure 23) or *Pier 70* works made between 1993 and 2003 (figure 20, 22-24) particularly compared to Kandinsky's *Zersetzte Spannung*, 1922 (figure 21), or the Tobias' work showing matching geometries in work with Marden Hartley's *The Iron Cross*, 1915 (figure 25), *Portrait of a German Soldier*, 1914 (figure 26), and *Pre-War Pageant*, 1913 (figure 27).

Moreover, there is a similar discourse regarding the function of line to delineate form. Rooted in Kandinsky's experiments that used lines to more decisively

¹⁴⁸ Eliot, T. S. "Tradition and the Individual Talent". *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. London: Methuen & Co., 1920.

articulate forms, such as *Skizze for Komposition II*, 1909 (figure 18)—likely influenced by his Cubist colleagues’ harshly separated planes—the Tobias’ *Untitled*, 2007 (figure 10) separates more subtle color ranges on the dress-like patterns of the figures with line and Gorky’s *Garden in Sochi*, 1941 (figure 15) implements line to form the horizon on the bottom right of the painting in order to make the central yellow and ochre form at the bottom of the canvas appear closer. Kandinsky’s experiments, such as *Im Grau*, 1919 (figure 19) implored more specific, graphic geometry to more distinctly break color fields. Such works ordered a dialogue for both his future experimentation and conversation across generations, evidenced in Tobias’ *Untitled*, 2005 (figure 14) and Gorky’s *The Betrothal II*, 1947 (figure 16).

The importance of color and geometry as Wassily Kandinsky theorized it, places a continuum between Tobias’ work with other contemporaries as well as with the inclusive history, looking to contemporary German artist Imi Knoebel’s puristic line-drawings, light projections and white pictures, and his recent *Gartenbild*, 2012 (figure 11), that overlaps brightly, expressively colored laminated plywood and metal plates in combinations.

Similarly to the fold Gert and Uwe Tobias’s works make reflecting a comparative and self-defining web through history, painter Alex Katz’s—who was in his twenties through the Abstract Expressionist 1940s and ‘50s and emerged into the worlds of Pop, Minimalism, and Conceptual art—weaves the history he has lived through to fold complex permutations that arrive at complex new conclusions. Critic Phong Bui writes that Katz, “allowed his paintings to adapt the monumental scale, the reductive use of images, and the immediacy of his painting process—all central to these movements...to coexist simultaneously. And this is where his great, gestural contribution lies: to make large, complex paintings”¹⁴⁹. His intelligent unfolding of the rich history he grew up to within his painting process births individual pieces that converse within themselves, merging description and abstraction. For instance, Katz’s *Yellow Flags*, 2011 (figure 29) exhibits a geometric, compositional, and graphic structure rooted in the cut out shapes of Matisse’s *La Nègresse*, 1952-1953 (figure 28), however his figurative accuracy within the simplicity of shape amplifies a sense of volume—other examples of permutations include *Flowers 2*, 2010 (figure 30) and *Birch*, 2010 (figure 31). While *Homage to Monet*, 2009 (figure 32) does not shy away

¹⁴⁹ Bui, Phong. “Alex Katz” *Brooklyn Rail*. Web. Oct. 2011.

from his influence in the title and the imagery tributes water lilies and reflections, the focus of the piece centers around the abstraction of shapes from Pop and Minimalist works.

What is the world but the maximum number of things that can exist together? In Deleuze's writing on Francis Bacon¹⁵⁰, he describes Bacon's perception of a blank canvas as containing everything and spending the duration of the painting eliminating what is unnecessary. Musician Tom Waits describes tuning two radios to different stations at the same time to create a new melody in an interview with National Public Radio's Terry Gross in 2011. Today's ability to access everything, our Capitalist market screams of an omnivore's dilemma—our debate is one of choice. The beauty is in our expressive process of editing, selecting, subjectivity. Cubism addressed the issue showing relationships between multiple angles of a subject at once or showed the subject at multiple times from one angle. David Hockney continued the questions regarding symbiotic relationships through his process of folding that began with his photo-collages in the 1980s onto his 2012-13 globally-traveling exhibit, *A Bigger Picture*, displaying paneled paintings and nine-camera films. In an interview, Hockney reveals, "I think cubism has not fully been developed...It is treated like a style, pigeonholed and that's it. But in fact, Picasso used it throughout his life, didn't he? Juan Gris said cubism wasn't a style; it was a way of life."¹⁵¹

Hockney, like the Cubists, presents the viewer everything at the same time. Each photo of David Hockney's photo-collage *My Mother, Bolton Abbey, Yorkshire*, 1982 (figure 38) has a unique perspective of the subject taken from a different angle and shares references with the photo beside it while also informing the totality of the space, providing comprehension of the subject in greater context. His photo-collages of the 1980s reflected the Cubist concepts that *Du "Cubisme"* [1912]¹⁵² established: "observing a subject from different points in space and time simultaneously, i.e., the act of moving around an object to seize it from several successive angles fused into a single image ('multiple viewpoints' or 'mobile perspective')"¹⁵³. In a 2012 interview,

¹⁵⁰ Deleuze, Gilles. *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*. Trans. Daniel W. Smith. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

¹⁵¹ Gayford, Martin. "David Hockney, interview" *The Telegraph*. Web. 28 Feb. 2012.

¹⁵² Gleizes, A. and J. Metzinger. *Du "Cubisme"*. Paris: Edition Figuière, 1912.

¹⁵³ Cottington, David. *Cubism and its Histories*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004; p 92.

Hockney himself said, “Cubism was an attack on the perspective that had been known and used for 500 years. It was the first big, big change. It confused people: they said, ‘Things don’t look like that!’ Actually cubism was concerned to claim: yes they do in a way...In Picasso’s pictures you can see the front and back of a person simultaneously. That means you’ve walked round them. It’s a sort of memory picture; we make pictures like that in our heads”¹⁵⁴—and with *Mother I, Yorkshire Moors*, 1985 (figure 37), Hockney had. The orchestration of photos simultaneously reference and complete one another, presenting the folding and unfolding process that emerges in the instance of looking at one’s mother—collective meanings and memories from numerous angles, at different times of day, in different places over a lifetime.

In 1998, Hockney took the challenge of how we see to a larger scale, the Grand Canyon. He orchestrated sixty continuous paintings—each with its unique perspectival construct and yet placed in relationship to the network of others to complete the whole—of the grand site. Hockney’s attempt at the impossibility of capturing grandeur, whether in nature or in the center of Times Square, as it is perceived matched the way Quiroga describes the brain’s process of perception: storing separate abstractions in memory and folding them into an origami of relationships, such that unraveled from any corner they composite the full meaning. *A Bigger Grand Canyon*, 1998 (figure 46) inspired a series of multiple-canvas paintings of trees outside his hometown in England in 2006, such as *Woldgate Woods, 7 and 8 November, 2006*, 2006 (figure 48), that are currently part of his internationally touring exhibit, *A Bigger Picture*. The multi-paneled works also eloquently combine years of own discoveries of how to paint the world with variations in pace and touch—splash in a pool, bare branches, light against water, palm trees against the sky. A series of nine-camera digital films comprise the remainder of the exhibition. In *Nov. 7th, Nov. 26th 2010, Woldgate Woods 11:30am and 9:30am*, 2010 (figure 47), each camera is set to a slightly different angle, exposure, and a few seconds apart, and set to play simultaneously beside one another at the gallery. Some films are a display of eighteen cameras in the same format, folding the same scene against itself in two different seasons at a time and all in high-definition. When critic Martin Gayford asked Hockney if there was “always more to be seen, everywhere, all the time,”

¹⁵⁴ Gayford, Martin. “David Hockney, interview”. 28 Feb. 2012.

Hockney responded regarding his films, “There’s simply a lot more to see. It seems you can see almost more on these screens than if you were really there. Everything is in focus, so you’re looking at something very complicated but with incredible clarity”¹⁵⁵. Hockney continues that his collaged films are closer to the actual experience of human vision, “We’re forcing you to look, because you have to scan, and in doing so you notice all the different textures in each screen. These films are making a critique of the one-camera view of the world”¹⁵⁶.

¹⁵⁵ Gayford, Martin. “The Mind’s Eye” *MIT Technology Review*. Web. 23 Aug. 2011.

¹⁵⁶ Gayford, Martin. “The Mind’s Eye”. 23 Aug. 2011.

Artist's Background and Imagery

6. A Background in Multiple Perspectives

7. Hope—Permutations of the Symbol

8. Applications—Methodology Matching Imagery

Writing—*The Decline of the Empire*: Three Essays and a Letter

6. A Background in Multiple Perspectives

The principals of the Deleuzian fold described in ‘The Fold’ section are fundamental to my background. At the nucleus of my immigrant roots is discourse on oscillating subjectivity. My traditional background is practiced in reflecting the present as a succession against the past, another infrastructure for a fold. Underlying my practice across mediums, the folds manifest themselves through modes of collage.

My background tells a story, one of multiple perspectives. Over the course of this PhD study, I visited and worked with an Australian Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory, Australia, who call their stories *dreamtime*. I am not interested, nor able, to be an Aboriginal. However, their stories—narratives presented like hieroglyphs which can also be read upward and diagonal—involve presenting synchronous thoughts to most articulately define the mysteries of perception, and they paint them. *Dreamtime* is a fold, each side of the story needs the other in order to survive. An Aboriginal elder does not project to tell a story, but rather is the story.

I am the son of hard-working immigrants—mother refugee from Baghdad to Israel in 1951, father rooted ten generations in Jerusalem including founders of the State of Israel and survivors of the Holocaust. The first in my family to attend college, I earned a Masters in Printmaking from the Royal College of Art, London and Masters in Painting from Boston University. In 2010 I gave a lecture series at Harvard University and in 2012 I gave a TEDx Talk, both encouraging contemporaries in all fields to see simultaneous, multiple perspectives. In 2012, my 8-ft. paintings and etchings on survival were exhibited at the Royal Academy of Art, London, Seattle Art Museum Gallery, featured in ARTNews Magazine and exhibited at the Aqua Fair during Art Basel Miami. I grew up between New Jersey and Jerusalem knowing I could make anything happen, but that I would have to make it happen. I learned by the age of six that this process would always start with a pencil and then involve hard work, bravery, humility, and surely *chutzpah*. I owe my successes to these ingredients and I approach my art with them—I am the product of survival.

My father, who immigrated to America in the 1970s, ran a factory in Paterson, New Jersey, where he cut the fabric for women’s coats. I frequented that

factory for over twenty five years. Cézanne's painting of his father reading a newspaper (figure 50) resonates as his father insisted that Cézanne carry on the family banking business—a young man literally trying to draw his father's attention to his art from behind the newsprint. My mother's father was also in the garment business—a tailor, for the Sultan of Iraq. Jews were not welcome, and my grandmother escaped overnight with all four daughters in 1951—my mother was one year old. My grandfather never joined them in Israel, a “stroke” killed him. In my traditional upbringing, the present has always been measured against the succession of such familial narratives. In graduate school, earning an MFA at Boston University under John Walker, I asked my father for his old blueprints and unrolled and stapled them around my studio walls. Literally surrounded by my father, I cut and collaged the shapes I had grown up with to make my way out of my studio. The process of working in collage struck not only as a metaphor for my background, but matched the way that I think because of my background.

Modes of collage stemmed in my father's shapes have permeated my work since. The ‘plates’ used for my collography prints—the process is detailed in the proximate chapter, ‘Applications—Methodology Matching Imagery’—originate as collaged cardboard cutouts. Notebooks of drawings translated from the collaged cardboard carry over the cutouts’ graphic elements into paintings. The shapes composing my paintings remain founded in the patterns of my father's blueprints—drawn, often by scissoring, with typical tools of his trade. A recent painting, *Today's Desert Con*¹⁵⁷, was constructed from a collage of seven separate paintings.

Collage for me has never been about fragmenting but rather about completing a story—showing the world the way I see it—in relationships between the segments the way Braque used them to characterize one another. Instead of a series of additions, ‘this’ and ‘that’ and ‘that’, the aspects of collage allow me to present ‘this’ against ‘that’ against ‘that’—I am careful to use the word ‘against’ instead of ‘versus’ in this description of the process, as the segments being collaged are not competing but rather conversing in an alignment of folds. These modes of collage are efforts to display the world as I see it, both sides of a story arriving at once.

Since I can remember, I have always had two homes—Israel and America—or no home, the perspective remains in flux. At my parents’ home we speak Hebrew,

¹⁵⁷ Catalogue of Work Presented for Examination

I am told I do not have an accent. Out of the family home in America I speak in English and am also told I do not have an accent, but am often told I am Israeli. In Israel I am often told I am American. I dream in Hebrew and in English. I count in both. Our minds have the gift of changing perspective and perception as we like—an awareness I have shaped since childhood. I touch the world through this folded identity.

I observed a number of similarities between the indigenous community and my particular Jewish, first-generation, Israeli-American upbringing: emphasis on tradition and the story through symbols; reverence for and obligation to cultivating land. These similarities seem rooted in conscious navigation through the world in folds, a comfort with consistent changing of perspectives, and forming comprehension and meaning through comparisons—perhaps this stems from the baseless concept of home. Observing an Australian Aboriginal making a bark painting, I asked when he knew he was done. We were outside, and beside him was a pile of bark paintings he had been working on for days. A half hour later, a few dingoes were walking past and one urinated on the pile. The man walked over, picked one of the bark paintings up, shook it off, placed it upright against a wall and told me it was done. The question: reverence and irreverence for nature?—A matter of perception.

I have watched my mother failing to replant her childhood Israeli garden for nearly thirty years in the rejecting soil and climate of our ‘temporary home’ 40 km west of New York City. We complete nature with feeling; otherwise, autumn would only be dying leaves. I begin my process using materials that have inherent meaning to my folded identity in this way. I find artworks’ meanings to be enriched, and at times defined, when their subject and materials harmonize. I make my paint and inks by mulling earth from the Judean Desert with oil. I also used fallen olive branches, burning them and mixing their ash with oils and waxes, to make my blacks. The methods were adopted observing traditional paint-making techniques of the indigenous community.

Nature’s perspective is consuming. Its elements confront one face on, from above and below. The complexity is one of scale, like an El Greco painting in which one can see both heaven and earth at once. An Aboriginal Australian painting is made with the notion of looking down in mind; It is grounded and considers the earth differently than the painting pioneers of America. The Hudson River School,

like my father's hopeful immigrant eyes, painted infinite horizons in sizes that implied ownership—as though we were looking out our windows to say in hopeful tones, “this is *my* land”. At eight feet wide, my paintings and prints eclipse my peripheral vision, and at six feet tall they stand as if I confront a person, myself. Rather than paint into a painting, into a distance, I consider the canvas as furthest from me and paint out and past me in collaged layers folded against previous ones.

My work attempts to create a space in which fields consistently shift across the z-axis using flattened color fields, line, and a mode of collage in which openings in layers reveal previous ones to match nature the way I see it—vacillating relationships between “in front of” and “behind” as patterns of sunlight are often more opaque and solid than their surrounding trees. I respect Imi Knoebel's experiments in constructing space this way, and Gert and Uwe Tobias's work in the print medium—they both look to Matisse's works that use color to compress deep space into two inches and vibrate, such as *The Snail*, 1953 (figure 49). In addition to compressing space across the z-axis to create folds, my practice also experiments using recognizable objects to create spatial reference and context to scale, though they are often fractured or somewhat iconized or abstracted to allow symbiotic relationships to form between them while structuring an inclusive space—after the Cubist artists. I also look at works by David Hockney and Alex Katz in regard to different treatments of forms within a painting to create a meaningful whole inclusive of both description and abstraction in my artwork. To this end, the specific observations referencing artists examined in this thesis coincide directly with my practice.

However the body of work grasps at the act, the breadth of the conversation itself is in the folds of questions like: What would Cézanne make looking out my window today? The comprehensive body work associated with the PhD—paintings, prints, and writing—is rooted in a thirty-year background navigating the world from multiple perspectives at once, a background practiced in making folds. The past seven years have concentrated on examining the Deleuzian fold and surrounding theories and writings in detail, and through its lens, looking at contemporary artists, Cubist artists and other manifestations through history, and my own practice rooted in drawing. My biographical practice transposes—folding, unfolding, and refolding—what I see, whether at a *tel* (translation—a raised mound marking the site of an ancient city) outside Jerusalem, beside an Australian Aboriginal in the Northern

Territory, looking at a Turner painting at the Tate while attending the Royal College of Art, standing in front of the fleet of Etruscan paintings that buttress the walls of Villa Giulia in Italy, or returning to El Prado Museum to face an El Greco or Rogier van der Weyden painting. The fragments composing the nature of my background found my process, and when the whole folds upon itself, the results can simultaneously strengthen their roots in the earth and reach toward the sun.

7. Hope—Permutations of the Symbol

Hope is the frontline for 2013 global campaigns—political, economic, environmental. It is also the driving force for individual, personal ambitions under the stresses of our current climate. Hope buttresses communities globally, determined to overcome a spate of recent tragedies. Commissioned through the arts originally to unify and to make text accessible, hope emblemizes our values and presents virtues sacred to us. This human condition serves as clay to all arts—El Greco's *Resurrection*, the unresolved dissonances of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*, Schopenhauer's 'desire', sex, the potential for achievement, Rubens' *Adam and Eve*, Bernini's *Ecstasy of St Teresa*, Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise* bronze doors at the Florence Baptistery. Simultaneously used as the aspiration to end wars and the catalyst for beginning them, hope is a measure of human life. Hope, like a fold, is measured by the possibilities and permutations of life, and is the logical or practical reasoning for making the next work of art.

Hope, the central element from my heritage and past ten years' work, has strongly influenced the current direction of my drawings, paintings, and prints. I have been drawing through symbols that speak to the current global significance of hope and also reflect my personal background. A recurring life preserver symbol speaks loudly, and its form in my paintings, prints, and drawings has begun taking shape as a sculptural subject.

A universal symbol of hope, the life preserver represents global struggles for survival. Its metaphor resonates across cultures and barriers and unites parties. The life preserver requires citizenship—in order for it to work, it must be both thrown and caught. The symbol embodies our capacity as citizens to reach out and instill hope in each other. In my TEDx Talk this April, I emphasized the best (art)work of a generation reflects what and how that generation sees. The headlines of today's world make it look much like a life preserver.

Hope has been the underlying subject of over ten years of my work. I come from a tradition of preserving hope and working hard to survive, the life preserver that founds people and countries. Migration also conveys hope, in the way birds transplant foreign seeds and plant new roots by way of their migration, and has been incorporated in my imagery. Darwin found the act, or impulse, of migration to

supersede even the primal, maternal instinct at instances¹⁵⁸—a mother may abandon her fledglings in the nest for the instinctive need of the journey—the exigency has resulted in suicide. Collaging images of migration attempts to exhibit possibilities of hope, folding new roots and seeds against their origins. A conversation examining hope with Daniel Belasco PhD, former curator at the Jewish Museum, New York, discussed that the reason citrus was brought to and grown in Europe was because of the Jewish need for the *etrog* (translation—citron) to celebrate the Jewish holiday of *Sukkot*. The premise induced my series of citrus paintings—a migration of oranges carried in hanging plant baskets, vessels used as a form of preserving nature.

Like migration, another folding of past against present is imbued in a body of work created after walking through the gas chambers in Auschwitz and Birkenow where my family was killed. I stood in an old Jewish ghetto in Krakow, Poland. Jews in this area were made to demolish their own graveyard and build the ghetto over it. When the Nazis knew they were losing the war, they tried to hide evidence and destroyed the ghetto. Years later, sections of gravestones emerged in the open field where I stood to reveal the old Jewish graveyard. The fragments of gravestones have been pieced together into a wall, and standing before them, for the first time in my life I was unable to draw. I fell to my knees and filled notebooks with rubbings instead. The symbols off the gravestones are collaged into a series of collography prints through a process I created that is metaphorically relevant to my ideas: collected pieces of trashed cardboard are collaged in layers and covered in a resin to become solid and resistant, ink is ground made from soil of the Judean desert, inked cardboard ‘plates’ are pressed at two tons per square inch. I think of the first twenty years of El Greco’s life. The time he lived in Italy and then in Toledo, Spain must have been saturated in the Inquisition’s heaviest slaughtering of Jews. Though there is no direct evidence the models he used for his work were conversos especially since he painted for the Church, being an outsider himself, his environment must have certainly influenced his work.

The collograph series is scheduled to be exhibited at the Holocaust Museum in Florida in 2014, juxtaposing one of the original railcars used to transport Jews in the 1930s. In the spirit of making folds, I will compile a publication to accompany the exhibit—essays on ‘hope’ by scholars from a variety of disciplines as it pertains to

¹⁵⁸ Darwin, Charles. *Descent of Man*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1871.

their respective fields: art and music historians, critics, public officials, politicians, as well as researchers in sciences and technology.

Developing projects in my studio have larger social aims stemming from the collograph prints and other works framed by hope. One project is transforming the collograph series into sculptures to be installed as an exhibit at Jerusalem Botanical Gardens where Jewish and Palestinian children plant together. Another is scheduling an exhibit of paintings on the subject of hope by contemporary artists with Israeli and Palestinian backgrounds whose artworks, founded in their culture, are recognized for artistic merits rather than faith-based or political activism, cultivating dialogue by revealing similarities between cultures instead.

Aboriginal Australians sing life into existence—the true poets of hope. Bruce Chatwin interprets, “a man who goes ‘Walkabout’ is making a ritual journey. He trods in the footprints of his Ancestor. He sings the Ancestor’s stanzas without changing a word or note—and so recreates the Creation”¹⁵⁹. Aboriginal Australians cannot believe the country exists until they can see and sing it themselves, just as in *Dreamtime* the country—indigenous groups refer to land or earth as “country”—had not existed until the Ancestors had sung it. Imagine a scenario: that your singing and those who have sung before you continue to make the sun rise—every morning you waking up, and keeping your eyes closed, you sing the sun out. Yesterday’s sun rose to your singing, and it has risen every morning of your life to your singing, so it would be reasonable to believe that it will not rise today without your song. “Land must first exist as a concept in the mind”¹⁶⁰, Chatwin describes it. “Then it must be sung, sung to exist.”¹⁶¹ To exist is to be perceived. I have heard an Aboriginal sing—it sounds like my grandfather speaking of Israel. In those moments, the whole earth is in motion, a motion of wind and streaming trees that carry one with it. I have traveled through life creating possibilities with this motion of producing folds, and my art making process is no different. Hope profoundly correlates with limitlessness. *Poesis*, in its original definition meaning ‘creation,’ is nomadic. The difference between the nomad and immigrant is a nomad is always going home—recreating home, making it. Hope, like the nomad’s perception of home, is conceived by

¹⁵⁹ Chatwin, Bruce. *Songlines*. London: Pan Books, 1987; p 16.

¹⁶⁰ Chatwin, 16.

¹⁶¹ Chatwin, 16.

making folds to show its possibilities and change perspectives. Berger describes Cubism in this way as well, as “a moment in which the promises of the future were more substantial than the present”¹⁶².

¹⁶² Berger, John. *The Sense of Sight*. New York: Vintage International, 1993; p 161.

8. Applications—Methodology Matching Imagery

The key to being “interesting” is being “interested,” the art of asking questions, or the search for possibilities. Picasso was not attempting to make his work look interesting by making an eye emerging from an ear (figure 43); Rather, his cubist work was interested in showing his lover, Dora Maar, from all her angles at once. Interested does not equate to certainty or clarity, it means questioning. I often walk into an artist’s studio and get excited by work that does not look “good”; It tends to mean tough questions are being asked. Innovation stands on good questions. Questioning in my practice is a process of restructuring a subject, or subjectivity through folds, often as a mode of collaging. My process looks to the way Borges asks in *The Zahir*¹⁶³ if a chair is still a chair with two broken legs or a window frame remains a window frame if there is no glass. Generating permutations has led me to new discoveries.

The value in applying the Deleuzian fold as a lens through which to make my work is in the questions that arise when complex, woven comparisons are made. The process results in new questions, new folds, and births innovation. It is not important that all the references come across, there is an absurdity to expect others to be interested in all the footnotes and thoughts, the passages meaningful to me—the extracted meanings and abstractions produced through the folding and unfolding process. However, what is important to come across as a result of the process is the urgency and necessity for their making, right now and by me.

To this end, the fold is my way of being. It is reflective of my generation’s ability and compelling need to be in multiple places at once, to be both inside and outside, to see the world rapidly in overlaps and layers, to be simultaneously in history and present. Contemporary culture’s craving for certainty has grown with science—our demand for answers. The conflation of science and truths, certainty, and absolutes has erased notions of magic and the unknown. Rules of science are built on theory—a hypothesis which has not yet been proven wrong—that over time our mind observes as truth. Western culture has fooled itself in this way, which has by some fashion concurrently diminished the drive for questions.

¹⁶³ Borges, Jorge Luis. *Collected Fictions*. Trans. Andrew Hurley. New York: Penguin Books, 1998; p 242.

The inquiry of my practice has been my compass. I have lived humbly in order to travel to Europe, Australia, and Israel to visit the works of art, artists, landscapes and sites that have been most relevant to developments in my practice at the time. In addition to travel, I have collected a library of theorists and artists that have supported the direction of my work. Ahead of me, in accumulated travel and books, are answers to questions I have yet to ask.

One project that applied the process of restructuring the subject through folds over the course of my PhD study occurred during a residency at Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem, Israel. Over six months I drew six hours each day from plants accumulated over three thousand years at the last city visited on pilgrimages to Jerusalem. Now a *tel* (translation—a raised mound marking the site of an ancient city), *Neot Kedumim* has been converted to a nature reserve and each species has been labeled with its scientific name, common name, and historic references. I drew one thousand invented ‘hybrids’ by crossing the plants’ elements—stems, petals, leaves—and catalogued them with invented Latin classification and botanical numbers. Adapted into a suite of etchings titled *Hortus Scaphium* (translation—Potted Plants), I bound a selection into a ‘botany’ book (*Libraria Botanica*) at the Royal College of Art. Inventing permutations of hybrid plants was an exercise in subjectivity, both technically and biographically, which I further stated by making the ink by mixing oil with earth from the Judean desert. This body of work is structured by autobiographic folds that are pronounced in metaphors of roots, seeds, hybridization, and migration.

I began another process of permutations when creating collaged 9-ft. collographs prints at the Royal College of Art, London in 2006, made on presses given to HM the Queen in the Great Exhibition of 1851. A foreign student earning an MA in Printmaking, I could not afford metal to make traditional etchings and began looking to different resources—I felt I understood Frank Stella in New York in the 1950s. Son to immigrants, resourcefulness has always been critical to survival both at home and at my father’s wool-cutting factory in Paterson, NJ—in the placement of patterns to minimize the waste of fabric. Collecting unwanted cardboard, I collaged shapes—familiar shapes from my father’s blueprints that I grew up with at the factory. The collage process materialized the folding and unfolding that has been sharpened by my autobiography. The unending supply of recycled material afforded a complete freedom of scale and speed in addressing formal and

conceptual artistic questions. Feeding the collaged cardboard ‘plates’ through the press made quite an impact on cotton paper—embossing the corrugated, layered image and transferring the applied ink. The momentum was exciting, and I built a series. When I did not have access to a press, I would drive a car over sandwiched plywood with the inked cardboard ‘plates’ and paper between, painting the wheels to know where they had pressed the wood for an even spread. Recently without a press again and in search of malleable weights, I purchased bags of concrete to lay over new cardboard ‘plates’. Recognizing opportunity for invention, I mixed the concrete and poured it over, allowing the ‘plates’ to act instead as molds. The resulting impressions were compelling—fossils of recycled corrugation engraved in stone—printed cement reliefs. I have begun experiments applying color.

Color defines form and light. Australian Aboriginals live by a color theory based in yellow, white, black, and red—reflective of Rembrandt’s Venetian palette. From the four, Rembrandt, like the Australian Aboriginals, could make the rainbow of his world. *Dhwua*—red and black—is the ancestry of the wallaby and the black cockatoo with red top, and *yirratja*—white and yellow—is the ancestry of the kangaroo and white cockatoo with yellow top. White represents bone, red blood, yellow sun, and black skin.

Color is extremely valuable to my studio practice in the way it informs the relationships I make. The gift of yellow is its oscillating meaning—the earth’s color, the golden ticket, sunlight, acid, urine, desert. Things become what they are to me when I see them in yellow, and the possibilities I find within the color fuel my process. Furthermore, yellow to me is a challenging color to paint in, like black—where the most sensitive changes effect temperature, space, or time of day in a work of art, and it technically demands expert tonality and the sensibility to express other colors by it. I have always looked to artists who have defined black as a subject over the lifetime of their career—a history of the use of black as a subject might begin with Francisco Zurbaran, follow with Francisco Goya, then Edouard Manet and perhaps continue to William Merritt Chase. Yellow in this way would also be a brilliant subject for a lifetime of work.

Writing—*The Decline of the Empire: Three Essays and a Letter*

I write as I paint. The following “Three Essays and a Letter” is a written painting. It is a written application of the Deleuzian fold akin to the process through which I draw my paintings and prints. It is valuable—both to my practice and to support the thesis—as a different format exhibiting my exploration through folds. The manuscript illuminates the same concurrent arrival of thoughts and editing process that feed my paintings and their borderless, imbricated placement in order to achieve moments of exactness and totality. Like the fertile, elastic process of drawing, I approach this writing with the same lifetime of syllogistic reasoning. My hope is to engage, to suggest to the reader, as with any work of art, that witnessing a work of art is to witness the profound act of life.

The continuity of footnotes suggests a metaphor for the infused thoughts that form a summative meaning. Presenting both sides of a fold simultaneously in this way allows each to inform the other. Alexander Theroux’s three critical essays, “Red”, “Blue”, and “Yellow” collected in *The Primary Colors* [1994]¹⁶⁴, followed by *The Secondary Colors* [1996]¹⁶⁵, seem at surface to be repeated observations of each color. However, like the presentation of folds in Benjamin’s *The Arcades Project* [1999]¹⁶⁶—though Theroux’s palette is slightly more refined in presentation—the aggregates present a crisper vision, description of what each color is. In a slightly shifted perspective, the reasoning is deductive like Buddhist thought, whereby accounting for what some thing ‘is not’ reinforces what it ‘is’. The orchestrated writing begins with a prelude of three essays—‘Decline’, ‘Empire’, ‘Monument’—that are characterized by three definitions of each.

The context of folds, like my studio practice, navigates through first-hand accounts of the panoply of art and autobiographical experiences. The subjectivity is paralleled declining empires I have witnessed—America; Israel; painting; my grandfather. The drive to make folds consumes me in the way Antoine de Saint-

¹⁶⁴ Theroux, Alexander. *The Primary Colors, Three Essays*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1994.

¹⁶⁵ Theroux, Alexander. *The Secondary Colors*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1996.

¹⁶⁶ Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999.

Exupéry expresses in *Night Flight* [1932]¹⁶⁷—“Man I love not, I love that which devours him”—and the writing aims for a personal and academic intimacy in displaying the schizoanalytic mind. The writing stems from an urgent need to tell the story of the folds I have discovered, that I find fascinating. *The Decline of the Empire* essays prelude the letter, “Dear Grandpa”, which explores folds following the ancient rabbinical statement, “Know where you came from, and where you’re going.” (Ethics of Our Fathers 3:1)

“Dear Grandpa” is a letter from a thirty-year-old man to an eighty-year-old man. All the stories are true. I interviewed my grandfather in Jerusalem over a six-month period during the course of my PhD study, while holding a residency at Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem, Israel. His words teach: that a person through his ‘art’ can restore the human race to the deepest feelings of the heart. I look to a man of integrity, one who was a member of Etzel, the underground movement bringing Israel independence, one rooted nine generations in Jerusalem, one who raised a family and three children, and place the fold: Do I have the same dreams as my grandfather?...as Rembrandt? The philosophy’s focus is on invoking questions rather than answers.

My grandfather fixed toasters at a time when it was cheaper to fix something broken than buy a new one. He fixed clocks, alarms, telephones, lights, heaters, fans, and just about anything electronic someone in town could carry into his shop. My grandfather did this on a cutting-board-sized table under a magnifying glass that clamped to the edge and squeaked whenever you turned or bent it over. This table was in the far corner dimly lit by the overhanging batteries, wires, pipes, hoses, chains and boxes of light bulbs. You could barely walk in without the batteries falling and getting a disappointed nod. But if you kept doing it, you would eventually get so good at arching your chest over the batteries without rubbing your back against the boxes of light bulbs and ducking just enough below the variety of bolts and locks clamped to the ceiling. Three people could stand in the shop with him behind the register and at certain hours of the day they would be lined up there, all three of them hugging toasters in their arms for him to emerge from the silent clinks in the far back corner of the shop. I would have permission to come in and watch or ‘help’ around the shop. Sometimes his friend of eighty years would stop in to visit and they would

¹⁶⁷ Saint-Exupéry, Antoine de. *Night Flight*. Trans. Stuart Gilbert. New York: The Century Co., 1932.

drink a cup of coffee together. But the story would always begin after he broke some piece of what it was he was taking apart, and of course, something else would break while fixing the first broken piece. A series of breaks, soldering, bending and screwing would result in a functional toaster. Sometimes, the parts he replaced were sturdier than the elements the device was built with. My grandfather saw the world like Braque, by one object's relation to another. My grandfather was an artist.

“Dear Grandpa” is a fold itself. It is written as a letter to a dear, respected friend, wise with age, to remind him of the values behind how he sees, his nuanced pedagogy for the same questions he may have rephrased fifty years later—like a work of art, so that he can remember what he had for lunch that day.

The Decline of the Empire:

Three Essays and a Letter

“Man I love not. I love that which devours him.”

—Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *Night Flight*

Empire

Empire (n) *em·pire* 1: imperial sovereignty, rule, or dominion.

Night Flight is not an important book, not in the way *The Iliad* is to anger, *Inferno* is to walking, Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* is to sight, or Berger's *Ways of Seeing* is to taste. It is short, and not so much as a phrase is excess weight. It has governed my life, not in my battles against windmills¹⁶⁸, nor am I bound to it as to the tablets of Mount Sinai, but as a guide in the hidden Ein Yakim spring,¹⁶⁹ or as I look

168 From Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote de La Mancha* at which Don Quixote dismounts Rocinante and proclaims to Sancho that he will battle the creature that Sancho sees as a windmill.

169 I remember hiking in northern Israel by Khirbet Shema out of the dense forest and near a drier arid area. My friend and guide pointed the eight of us to a crack in the rockbed and said that inside was a natural spring. Whoever wanted to hike in and see it could come; it would take a half hour, and it was safe for the others to wait outside. Three of us went with Amir, entering the darkness of the cave via the crack, barely fitting sideways through the narrow path that continued this way for about ten minutes. Eventually the darkness settled and the path opened enough to turn my head in both directions and then my feet on either side, in a more natural bipedal stance. I began to feel a dampness in my Dexter boatshoes, that I normally hike in, as they broke thin puddles. Barely audible beyond our breathing, this was the only other sound. The silence broke when Amir stopped to direct us through the upcoming path. He turned on his torch, and said to follow him left, it would be another five minutes or so, and "if you don't like it now, you can turn and walk back toward the light". This was the last point of option. One man left, Amir turned off his torch, and the three of us continued. In the next five-minute walk, the puddles became ankle high, covered our knees, rose to our waists, and when Amir stopped us again, I was facing straight up, water up to my ears in silence and blackness. Amir told us to turn and walk toward him: "We'll go in now, this is near where the spring emerges". He said to feel the stone at the dead end we were at. There was an opening at the bottom, around knee height. I made it to the wall and felt the stone and the opening. It was fascinating as we came toward the wall, all forced to look up in order to breathe and splashing a bit, how bizarre it was that there was no light reflecting on the water. At full stretch, your nose pointed directly up and the water's surface cut at your neck and ears. You could only rely on the splashing sounds for direction. Amir told us to trust him and that one at a time, we should grab the top of the opening with both hands, hold our breath, and pull ourselves through and on the other side, we would float to the top. He assured the hole would be big enough to fit through, and that we'd all fit on the other side. He would go first and call out to us for the next person to follow. We decided that after his call, I'd be next, and that was mostly because I didn't want to be left alone on the other side, but neither of them knew that. I grabbed the sides, held my breath and pushed. I swam directly up on the other side, it was narrow, and I hit the side walls a couple times to get my bearings. I emerged into the darkness of what was similar to a well. I could hear nothing again and Amir grabbed me to make sure I was alright. He called for the other hiker. When he came up, I could fully sense the cylinder we were in. The three of us left little room for movement, just enough to stay floating. It was black. Amir explained that the spring entered through a similar chamber adjacent to us and suggested that we be silent

through Kunitz's Robin at "the cold flesh of the blue/unappeasable sky".¹⁷⁰ A near-to-retiring professional pilot, Fabien, recounts a single evening in the Argentine night postal service through a trans-Andean storm during wartime. The moment one

for a couple minutes to hear the dripping next door. I was already listening. After the minutes passed, he instructed to just swim directly down, and when you reached the bottom, to feel for the opening and push through. We would return to where we were. I argued in my mind; return was impossible. Again he went first, and again I followed second for the same reason. When the three of us were together again, we followed Amir out. I remember the cold sensation of the water level dropping from my ears down my neck and to my waist, and the growing heaviness of my body. After we followed the stones' curve to the right and were able to reach either side of the rock with extended arms, I could see light entering the thin crack that was once behind us. We followed the opening we had entered back and sideways out, meeting our friends and continuing our hike near the Golan, not able to describe the experience.

170 "Robin Redbreast" by Stanley Kunitz (*The Testing-Tree*, 1971)

It was the dingiest bird
you ever saw, all the color
washed from him, as if
he had been standing in the rain,
friendless and stiff and cold,
since Eden went wrong.
In the house marked FOR SALE,
where nobody made a sound,
in the room where I lived
with an empty page, I had heard
the squawking of the jays
under the wild persimmons
tormenting him.
So I scooped him up
after they knocked him down,
in league with that ounce of heart
pounding in my palm,
that dumb beak gaping.
Poor thing! Poor foolish life!
without sense enough to stop
running in desperate circles,
needing my lucky help
to toss him back to his element.
But when I held him high,
fear clutched my hand,
for through the hole in his head,
cut whistle-clean...
through the old dried wound
between his eyes
where the hunter's brand
had tunneled out his wits...
I caught the cold flash of the blue
unappeasable sky.

comes face to face with his own fear is always transparent. A retired pilot himself, Saint-Exupéry asks questions similar to those of Mexican civilizations, ancient Egyptians, and Etruscans. He is after—What makes the sun come up in the morning? What makes the lights in the sky at night? Why do I love my wife?—with the same necessity that Michelangelo questioned the human body.

Two Marches ago, Scott took me on my sixth flight lesson in the East Coast Aero Club's single-engine Tomahawk. I climbed as instructed, 5,000 ft. heading 270° over Fort Devens, the abandoned military base, toward Fitchburg Airport from Hanscom Airport 20 miles west of Boston. It is a clear place to practice fundamental maneuvers. After I made my clearance turns, Scott grabbed the throttle and cut the engine. "Your engine is out, what do you do?" He faced me. I remember saying something stupid like, "Pull over to the side of the air and call AAA",¹⁷¹ or, "Call home and ask my mother to put Parker on the phone",¹⁷² because I couldn't describe my initial reaction—close your eyes and feel the way down. The blind skier, Kevin Alderton, has four percent vision after a gang attack and sets records wearing dark goggles.¹⁷³ He says he'd rather completely stunt his vision wearing the goggles than see a little light; otherwise, it's too frightening to see the way down. This is not an essay about suicide. I have never thought of it, nor tried. It's not an essay about survival or courage either. It is more about the weightlessness of V_y , maximum rate of climb, going into a stall when killing the engine and pulling back the ailerons in the Andean mountains at night and all you have to do is deliver the mail that is urgent enough to send you through terrible weather.

171 The American Automobile Association provides emergency road-side assistance.

172 Parker is my pet parakeet. She is about three inches tall, white with blue stripes. I've had her since she was a month old, nearly four years ago. At first we thought she was a he. This can be determined by the cere at the top of the beak: blue for boys, pink for girls. Parker's was purple at one month. I named her Parker after Charlie Parker, the jazz saxophonist. They called him 'the bird' because his fingers fluttered so accurately over the keys. So I called the bird Parker. She follows commands, like 'step up', 'home', and 'shoulder', and loves playing with a little bell attached to a wooden dowel. She eats apples from my mouth and copies my whistles—which I initially invented to copy hers—verbatim. I've been in England for seven months now, and when I call home, my mother puts me on speaker phone; I whistle and she whistles back. My entire family laughs, telling me she's running and flying around looking for me. It is funny, but makes me sad.

173 "Blind Skier Sets Downhill Record". *BBC News*. Web. 10 Sept 2007.

Empire (n) *em·pire* 2: supreme control; absolute sway: passion's empire over the mind.

I must define “man I love not” first. I saw Marcel Marceau, in his eighties, perform at Harvard’s American Repertory Theatre in late September, 2004. One short, mimed vignette among the night’s suite, began like most others. Of course it was silent, the stage was in darkness, and empty, except for a spotlight over a box in the center on which he was sitting. It was called “The Mask Maker” and Marcel was the diligent and careful craftsman proud of his attention to detail. Within the first minute, you knew the old man’s age, the type of shop he lived in, what floor it was on, when he had last eaten, the time of day—and he hadn’t, nor would he, leave his box. He had been making masks all day, blue ones with yellow feathers, scary red ones with orange hairs, elaborate ones with ringing wooden bells, and simple half-sized colorless ones that just covered the eyes. He put down his tools to admire and try on his work, and the scene ended in his discovery of two simple masks: happy and sad. Rotating between the two in growing flirtatious excitement, the happy mask got stuck on his face. Surrendering to a number of emotions and increased frustration at his inability to separate from the happy mask, he diminished, an airless slouch in exhaustion. Sad, with the happy mask remaining on his face.

I’m not certain what urges a man to discuss Egyptian pyramids over a trans-Andean storm, but it has been a gift to humankind. Among the night’s constellations is the “sparkling” of “sheltered human life”¹⁷⁴ below that Fabien sees as he slows his 500 horse-power engine to land over the San Julian village. Men think their lamp brightens only a small room, but from miles above, one sees a flickering ensemble, as if each were “a desperate signal”, or perhaps a collective measurement of hope.¹⁷⁵ There’s a difference between stars and grains of sand: among the many below, we must work hard to point to one. I have been printing on presses at the Royal College of Art dating back to the 1800s that were paraded for Queen Victoria at the Great

174 Saint-Exupéry, *Night Flight*, 8—“Now every place that sheltered human life was sparkling”.

175 Saint-Exupéry, 11—“They think, these peasants, that their lamp shines only for that little table; but, from fifty miles away, some one has felt the summons of their light, as though it were a desperate signal from some lonely island, flashed by shipwrecked men toward the sea”.

Exhibition—it makes them special, but doesn't make your prints look any better. Not much is left of man with a tool. There's an appealing sound to a blacksmith and his anvil, even if it only exists in Goya's forge on East 70th Street.¹⁷⁶ And the application of paint resonates from the forge of Vulcan, the metalworker of the Olympian gods.

One day an engineer had remarked to Rivière [chief of air mail services], as they were bending above a wounded man, beside a bridge that was being erected: "Is the bridge worth a man's crushed face?" Not one of the peasants using the road would ever have wished to mutilate his face so hideously just to save the extra walk to the next bridge. "[Is] the welfare of the community...just the sum of individual welfares [?]...Even though human life may be the most precious thing on earth, we always behave as if there were something of higher value than human life...But what thing?"¹⁷⁷

When two colors of similar value are placed next to each other, a certain vibration occurs in the waves, similar to peeling a lemon with a cut thumb, and then holding the peel by Plath's "plush" red.¹⁷⁸ In a Zurbarán still life, there is first a

176 Goya, Francisco de. *The Forge*, (c1815-1820). The Frick Collection, 1 East 70th Street, New York, New York—Figure 51.

177 Saint-Exupéry, 134-135

178 "Cut" by Sylvia Plath (*Ariel*, 1965)

What a thrill ---
My thumb instead of an onion.
The top quite gone
Except for a sort of a hinge

Of skin,
A flap like a hat,
Dead white.
Then that red plush.

Little pilgrim,
The Indian's axed your scalp.
Your turkey wattle
Carpet rolls

Straight from the heart.
I step on it,
Clutching my bottle
Of pink fizz.

disturbance or vibration, and the contour is in its service.¹⁷⁹ The vibration in the womb—if it were not for science—I would argue, is not man, but what will inevitably devour him. What consumes animal or man, “the interval before meat”,¹⁸⁰ is this beautifully eternal disturbance.

Rivière’s “dark sense of duty,...worlds away from ordinary feelings”, recalls the Incan sun-god temple, whose ruins still tower on a mountain today. Driven to build “something the desert would never engulf”, the “primeval leader...may have

A celebration, this is.
Out of a gap
A million soldiers run,
Redcoats, every one.

Whose side are they on?
O my
Homunculus, I am ill.
I have taken a pill to kill

The thin
Papery feeling.
Saboteur,
Kamikaze man ---

The stain on your
Gauze Ku Klux Klan
Babushka
Darkens and tarnishes and when

The balled
Pulp of your heart
Confronts its small
Mill of silence

How you jump ---
Trepanned veteran,
Dirty girl,
Thumb stump.

On February 11, 1963, Plath took her own life, placing her head in the oven in her kitchen while the gas was turned on.

179 Didi-Huberman, 61

180 White, *The Tree of Man*, 9—“So the sharp dog looked. Hunger had caused him to place his paws delicately. His yellow eyes consumed the man in the interval before meat”.

Patrick White, Australian author (1912-1990), is regarded one of the major English-language novelists of the 20th century. His fiction employs shifting narrative vantages. In 1973, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

had scant compassion for man's sufferings, but he had boundless pity for his [dust-fated] race". The "strange love" and "ruthlessness" of this leader compelled his civilization, a "form of happiness [in] shackles...to drag this temple up the mountainside [and]...raise up their eternity".¹⁸¹ It is when you're devoted to some thing that is greater than yourself, something with a greater meaning, that you lose the void that is otherwise inevitable. Is that what makes something religious? In *Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze quotes Bacon saying, "I wanted to paint the scream more than the horror", and suggests that the horror is multiplied because it is inferred from the scream, and not the reverse.¹⁸² Do I want to paint the scream in the way *The Iliad* is not about the Trojan War, but about Achilles' anger? Is it enough to howl¹⁸³ a Moloch¹⁸⁴ the way Kevin read it the night we met Noam Chomsky?¹⁸⁵

181 Saint-Exupéry, 136-7—"To love, only to love, leads nowhere. Rivière knew a dark sense of duty, greater than that of love. And deep within it there might lie another emotion and a tender one, but worlds away from ordinary feelings. He recalled a phrase that he once had read: 'The one thing is to make them everlasting....That which you seek within yourself will die.' He remembered a temple of the sun-god, built by the ancient Incas of Peru. Tall menhirs on a mountain. But for these what would be left of all that mighty civilization which with its massive stones weighs heavy, like a dark regret, on modern man? Under the mandate of what strange love, what ruthlessness, did that primeval leader of men compel his hordes to drag this temple up the mountainside, bidding them raise up their eternity? And now another picture rose in Rivière's mind; the people of the little towns, strolling by nights around their bandstands. That form of happiness, those shackles...he thought. The leader of those ancient races may have had scant compassion for man's sufferings, but he had a boundless pity for his race, doomed to be blotted out beneath a sea of sand. And so he bade his folk set up these stones at least, something the desert never would engulf".

182 Deleuze, *Logic of Sensation*, 34—"Bacon has always tried to eliminate the 'sensational', that is, the primary figuration of that which provokes a violent sensation. This is the meaning of the formula, 'I wanted to paint the scream more than the horror'. When he paints the screaming Pope, there is nothing that might cause the horror, and the curtain in front of the Pope is not only a way of isolating him, of shielding him from view; it is rather the way in which the Pope himself sees nothing, and screams before the invisible. Thus neutralized, the horror is multiplied because it is inferred from the scream, and not the reverse...Bacon harbors within himself all the violence of Ireland, and the violence of Nazism, the violence of war".

183 Allen Ginsberg, principal poet of the Beat Generation, wrote the poem, *Howl*, in 1955. It is dedicated to Ginsberg's friend Carl Solomon (1928-1993), whom he met at a psychiatric hospital in 1949. It begins:

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by
madness, starving hysterical naked

Its last section, a footnote, begins:

"Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy!
Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy!"

184 Moloch, translated into ‘King’ in Masoretic Hebrew text, is also the name of a Phoenician god and a specific form of sacrifice. Leviticus, Kings, and Jeremiah texts use the word as ‘seed’ or ‘offspring’. It has been used in descriptions of idols, referred to as a rebel angel in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, and appears in medieval demonology as the Prince of Hell.

185 Noam Chomsky gave a talk at Brandeis University on March 5, 2002. Kevin Robinson and I went early and were barely among the last ten people in line allowed into the lecture hall. Chomsky said Judaism was a polytheistic religion quoting, “Love thou God above all other Gods.” He knew the Jewish contingency at Brandeis University was large, and must have wanted to stir the crowd. You could hear the rustling anger, conversation buildup, and some people walked out of the theater. Why make an argument, just to argue, to upset someone or to be different? It was a loose tangent to his lecture, and clearly thrown in with little relevance to organization of thoughts for the evening. Later that night in the dorms, Kevin read the guts of *Howl’s* Moloch.

He read these parts loudest:
(from section II)

What sphinx of cement and aluminum bashed open
their skulls and ate up their brains and imagi-
nation?

Moloch! Solitude! Filth! Ugliness! Ashcans and unob-
tainable dollars! Children screaming under the
stairways! Boys sobbing in armies! Old men
weeping in the parks!

Moloch! Moloch! Nightmare of Moloch! Moloch the
loveless! Mental Moloch! Moloch the heavy
judger of men!

Moloch the incomprehensible prison! Moloch the
crossbone soulless jailhouse and Congress of
sorrows! Moloch whose buildings are judgment!
Moloch the vast stone of war! Moloch the stun-
ned governments!

...

Moloch in whom I sit lonely! Moloch in whom I dream
Angels! Crazy in Moloch! Cocksucker in
Moloch! Lacklove and manless in Moloch!

Moloch who entered my soul early! Moloch in whom
I am a consciousness without a body! Moloch
who frightened me out of my natural ecstasy!
Moloch whom I abandon! Wake up in Moloch!
Light streaming out of the sky!

Moloch! Moloch! Robot apartments! invisible suburbs!
skeleton treasuries! blind capitals! demonic
industries! spectral nations! invincible mad
houses! granite cocks! monstrous bombs!

They broke their backs lifting Moloch to Heaven! Pave-
ments, trees, radios, tons! lifting the city to
Heaven which exists and is everywhere about
us!

Visions! omens! hallucinations! miracles! ecstasies!
gone down the American river!

Dreams! adorations! illuminations! religions! the whole
boatload of sensitive bullshit!

Perhaps it is a matter of developing Cyrus' strategies of war for my own anabasis¹⁸⁶ and hiding them under Huxley's cloth.¹⁸⁷

More vomit-inducing than touching the nudity of a chicken neck is spending a lifetime on a purpose and then painting over it. Deleuze writes that the violence of paint is incomparable to that of war, as "the former is inseparable from its direct action on the nervous system".¹⁸⁸ Forcing death by one's own volition surpasses the act of telling or being told to do so. It refuses the beauty that is often misunderstood as violence in Hirst's dying flies¹⁸⁹ or Billingham's¹⁹⁰ caged tiger. Bacon "passes through the horror of the crucifixions, and especially the fragment of the crucifixion, or the head of meat, or the bloody suitcase,...[to a place where] even bullfights are

186 *Anabasis* is a work of Greek writer, Xenophon. It tells of Cyrus the Younger's expedition to destroy his brother and take the throne of Persia. Set out from Sardis in the Spring of 401 B.C., it is followed by a retreat to the Black Sea, Cyrus' death, and the return of his army. The Greek term "anabasis" is defined as a journey into a country's interior from the coast. Strategies of war become key to engulfing and taking possession of a center.

187 In *The Doors of Perception* (1956), Aldous Huxley illuminates drapery in paintings and sculptures as the "non-representational nine-tenths of a Madonna or an Apostle [that] may be just as important qualitatively as they are in quantity". His vivid descriptions study the complexity of how crumpled wool or linen "very often set the tone of the whole work of art" (31).

188 Deleuze, *Logic of Sensation*, 34—"He passes through the horror of the crucifixions, and especially the fragment of the crucifixion, or the head of meat, or the bloody suitcase...even the bullfights are too dramatic. In the end, the maximum violence will be found in the seated or crouching Figures, which are subjected to neither torture nor brutality, to which nothing visible happens, and yet which manifest the power of the paint all the more. This is because violence has two very different meanings. When talking about the violence of paint, it's nothing to do with the violence of war. The violence of sensation is opposed to the violence of the represented (the sensational, the cliché). The former is inseparable from its direct action on the nervous system, the levels through which it passes, the domains it traverses: being itself a Figure, it must be nothing of the nature of a represented object. It is the same with Artaud: cruelty is not what one believes it to be, and depends less and less on what is represented".

189 In *A Thousand Years* (1990), Damien Hirst made an installation of flies in a glass container. As soon as they emerge from their maggot state, they fly into an Insect-O-Cutor and die—Figure 52.

190 British artist, Richard Billingham, has been filming caged animals at zoos across the United Kingdom, Europe, and South America, recording the impact of confined spaces on animal behavior.

too dramatic”.¹⁹¹ As with Artaud¹⁹²: “cruelty is not what one believes it to be, and depends less and less on what is represented”.¹⁹³ The violence in Jeff Wall’s *Dead Troops Talking* is not in the recreation or staging of war, in fact, it’s a failure at that; the atrocity lies in his insistence to replicate it. The brutality in De Kooning’s *women*¹⁹⁴ is in the instinctive, guttural nature of the painting. Not as in Freud’s¹⁹⁵ fleshiness, but in a speed and destruction of the figure. The energy awakened by this speed does not benefit a construction nor an excitement; it’s a confident stroke, yet contains fear—not in a running away or toward death, but into a destruction—into that of himself. The violence lies there, in the smack of the sticking between slips¹⁹⁶, in the covering of previous marks to reveal. When a fox is caught in a trap, it will chew its own leg off to set itself free. Aristotle’s praxis¹⁹⁷ suggests man would do the same. It is this devouring and not man that I love. We see things devouring other things, we devour ourselves, we devour each other. And it’s not Schutz’s¹⁹⁸ devouring of each other; but a devouring that has more to do with Luria’s¹⁹⁹

191 Deleuze, *Logic of Sensation*, 34 (see Footnote xxi)

192 Antonin Artaud, French (1896-1948), was a playwright, poet, actor and director. In his conceptual “Theatre of Cruelty”, Artaud believed that theatre should be heightened to reality. He combined sound, lighting, and performance to such a point of disturbing realism that the audience was often made sick. (See Artaud's essays, *The Theatre and Its Double*, originally printed 1938).

193 Deleuze, *Logic of Sensation*, 34 (see Footnote xxi)

194 Specifically, De Kooning’s *Woman I*, 1950-52 — Figure 53.

195 Lucian Freud (b. 1922) British painter. His paint has the thick, penetrable, malleable, hydrated, transparent, crusty, and other conditions of raw flesh— Figure 54.

196 Willem de Kooning, American painter (1904-1997), would at times pour areas of water over his canvas. Since oil and water repel one another, as he pulled his stroke, the brush would slip over the water-covered areas and stick where it met the canvas.

197 The Greeks made a distinction between producing and doing: poesis and praxis; Aristotle’s praxis related man to animal.

198 Dana Schutz (b. 1976), received her MFA in painting from Columbia in 2002, and lives and works in New York. Her paintings such as *Devourer*, 2004, and *Mulch*, 2004, depict self-eaters— Figure 55.

199 Rabbi Isaac Luria (1534–1572) was a Jewish mystic in Safed and a scholar and student of the Zohar, a major work of the Kabbalah.

investigation of the theological problem—If God is everything and everywhere, then how is there a place for creation? His Gnostic thought considers God withdrawing himself, in order to make space to create.

After the devouring, only the bones—the cores of things—remain; and their secrets can be revealed. Everything that is funny is actually scary. Terrifying, in fact. So as the ‘scream’, I paint what is hilarious to me. There must always be a ladder for myself—it is an escape, strategy, safety, a decoy, a method for climbing. There is Jacob’s ladder and the Ascension, but perhaps it is the Tower of Babel that’s most hysterical. What would Daedalus²⁰⁰ construct for the regions of air if he had rungs instead of feathers? And what happens when I turn a painting upside down, some bizarre switch of identity between heaven and earth? Kiefer’s paintings appear to relate the ordering of the heavens—angels, arc angels, seraphim, cherubs—to ancient traditions of going up and down.

Hero of Alexandria’s *Pneumatics* assembles a sculpture of childhood toys, gears, and altars, with the meaning of Campbell’s bliss.²⁰¹ Written in 1 B.C.E., it is a scroll of 78 inventions or magic tricks at a time when people particularly conflated the ideas of science and magic even more so than today. In number 37, Hero describes a system that moved temple doors from underneath an altar using pulleys and evaporating water, thereby convincing society—through illusion—that he had summoned the gods.

Guston considers that if we were to make a list of inspirations from which we paint, we’d probably find anger, boredom, and disgust at the top.²⁰² I had often tried writing down some ideas I was thinking about—it was the biggest bunch of crap I ever saw. It’s one thing to think, but to write it down is different. It starts to

200 In Greek mythology, Daedalus, Icarus’s father, watches his son fall into the sea and cries, bitterly lamenting his own arts.

Daedalus eventually flies to Sicily, where he builds a temple to Apollo, and hangs up his wings, an offering to the god.

201 Joseph Campbell (1904-1987), wrote and was interviewed on heroes, myths, and sacrifice. It upsets me that he was an anti-Semite (perhaps Heidegger too for that matter). This is where his hero stops and mine begins.

202 *Philip Guston: A Life Lived*, dir: Michael Blackwood, 1980.

smell bad. I've thrown out many of those notebooks, and paintings too for that matter.

I keep my favorite childhood toys in a red wagon in my studio—I have always had a hard time making sense of them. A Chinese finger trap (tightens when attempting to remove it). A magic wand. The pile grows, accumulating more in weight than mass. I have also booby-trapped my studio, by hiding important and non-important things in buckets suspended from pipes in the ceiling. In the corner is a skeleton with wind-up chattering teeth for a skull. Brancusi carefully positioned everything within his studio.²⁰³ On the third floor of the Tate Modern, Joseph Beuys' *Lightning with Stag in its Glare*²⁰⁴ always stands out as similarly arranged, with Uglow's²⁰⁵ exactness in measurement. I've also kept a gyroscope in the Radio-Flyer wagon in my studio. Fascinated by its manipulation of the forces since ten years old when I received it as a gift from my cousin visiting America, I would wind the string around the weight, quickly pull, and place the tip back onto the string. In wonderment of its balance, it's only in my twenties that I understand the torturing gift—the ability to center on such a fine point by pressing up against all edges of torqued forces simultaneously, and spinning really fast.

203 Edward Steichen's photograph of Brancusi in his Paris studio is included in his *The Early Years, 1900-1927*. And of course Brancusi photographed his studio himself (see Brancusi, Constantin. *Brancusi, The Sculptor as Photographer / Essay by Hilton Kramer*, 1979) — Figure 56.

I made soup for art critic, Hilton Kramer, in John Walker's studio/home in Maine. I remember how nervous I was, as his wife is a gourmet chef.

204 Beuys, Joseph. *Lightning with Stag in its Glare*, 1958-85—Figure 57.

205 Euan Uglow, British (1932-2000), painted meticulously and directly from life. While articulating precise planes with sharply defined edges and subtle changes in color, his surfaces reveal small horizontal and vertical marks, where carefully measured coordinates have been recorded to be verified against reality. *Root Five Nude* (1976) is an example—Figure 58.

Empire (n) *em·pire* 3: capitalized [Empire State, nickname for New York]: a juicy apple with dark red skin that is a cross between a McIntosh apple and a Red Delicious apple.

I remember growing up in America and watching Sesame Street with my parents, Israeli immigrants, all learning English together. My father cut women's coats in a factory in Paterson, New Jersey. He has done so for the past 25 years. I remember filling out bank and insurance forms in English with him at nine years old. I was a brat and consistently gave my mother a hard time while writing her Hebrew school students' report cards for her. (I wondered, if the students' parents had compared report cards, whether they would catch the same phrases or if they could tell it had been written by a 10-year-old.) My mother's education was nothing to be proud of; my father's was a bit more impressive, in that he finished high school and was accepted to a vocational school after the army. That after the army, his spot was filled and he wasn't allowed to enroll is sad, but irrelevant. My mother's father was a tailor. The official tailor for the Sultan of Iraq. They didn't like Jews there. My grandfather died of a stroke in Iraq, but my grandmother escaped to Israel with her four daughters thanks to him setting everything up. My mother, the youngest daughter, arrived in Israel before she was one year old.

For nearly a year, I've been drawing weekly at the Tate Britain entirely from Turner's painting, *Decline of the Carthaginian Empire*.²⁰⁶ Many figures are twisted and turning in devastation, others are bending down and working, nearly all are concealing their smiles and laughter at the inevitable destruction. Has my empire been destroyed? Which one? Religious or familial roots? America or Israel? Land? And what happens when an empire is destroyed? Is another one built? After Fra Angelico, Titian, and Rembrandt, was it El Greco and Goya that continued? After his death, Picasso's studio in Mougins, south of France, was found packed with Otto Benesch's six volumes of Rembrandt drawings.²⁰⁷ Guston had Giotto and Masaccio frescoes on his studio wall over his desk at his death.²⁰⁸ Completing the circle, while Fra Angelico was creating frescoes for the convent of San Marco, he was reading

206 Turner, William. *Decline of the Carthaginian Empire*. 1817— Figure, 59.

207 Schama, "Rembrandt's Ghost", 2007

208 This detail can be found in *Night Studio*, p. 47, a memoir written by Musa Mayer, Guston's daughter, after his death.

translated works of Albertus Magnus, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Aristotle, and other Greek fathers which were being collected for Niccolo Niccoli's library down the hall from his cell.²⁰⁹

Elliot's *Tradition and the Individual Talent* explains that "the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past", and that this knowledge carries with it an enormous responsibility.²¹⁰ Over the past nine months, I spent Wednesday nights at the National Gallery (it is open until 9 pm on Wednesdays²¹¹), drawing relationships in which one thing made another appear larger than it was: the construction of historical and mythological space, landscapes against columns, stairs, small plants set against vast nature, control of light, the reflections of the paintings on the museum floors, the structure of the gallery rooms themselves. My father called last week and in conversation asked, "So you're studying Fine Art, right?" I explained that I earned an MFA in painting at Boston University in Massachusetts, received an MA in printmaking at the Royal College of Art in London, and was working toward a PhD through Sydney College of the Arts as well. Embarrassed, he followed, "Shows you how much I know". I stopped him. "No, Dad, it shows much how much you want to know". Perhaps empires don't decline or fall, but rather get built upon. The destruction and falling is confined within our

209 Didi-Huberman, *Dissemblance and Figuration*, 17—"At the moment Fra Angelico was producing the frescoes for the cells of the convent of San Marco, a famous library was being founded on the very premises, a result of the extraordinary collection of manuscripts assembled by the erudite Niccolo Niccoli...On the same floor as the convent, Fra Angelico could thus read at his leisure the great texts of Albertus Magnus and Saint Thomas Aquinas, as well as those of Aristotle, Saint Augustine, and the most famous Greek fathers, whose works had been recopied and translated. In particular, there were in this library two collections of texts by Albertus Magnus commenting on Aristotle's *Physics*".

210 T.S. Eliot writes in his essay, *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, that "what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it...whoever has approved this idea of order...will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past." Eliot concludes: "[one] who is aware of this will be aware of great difficulties and responsibilities" (Eliot, 4).

211 The National Gallery is really open until 8:30pm. That's when the guards who are already getting anxious to leave come to remind you that the museum will be closing shortly every five minutes until 8:50, when they play an uninteresting game of telephone and 'the museum is now closed' gets passed across gallery rooms from one guard to the next. The visitors are funneled out through the front doors and then pointed and stared at down the stairs to the front patio.

shallow sense of perception. Perhaps empires are not fulfilled nor celebrated by the empty weightlessness of man, but in what man leaves behind. This is not an essay about man's quest for immortality, but more about the love of that which devours him, that survives to be built upon.

Decline

Decline (v) *di•klahyn* 1: to refuse; to express inability or reluctance to accept.

If every single day / at exactly the same stroke of the clock, / one were to perform the same single act; like a virtual, unchanging system, every day at the same time. / The world would be changed / Yes, something would change. / It would have to. / One could wake up in the morning, let's say, get up at exactly seven, / go to the bathroom, pour a glass of water from the tap, / and flush it down the toilet.

—A father, speaking to his mute son while planting a tree,
Opening sequence, *Sacrifice* (Andrei Tarkovsky, 1986, Film)

This past December, my grandfather was walking the same route home from work that he has for the past forty-five years. He lived and worked on the same street in Jerusalem, Keren Kayemet, L'Yisrael. Its direct translation is a ray of light, true and lasting, upon Israel. It is also the name of an organization formed during the creation of the state of Israel to which citizens could donate to plant trees, grow crops, make parks, and build streets to enrich the land. This is the home my father grew up in with his two brothers. My great grandfather, after his wife passed, also moved into this home, number 22; he moved in with his son, my grandfather. I lived in this home with my grandparents for months at a time as a child while my father was working in America, my mother was staying an hour away in Tel Aviv with my younger brother, and my cousins, aunts, and uncles were busy with school and work. The neighborhood, Rehavia, is quaint, and in central Jerusalem. I used to walk into the 'old city' of Jerusalem through Jaffa Gate in twenty minutes. Within the first minutes, and still on Keren Kayemet, I would pass my father's primary school, now the post office, and the salon where my grandmother got her hair²¹² and nails done once a week and the pharmacy where she got me powder for the chicken pox, the shoe maker, David, who still greets me with a smile, and the shop where my grandfather would treat me to falafel with 'an extra ball for the kid'. My grandmother would buy white salty cheese (Bulgarian) that she poured a salt-water mixture over and kept in a deep butter-stick-length white and emerald china dish. We'd eat that and fresh loaves that my grandfather had picked up earlier, on his first walk home from opening his electronic and repair shop at 6am. The bakery shop was on Keren Kayemet as well, between his shop and the house. Sometimes, if I was lucky enough to wake up at 5am by my grandfather's shower, I could walk down

212 Dudu was her hairstylist.

Keren Kayemet with him to watch him turn the key thirteen times to the right at the shop's front gate, which he'd then fold over once to open the front door and take out the six types of ladders from the entrance to display outside his shop—there was no room inside—and then, of course, lock it again but only four times and walk back home for breakfast and the news. My grandfather took this walk home three times each day, each time walking up the two short flights—thirty-three or thirty-four stairs, depends who's counting—to his front door. And all this history passes, in the five-minute walk home from my grandfather's shop, let alone the nearby outskirts of Jerusalem's 1000 B.C. walls.

Another thing that can happen in the course of a lifetime walking home from work is this. On this recent December afternoon, a man, in his thirties, had followed my grandfather up the stairwell and as he took out his keys, strangled him from behind. He gripped him around the throat and punched him repeatedly in the head. In his eighty-fifth year, my grandfather managed to bite the man's hand, get into his home, and lock the door behind him before falling onto the floor. Bleeding, with a broken nose, and dizzy each time he attempted to get up for the phone, he gained enough consciousness to call Bentzi, the youngest of his sons, with the mobile phone in his pocket. After rushing to the hospital, the police capturing the rotten disgrace, and my grandfather's return home, he—a man who, at the age of sixteen, joined an underground movement to bring Israel independence, who fought in three wars, raised a family and country with his wife and their friends, an empire with great grandchildren—after three weeks, was still afraid at home at night.

He left 22 Keren Kayemet. The three sons helped him find a place at an assisted living community and emptied and sold the home. It's bizarre to witness the silence of the moment when generations are changed; to see the strength of a man ripping away what he has built with his own two hands. "We do not pray for immortality...but only not to see our acts and all things stripped suddenly of all their meaning;...it's then that the utter emptiness of everything reveals itself".²¹³ It's not misery I'm concerned with, but the aggregates of courage accumulating in Tarkovsky's toilet—in the visible, with and without a frame. Saint-Exupéry questions why Plato places courage in the last degree of virtues in a letter written on his Casablanca-Dakar air-route: As an arrogant jumble of dishonorable feelings

213 Saint-Exupéry, 169-170. As Fabien's wife waits at Rivière's desk to hear of her husband's return from flight, Rivière thinks.

(anger, vanity, obstinacy), courage is “rather a pleasant feeling. [But] when it happens at night, another feeling creeps into it”; risk at a time of necessity; some abrupt confidence—the moment you feel as if you’ve “done something immensely silly”—is when courage exposes a greatness. “I will never again admire a merely brave man”.²¹⁴

In an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course at the age of sixteen, I remember learning that when a man has a heart attack, his heart does not stop, but rather it receives too many simultaneous signals. When we send 1000 volts through the heart with a defibrillator, we aren’t trying to restart a man’s heart, but stop it entirely for a moment, so that it has the chance to restart itself. Painting has this complicated existence, the need to reinvent itself from the beginning at any given moment.

“A cyclone, that’s nothing. A man just saves his skin!”, Fabien says, entering grey storm clouds. “It’s what comes before it—the thing one meets upon the way”.²¹⁵ This is not at all to say a painting must be struggled with in order to be good, but, there is a need to have experienced something with it. And there’s yet, another thing to consider: leaving the storm. “Violent action leaves little trace behind”, recollections are lost, and “only one clear memory remains”.²¹⁶ A simplicity occurs. I tended to see additions in my grandfather’s life; a ‘this and that and that’. Where really, the silence that followed emphasized a simplicity, the whole, that was there always. I enjoy a painting that looks as though it was made in one sitting. This essay is not a complex version of the *Giving Tree*,²¹⁷ about some personal conflict with ending, or the decline of Promethean virtues, but about Kevin and me walking through the streets of Boston inventing histories behind street names,²¹⁸ Coltrane

214 Gide, Andre, *Preface*, qtd. in Saint-Exupéry, pg. x

215 Saint-Exupéry, 28

216 Saint-Exupéry, 28—“Violent action leaves little trace behind it and he had no recollection of the gusts that buffeted him then from side to side. Only one clear memory remained; the battle in a welter of gray flames”.

217 *The Giving Tree* is Shel Silverstein’s 1964 children’s book describing a relationship between a tree that selflessly gives and a boy that takes and ends with the tree left as a stump at the end of its life—with nothing left to give—and even then, the boy needs a place to rest and has the stump to sit on.

carrying his audience through a thirty-minute solo,²¹⁹ the moment when your feet are kicking and you tilt your head back on the swing at thirteen years old at Verona Park and see what it is that you're really doing, and that is not even entirely it. Mostly, it's that somewhere in the golden dust of Jerusalem, "so it would always be. Always. For the first time in his life, this veteran fighter caught himself feeling tired".²²⁰

218 When we were studying at Brandeis University, Kevin and I would take long walks through Waltham at night. One night, he started by reading the street name, Vernon, and began creating the account of its history—how it came to be called Vernon St. Short, Long, and Main were easier, but some turns were more challenging.

219 John Coltrane (1926–1967) was an American jazz saxophonist and composer. He was constantly defining himself, even when he was playing with Thelonious Monk and later with Miles Davis. Coltrane's distinct sound, a strong and brash tone played with tenderness, often created a melancholy color.

Toward the end of his career, Coltrane would take extended solos, often exceeding thirty minutes, yet he was able to keep the attention of his audience and colleagues. He would direct his band members to leave the stage, and play duets with drummer Elvin Jones for up to an hour.

"The construction of his solos used advanced harmonics, [but most capturing was] the strange way the notes succeeded each other and the speed with which they were played" (Thomas, 89).

220 Saint-Exupéry, 16—"And so it would always be. Always. For the first time in his life, this veteran fighter caught himself feeling tired".

Decline (n) *di•klayn* 2: A disease that weakens or wastes the body, especially a gradual deterioration.

There's a stillness after violence. Often I've found it falsely referred to as a coldness. It's the same stillness in Vermeer paintings, where the figure reading is numbed at the center, fixed by her surroundings. She can't move, because if she did it would hurt her too much.

There's something spiritual about those paintings too. My father would yell sometimes, at my brother or me at the dinner table; he would never hurt us, it was just a powerful compression into silence. I would walk over to the window and look out—to make sure the birds were still chirping, the trees were moving to a breeze. It was kind of funny and would relieve the moment, but I wasn't entirely kidding.

I have always been fascinated by the way El Greco painted the ropes cinching the robes of religious figures and clergy. They distinctly remind me of the space around the left hand of Rembrandt's self-portrait hanging in the Frick Collection. Maybe it's something about painting a certain tension, perhaps it's that of the air holding something which itself is limp. Sometimes I feel that in the great paintings, the air holds everything in place rather than the objects that should be pushing, pulling, and pressing.

It's funny to imagine all artists wearing black to their studios, as if they're going to a funeral. The inconsistency isn't with whether or not they are going to a funeral, but how it is observed. During the Mexican festivity of Día de los Muertos, Day of the Dead (Aztec in origin), gravesites are decorated and families engage in picnics there with their relatives, deceased and alive. Perhaps that's when you join the human race: when the preciousness of loss is overtaken by birth. Maybe the reason for art, or why I paint, is to get comfortable with not being afraid of death.²²¹

221 From a conversation with Richard Ryan, American painter and mentor (b. 1950), in my studio, Boston, MA, USA.

Decline (n) *di•klahyn* 3: a failing or gradual loss, as in strength, character, power, or value; deterioration; progress downward or toward the close, as of the sun or the day.

There's an afterlife to a story, similar to that in a painting. Benjamin describes the reproduction that occurs in the translation from the storyteller.²²² How this alters our understanding of tradition is key.

222 "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Work of Nikolai Leskov" (1968) is part of a collection of essays by Walter Benjamin entitled *Illuminations*.

Monument

Monument (n) *mon•yub•ment* 1: something venerated for its enduring historic significance or association with a notable past person or thing.

Carl Belz's²²³ last class was held at Brandeis University in 2002. He was an old, tall man then, a former basketball player, with a jointed metal brace on his leg like Forrest Gump.²²⁴ It was a small class, only seven of us in a narrow room across from the Rose Art Museum, and him at the head of the table. The two projectors were always running before we arrived, and he would come in late with the carousels; I'd usually be startled out of reading the *American Indian Art* journals that were stacked against the corner of the room. You would look up—you had to—because of his height, you'd hear the squeak of his metal brace with every step, and then came a long smile, scanning each of us. I was the youngest one; the others were all postgraduates in their thirties and forties, painters, sculptors, art historians, all critics. The first classes were composed like Bacon's triptychs, separated into light, color, and time.²²⁵ The next classes were about his interviews with Duchamp, sitting across the chess table, and then into more contemporary American art. But always, as he would show slides, he would talk in his slow, smoky thrill. He'd place his hero, basketball hands on the table, and lean almost into a push-up to rise in his talk. And with the hunch of a tall, old man, he'd squeak the ten slow, limped steps around to the other end of the table; and he would reach down, palming our heads for support with each. I don't think he caught on, but sometimes before class, we'd rearrange who sat on the right wing of the table to be the head supports for that class. He would continue talking on the walk to the other end, and while standing in the projection, he'd turn to look for himself, sit on the table, or push further back and stretch his legs down it, the silhouette of his head and the length of his arms moving against some Motherwell, Frankenthaler, Diebenkorn, or another friend's work. Somehow, I'd always be sitting by the metal brace. To get a better look from there, he'd sometimes push forward, then up, and into something between a lean and a fall onto the wall and, dissolving into the painting, he'd point while holding on. What's

223 Carl Belz was Director of the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, a curator, critic, and art historian.

224 *Forrest Gump*, dir: Robert Zemeckis, Paramount Pictures, 1994.

225 Deleuze, *Logic of Sensation*, 70—"Even Bacon's 'isolated paintings' are composed like triptychs: separation of light, color and time".

even more critical than the squeak in the brace of a tower, is that a monument in that class, to him, was when everything else in the room became insignificant, irrelevant, inconsequential—when *the painting* held up the wall.

Size is a complex matter. I always get upset with people looking at Matisse's *Red Room* at the MOMA. Even scholars in art step away to observe its dimensions, attempting to rediscover its perspectives. He didn't paint it from ten feet away. For me, it has always been at the two- and one-foot distance, the life and intimacy with a line, where the painting is its largest, where the field of red dominates, even seems endless—endless in the way Rodin's edges to the *Gates of Hell* don't end but rather keep changing direction. The potential energy of an Auerbach sustains its life. It is as if there is one line you could pull away, and all the brains and guts would fall out. They are never tied in some sort of a conclusion or bow, but left for an unraveling. Giacometti's lines are created as weight, perhaps a weight stronger than gravity—not holding the figure in a seat, but fixing the head into a definitive position in space—like in my mother's beautiful description of my name.

Aithan in Hebrew, she would tell me growing up, means 'long-lasting'; like the light above an ark cradling the Torah, like the lights of the Maccabee soldiers, or the Holy of Holies. At Jewish funerals, stones are placed on the grave rather than lilies. Part of this, is a continued participation in a burial, but moreso, a flower wilts or can blow in the wind, and a stone is 'Aithan', and long-lasting. Somewhere between this importance and unimportance is where scale is probably best defined; and according to Einstein's relativity, these stones are sturdier than the Rollright Stones²²⁶ or the sun setting over Belas Knap²²⁷. The precise position of each cross in

226 In February of 2007, I visited The Rollright Stones outside of Long Compton, England. They are a complex of megalithic monuments in close proximity: 1) a stone circle 33 meters in diameter, made of a series of 70 closely-spaced stones, which were positioned in the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age, 2) a monolith, carbon-dated to 1792 B.C., and 3) the burial chamber of an early or middle Neolithic tomb.

227 Belas Knap is a Neolithic long barrow, situated between Cheltenham and Winchcombe in Gloucestershire, England. I drove there and climbed Cleeve Hill to see the sun setting from it last February.

The mound comprises four burial chambers formed of upright stone slabs and linked by dry-stone walling. The main entrance to the barrow was a false one, made to fool grave-robbars.

Rembrandt's *Three Crosses* etching at the British Museum is important, but how deeply buried each is, anchored below the surface, takes more significance. Then of course, is the question of how the figures surrounding each cross hold it in place, even its pressure into the earth.

Scale is altered by the dynamic of getting up close and the feasibility of touching something. I remember being in the basement of the Royal Academy in September 2006, while a Rodin show²²⁸ was being put on upstairs. Leaning on a Rodin that hadn't made the show, was another painter fraternizing after drawing class, a flower with no color yet. Something had been uprooted, the scale was altered and threw off my balance.

Size emerges from juxtaposed geometries of structures and figures. Sure. I have stood in front of the unicorn tapestries at the Metropolitan Museum's Cloisters²²⁹ and Uccello's *Battle of San Romano*²³⁰ at London's National Gallery. The true measure of size is in tension—tension built by geometries colliding with the edges of the canvas, and in turn, the pressure of this force on the canvas at the point it meets the wall it hangs against. Perhaps measuring the scale of brush strokes—say, the width and length of those composing a Chardin cherry—or comparing the marks' sizes to those constructing the air, or bowl, on which it presses against, isn't as relevant as considering the size of the brush to that of the painter's hand; or that the monumentality of an image is revealed in its making, the importance of its creation. Along the Vatican's chambered passageway to the Sistine Chapel, while looking at Raphael's *Battle of Ostia*²³¹ fresco, I made sense of Sassetta's panels made for the altar

Some human skeletons and flint implements found within date to the end of the Neolithic period (New Stone Age), circa 2000 B.C., but the skeletal remains could be from different eras than which the mound was built.

228 *Rodin* was exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK from September 23, 2006 - January 1, 2007. On the floor above, at the same time, was *Modigliani and His Models*, July 8, 2006 - October 15, 2006.

229 *The Unicorn is Killed and Brought to the Castle, The Unicorn Leaps out of the Stream, The Start of the Hunt, The Unicorn is Found*, c1495-1505, South Netherlands region—Figure 60.

230 Uccello, Paolo. *Battle of San Romano*, 1438—Figure 61.

231 Raphael. *Battle of Ostia*, 1514 —Figure 62.

of San Francesco²³² that I had been drawing from days before at the National Gallery. It was the stairs that had the strongest effect on scale. They logically both separated and elevated the figures from the ground, gave an entrance for us to walk up and into the event, and provided a ledge for a foot or arm as in Van der Weyden's *Descent of Christ from the Cross* at the Prado Museum. And most dynamic is the flat shape of the stairs; it puts us halfway up the Mayan pyramids, neither above nor below the stairs, but both simultaneously—you have climbed, but there is more to climb—placing us at eye level with the figures' hanging limbs, resting waists, and debris, lifting the structures and immortalizing the characters. The positioning of the paintings takes a reinforcing roll as well, even if simply because of standard museum hanging rules or the size of the frescoed walls in the Vatican's case.

Why do we try so hard to make sense of 'big' things? Painting is this mysterious process that I don't want to stop to understand. It wouldn't do me any good to understand it in that way, analytically. It's like Tarkovsky's *Stalker* describing the Bermuda Triangle as points ABC = Triangle A-prim, B-prim, C-prim.²³³ There's a boredom to it. The lunar eclipse was used by Aristotle to determine that the Earth was round by the shape of the shadow over the moon.²³⁴ Now, we use it to determine dust in the atmosphere, and by the color of the moon, we recognize pollutants.²³⁵ Today's eclipse is a spectacle of what early man saw at Stonehenge. *Stalker's* teacher and the writer discuss how in the Middle Ages, people were young; every home had its house-spirit, and every church had its God. Now, every fourth is an old person,²³⁶ listening for the gears at a David Copperfield²³⁷ performance. We will never know which strokes came first in a Rembrandt self-portrait.

232 Sassetta, Stefano di Giovanni. *The Funeral of Saint Francis and Verification of the Stigmat, Saint Francis Renounces his Earthly Father, Saint Francis before the Sultan*. Panels from Altar of San Francesco, Borgo San Sepolcro (1437-44). National Gallery, London, UK—Figure 63.

233 *Stalker*, dir: Andrei Tarkovsky, Gambaroff-Chemier Interallianz, 1979.

234 Padamsee, *Unifying the Universe: The Physics of Heaven and Earth*, 2002.

235 Yalcin, Kaplan and Cameron P. Wake. "Eclipse Icefield, Yukon Territory, Canada". *Geophysical Research Letters*. Vol. 28, No. 23. Climate Change Research Center, Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space, University of New Hampshire. 1 December, 2001: 4487-4490.

236 *Stalker*, dir: Andrei Tarkovsky, Gambaroff-Chemier Interallianz, 1979. A writer and a teacher hire a stalker to take them to the Zone.

There's a treasure in front of every painting. A certain void. Thinking of it sculpturally, I tend to make it into a form. It must be considered, like how Bacon glass-covered his paintings, but not by removing it; the void has too critical a role as the Norse Gunnungagap²³⁸ and the Greek Chaos.²³⁹ It is also a reminder, in the way Bernini's *Ecstasy of St. Teresa*²⁴⁰ or El Greco's *Resurrection*²⁴¹ hang, prepared for a religious ceremony to be conducted before them, or in the way a Goya might have a religious ceremony conducted during its making, and the painter must be its guardian—the keeper of the void. I don't want to eliminate the pause—the lift of the conductor's body, the permission for entry—entirely, but there must be immediate confrontation, a refusal of the Hudson River's²⁴² depth; you must paint yourself out of the painting, or rather paint out a painting. And breathing becomes a serious issue in this interval. The questions are precisely when, and for how long the breath is released.

At one tenth-grade lesson, practicing a saxophone arrangement of Bach's Sonata No. 2 in E-Flat, Mr. Larsen²⁴³ told me I couldn't play quietly enough, my

237 David Copperfield, American magician and illusionist, combines the art of illusion and storytelling. He has made the Statue of Liberty disappear, levitated over the Grand Canyon, and walked through the Great Wall of China.

238 In the Norse stories, Gunnungagap, was “the great void before creation” (Sturluson, 19).

239 In the Greek creation myth, Chaos, a shapeless void, was all that existed at the beginning (Martin, 2003).

240 Bernini. *Ecstasy of St. Teresa*, 1647-52. Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome—Figure 64.

241 El Greco. *The Resurrection*, 1577-79. Church of Santo Domingo el Antiguo, Toledo—Figure 65.

242 Thomas Cole led a group of mid-19th century American landscape painters through an art movement called The Hudson River School. Influenced by romanticism, Frederic Edwin Church, John Frederick Kensett, Sanford Robinson Gifford, and Albert Bierstadt painted idealized depictions of nature, and through use of the horizon, manifestations of hope and infinity. Painting America's beauty in the Hudson River Valley, the Catskill Mountains, Adirondack Mountains, and the White Mountains of New Hampshire, they shared inspiration from European painters such as Claude Lorrain and John Constable, and from contemporary American writers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau—Figure 66.

243 Mr. Paul Larsen, my saxophone teacher since the fourth grade, remains a true mentor today, though I haven't seen him since the last days of high school, when I was playing Charlie Parker's solo from “Billie's Bounce” at half the tempo from the *Parker Omnibook*. He

sound was too 'big' even at its subtlest. He opened the closet door in the room and told me to shove the bell of the tenor into the cloths and play the entire Sonata as loud as I possibly could. I turned shades of violet and red, and felt light-headed returning to the seat. After catching my breath, he asked me to play it again, now as quietly as possible. In that high school practice room, and with only Mr. Larsen listening, was probably the most beautifully I have ever played.

The most memorable line of music last year, was during a thirty-minute Benny Green performance with guitarist Russell Malone at the Newport Jazz festival. Some of the greatest musicians of my time had congregated outdoors by the ocean, and among all the commotion of the paparazzi, advertisers, listeners from around the world in full stir, and three mainstage acts performing at once—Benny Green was playing on one of the side stages at the 'keys'. Green and Malone had just finished a tune together and Green took a turn playing a solo improvised version of "My Funny Valentine". After a few measures, Malone was gesturing at the tech crew, demanding they bring up the volume on Green's piano, which was barely audible with all the surrounding chaos. Green stopped playing, and with an intent look, pointed 'down' repeatedly at the tech crew, asking for the opposite—to nearly turn his microphone volume to 'off'. He returned to his absorption with the ivory, gave his familiar stare

was a hero, introducing me to his: Thad Jones (his teacher), Monk, Parker, Chick, Coltrane, Davis. He made me stand up once; I must have been twelve or thirteen at the time, and told me I was playing from my head and not my stomach. I didn't understand why he made me stand up, and couldn't piece together if it was my embouchure, a shrugged shoulder, chest or a diaphragm issue, or the consistency of my breath. He told me to bend my knees and kind of bobble for a moment as he demonstrated at my side. I did it and held a note, my memory serves me an A—left index and middle finger pressing the ivory, thumb loose and in place, and right hand balancing the bell. I played from my gut, and it wasn't what he had asked for. He described the bobble again, in a different way. He said to feel gravity pushing me down, my feet pressing against the floor, balancing, and the floor pushing back up. Then he asked me to play again. He gave a short smile over my note, patted my shoulder, asked me to stop, sit, and play Parker again. He wasn't asking me to play from my diaphragm, my gut, or to dance. He wanted me to play from my feet.

What Mr. Larsen described to me in the sixth grade matched almost verbatim and resonated even stronger in my later age, when John Walker walked into my studio for the third time. John didn't tell me to 'bobble', and I wasn't thirteen, but he told me I was painting 'up there' and 'with a loose wrist' and that I needed to get 'grounded'. Later, when I was more rooted, the decisions I made became more significant, rather than picked from the thinness of the air, in some form of impressionistic approximates.

at the keyboard. I leaned forward in my seat and could hear only the sweetest dissonances of felt hammerings. He played the most tender, honey-filled, and barely audible three chords to begin the tune. It's this moment of Campbell's bliss that defines the scale of a monument.

Monument (n) *mon•yub•ment* 2: any enduring evidence or notable example of something.

Grandma's Friday Night (Shabbat) Aubergine

Aubergine

Wednesday—

Bring home 'male'* ones—no black seeds

Cut into loaves and salt each side

Leave out until Thursday

Thursday—

Blot aubergines, fry in batter

Blot again and put into boiling sauce

Boil again, let cool until Friday night

Friday—

Serve cooled with challah,

after the eggs and tehina

Batter

Egg, sprinkle salt, sprinkle pepper

Sauce

Create a tomato paste, add water, lemon,

a lot of sliced garlic, a little sugar

Stir and heat

*you can tell 'males' by the nub shapes at the bottom

Monument (n) *mon•yuh•ment* 3: an inscribed marker placed at a grave; a tombstone.

“Fabien landed and knew he had seen nothing at all”.²⁴⁴ What’s interesting about beginning with nothing at all, is then spending the entirety of his time describing it. I have always liked it best when the characters of a book are smarter than the writer. There is something about the reluctance in Holden’s voice.²⁴⁵ It’s what the boy’s note in El Greco’s *Count of Orgaz*²⁴⁶ has that Vermeer’s *Woman in Blue*’s²⁴⁷ note doesn’t. It’s in creating something where the need to hear a story is much stronger than a need to tell it. I’m not sure how much the way they hold the notes or what surrounds the notes matters, but it’s the touch that bares the significance of the letter. And not theirs, but the importance carried in the touch of the painter’s making of it.

I think of my grandmother. It’s beyond the matter of not caring to leave behind what she learned, or what I learned from touching her hands. There’s an impossibility to that. It’s odd to find my mother’s hands feeling the same now. I think of my grandmother having Lily Briscoe’s ‘vision’.²⁴⁸

It’s very rare to find a good reason for a bad ending to a novel. In fact, it is usually reversed; a ‘good’ ending, summing up interwoven characters and plots, is often written to place the reader into another life. Virginia Woolf ends *To the Lighthouse* beautifully ‘bad’—“I have had my vision”.²⁴⁹ We don’t know what the vision is. And what does it even mean to have your vision? Can you have another? And this, for the reason that life has no conclusions, nor does it end with time. It carries a painted time, like Tabucchi’s *Indian Nocturne* or Kafka’s *The Trial*. Van Gogh learned from Poussin drawings. He used the crosshatchings and control of marks to mean something, even if it was to form a light. We rarely think in this way. Woolf

244 Saint-Exupéry, 7

245 Salinger, J.D. *Catcher in the Rye*. Bantam. 1966.

246 El Greco. *The Burial of the Count of Orgaz*, 1586-1588. Santo Tomé, Toledo, Spain—Figure 67.

247 Vermeer, Johannes. *Woman in Blue Reading a Letter*, 1663-1664. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Amsterdam—Figure 68.

248 Woolf, Virginia. *To The Lighthouse*. London: Harcourt, 1927.

249 Woolf, 209

tolerated the unfinished and fragmentation and tried to do something different than the masters of her previous generation. It's interesting to me that there is both success and failure in doing so. But it is less important that it is a failure than that it is a success.

In this way, her novel is about knowing how to know something. Epistemology is the key; Ms. Ramsey is a great knower, and Lily is a knower too. Andrew tries to be a knower; he tells her to “think of a kitchen table...when you're not there”.²⁵⁰ Ms. Ramsey describes Mr. Tansley's Ph.D. dissertation as being about “the influence of somebody upon something”.²⁵¹ Perhaps we all identify with the beauty of reaching for the letter Q or R.²⁵²

The touch in the letters mailed, from soldiers to their wives, in chiefs' tired weakness to their men, are each worth flying through the Casablanca-Dakar air-route through a storm in Mendoza over night. The night, every night, is a time of confrontation, where light is at its most consistent, and weakness for a moment is defeat.²⁵³ There is so much fighting before the opening of Ra's eyes, the point at which you are defeated anyway. String Theory²⁵⁴ that had already been discovered in Picasso's *Women at Their Toilette*, and by Eratosthenes²⁵⁵ in Alexandria. Blanchot says

250 Woolf, 23

251 Woolf, 66

252 Woolf, 33-35

253 Saint-Exupéry, 56—“Rivière was thinking how to-night, as every night, a battle was in progress in the southern sky. A moment's weakening of the will might spell defeat; there was, perhaps, much fighting to be done before the dawn”.

254 String Theory is a model of fundamental physics whose building blocks are one-dimensional extended objects called strings, rather than the zero-dimensional point particles that form the basis for the standard model of particle physics. The phrase is often used as shorthand for Superstring Theory, as well as related theories such as M-theory. By replacing the point-like particles with strings, an apparently consistent quantum theory of gravity emerges. Moreover, it may be possible to unify the known natural forces (gravitational, electromagnetic, weak nuclear, and strong nuclear) by describing them with the same set of equations. (See “Theory of Everything” at www.wikipedia.com.)

String Theory unifies the fundamental building blocks out of which the world is made, both what we see through a microscope and in outer space. It interprets these ‘fundamental’ particles as different manifestations of one basic object: a string.

bad sleepers are guilty of making night present.²⁵⁶ Exupéry's Rivière says, "if a composer suffers from loss of sleep and his sleeplessness induces him to turn out masterpieces, what a profitable loss it is".²⁵⁷ I am certain Fabien was the Persian king flying through his 1001 Nights, yearning to be devoured by the seductive undulations of Scheherazade's voice in the sky.²⁵⁸ Always, from the very beginning of Kordakov's 1888 symphonic suite²⁵⁹, every time a point of arrival is reached harmonically, he goes someplace else—like her story, to stay alive.

255 Eratosthenes of Cyrene, Alexandria, 276 B.C.-194 B.C., was the first man to have calculated the circumference of the Earth. He used simple math.

256 Blanchot, 265—"Those who sleep badly seem to a greater or lesser degree guilty: what do they do? They make the night present".

257 Saint-Exupéry, 55

258 Originating from the old Persian book, *Hezar-afsana*, or the "Thousand Myths," *The Nights* was translated by Sir Richard F. Burton. The tale is told that every day, Shahryar, the Persian king, married a new virgin and beheaded yesterday's wife, for his first had betrayed him. He had done so for three thousand wives before meeting Scheherazade. She had collected a thousand entrancing books full of colorful and historical adventures. "She had pursued the works of the poets and knew them by heart; she had studied philosophy, the sciences, [and the] arts...and she was pleasant and polite, wise and witty, well read and well bred" (Burton, 11). The King lay awake night after night, asking for more stories. She always stopped before dawn, keeping the King's interest and preventing her death through a thousand and one nights. Entertaining and educating the King, Scheherazade became his Queen, three sons and many stories later.

Other stories from *The 1001 Nights* include "Aladdin," "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," and "The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor."

Scheherazade is also called Shahrazada or Shahrzad (Persian).

259 In 1888, Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov completed his "Scheherazade, Op. 35" in four movements, based upon four of the tales from *The 1001 Nights*: "The Sea and Sinbad's Ship," "The Kalendar Prince," "The Young Prince and The Young Princess," and "Festival at Baghdad".

In the first movement of the symphonic suite, "The Sea and Sinbad's Ship," Scheherazade voice is heard through the singing violin. The meters are not symmetrical and continually change direction, like her enchanting stories.

Letter

Dear Grandpa,

This letter was born from my silence. What could I have to tell a man in his eighty-fifth year over two crisp cheese bourekas and a latte on Faran Street?²⁶⁰ I might say I've seen a lot in twenty-nine years. Like Milius, “I once saw a snail crawl across the edge of a straight razor”.²⁶¹ I have studied the human heart; I am intimate with its urgent ballad, the conflicting pulses between the rational and the irrational. I thought to describe the importance of a Prokofiev²⁶² symphony to the existence of a Keith Jarrett²⁶³ melody or to compare Chick Corea's²⁶⁴ modulations to those of

260 Between June and October 2008, I sat across my grandfather, Moshe Shapira, about three mornings a week for a couple hours. Frequent encounters brought discomfort, a day between seemed appropriate. Some mornings I would meet him at his place in the assisted living community on Faran Street in Ramat Eshkol and walk to the cafe across the street together, others he would already be out and sitting with friends. I had gotten to know the first names of these men and women in their eighties, some had been his friends since childhood, some were his buddies from Etzel, the underground movement that helped found the State of Israel, he had been friends with some in the army, and others had been neighbors who's children went to school with my father and uncles—and each of the group was the incredible person you hope to meet, one who notices the colors. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew language, and if we were to rearrange them into every possibility, there would sadly be a finite, though extremely large, number of ways in which to express oneself. The wisdom, and relief, is presented over generations—the gap by which expressions, definitions, and any combination of letters alter over time. Braque left cubism in this state in 1914, interrupted by World War I, and over the mornings spent with my grandfather I learned there is something more incredible than meeting a person who notices the colors, one who speaks them.

261 John Milius wrote *Apocalypse Now* in 1979, directed by Francis Ford Coppola.

262 Sergei Sergeyevich Prokofiev (1891- 1953) Russian composer and pianist.

263 Keith Jarrett (b. 1945) American—Hungarian descent—pianist, composer and jazz musician grew up playing Bartok as a child and has imbedded his classical upbringing throughout his career. In his mid-twenties he worked with Art Blakey in New York, then the Charles Lloyd Quartet and recorded with Miles Davis. In 1983, he formed a trio with drummer, Jack DeJohnette, and bassist, Gary Peakcock. I have been to a few of their performances in Boston. He also played solo concerts of improvised music that have been recorded, of which nearly the entire ninety minutes of *Bremen/Lausanne* (1973) and *The Köln Concert* (1975) I can hum from memory.

Jarrett was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) around his fiftieth birthday and confined to his home for periods at a time. *The Melody at Night, With You*, the solo piano recording he made during that time, carries the poetic eloquence of a collection of elegies.

Korsakov²⁶⁵—any futile attempt at articulating respect and gratitude to the face of a man who had seen the vanity of the world could only be reduced to the pause of an insect. A year has passed, and I can still feel my cheeks burning²⁶⁶ in embarrassment of the thought. We joked and questioned over the lattes and I counted your sips, because sometime between the third and fourth you might approach the first utterances of a story. My ears tuned, as if to the entrance of a piece of music accompanied by the awareness of silence, the blandness of sound, that preceded it. Even among the greatest pianists, Arthur Rubinstein²⁶⁷ must have faced the problem of acceleration; at times I feel we should paint to a metronome. Jack Flam's writing

264 Armando Anthony "Chick" Corea, American (Italian descent) jazz pianist, and composer (b. 1941) replaced Herbie Hancock as the pianist in Miles Davis' band and has been involved in much jazz fusion, including working with Brazilian and Spanish-American influences early in his career to a bluegrass collaboration with Bela Fleck at the most recent performance of his I attended in London. I will always remember sitting across from him at one of his performances at the Regatta Bar, Boston listening to his changes and being impressed by how short his arms were.

265 "Scheherazade, Op. 35" by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

266 "The Portrait" by Stanley Kunitz

My mother never forgave my father
for killing himself,
especially at such an awkward time
and in a public park,
that spring
when I was waiting to be born.
She locked his name
in her deepest cabinet
and would not let him out,
though I could hear him thumping.
When I came down from the attic
with the pastel portrait in my hand
of a long-lipped stranger
with a brave moustache
and deep brown level eyes,
she ripped it into shreds
without a single word
and slapped me hard.

267 Arthur Rubinstein (1887 – 1982) American pianist, perhaps greatest of his time, was a scholar of Chopin and Brahms. He was born in Łódź, Poland, the same town my father's mother was born. Other than her parents and brother, the entirety of her family who stayed in Łódź were taken by the Nazis to camps and killed.

on Matisse never uses the word 'time' but rather 'duration'; it best describes the relative relationship that occurs when sitting at a shape for half an hour and learning it. It was not Cézanne's *Bather*²⁶⁸ but himself that stepped left foot forward to challenge the sea; like Frenhauser²⁶⁹, he did not teach us by what he did, but by what he was. It was not myself that I gave you those mornings at the cafe. In its simplicity what I handed over to you was yourself, yourself loved.

We sat alone, together. Whole; because miles apart we were fighting the same quiet logic. Distance, the funny measurement. Two meters and fifty-seven years separated us. Closeness is a matter of memory from childhood—a time we learned so much and so quickly that we have since forgotten which discoveries were our own, where the first fragments of news came from. Suzuki observed that the first month in a nightingale's life determines its fate.²⁷⁰ With wisdom a baby nightingale changes its throat. A tel²⁷¹, the whole Mediterranean, is buried within you—the green sea, the desert hawks, the ancient temples, the cypress, the almond trees and the karat trees, the gazelles, the seven species, the mystic numbers—and when something reminded you, it flowed like smoke through a keyhole.²⁷² The Kabbalists believe that man is a microcosm, a symbolic mirror of the universe; the mirror implies the universe is not infinite, but reflective—a complex array of mirrors,

268 Cézanne, Paul. *The Bather*. 1885. Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York—Figure 69.

269 Frenhauser is the main character of Balzac's *Unknown Masterpiece*. He could not separate reality from painting. Between sessions painting from a model, he covered his paintings because the model was nude.

270 Shinichi Suzuki *Nurtured by Love*, 19. Suzuki was born in Nagoya, Japan, son of the founder of the largest violin factory in the world, he is also the author of the Suzuki method books for learning music.

Suzuki describes an old Japanese method for training fledglings taken from the wild birds' nests. A nightingale's song is both inherited and instinctive. "As soon as they lose fear and accept food, a 'master bird' is borrowed that daily sings its lovely song, and the infant bird listens for a period of about a month."

271 A tel is a hill or mound referring to a type of archaeological site. Archaeological tels result from the accumulation and erosion of material deposited by human habitation over a long period of time.

272 In this way you fulfill one of painting's paradoxes—enter through its edges to see all living beyond.

assembled as the hexagons in Jorge Luis Borges²⁷³ *Library of Babel*, reflecting off one another. There is a strong lineage of distinguished people who have remade or celebrated or extended the world, yet a smaller circle exists of ones who, facing one the other, have altered our perception of it—the world will never look quite the same again and everything after carries their mark—Socrates, Aristotle, Homer, Rembrandt, Matisse, Picasso, Cézanne, Bach, Miles Davis, Darwin, Borges.²⁷⁴ In a lifetime you would hope to meet a person whose feet hold the earth; and when you do, you learn quickly that rather than having dreamt to be carried by him, you have been dreaming to carry him with you. Painting at John Walker's acres in Maine a few years ago, he told me he did not want to be making twenty-year-old paintings, and that I should not make sixty-year-old ones. Spontaneous courage begins young. What comes with age, the cruel gift of years, is endurance. As a boy I would wonder how it was possible to see so much with eyes so small. I could take in our whole yard in Cfar Saba²⁷⁵ barely moving my head, and all of it fit through two tiny openings in my eyes. It was then that they told me I had big eyes, which have not grown much since, yet now I see whole cities and forests. Looking around the table and deeply into the aged eyes of your friends sipping in their late years a constellation of minute holes emerges; through pinholes measured in fractions of an inch, they have taken in the world. Will I live long enough to learn from all my mistakes? We shared the unspoken understanding.

When Rembrandt embarked on a self-portrait he knew one element, perhaps the most critical, about its ending: that he would be changed; in some way, he would be different. I argue he was more definite about the result than what it was he was looking at when he started. That faint, misleading feeling of certainty that creeps into the start of a journey must have been all he could have hoped to eliminate in

273 Jorge Luis Borges (1899 – 1986) Argentine writer and poet born in Buenos Aires was fluent in several languages, grew blind by his late fifties, and renovated the language of fiction.

274 The list has been abbreviated to preserve context.

275 Cfar Saba is a small farming town in Israel where my mother grew up after my grandmother escaped from Baghdad with her in 1951. My mother was one-year old then, and they lived in a tent with others in the camps until they eventually bought a home with a lawn in this town. I remember the chickens and pear tree from my childhood, even after it was turned into a community pre-school when my grandmother and mother moved to an apartment in Ramat Gan, a neighboring town.

order to arrive at the ending. In fact, any other result would warrant no point in starting. I write this letter with the same position.

Rav Eliyahu wrote down his thoughts and edited them before speaking.²⁷⁶ He would recite even the briefest greeting so as not to waste a word. In his ninety-third year seated on the unpolished wooden chair²⁷⁷ in his dining room, he told me that wise men believed our words were numbered and should be chosen carefully. The Hebrew *lashon bara* translates as ‘the evil tongue’. Language is spoken by the tongue, and like Rodin’s²⁷⁸ *Gates of Hell* two seals must be pried open²⁷⁹ before semblance of even the kindest word. In Russian, *razdirat dusbu* literally means to ‘tear out one’s soul’. I imagine that if a heart was ever truly translated, the nude truth of an experience in its entirety, the world would erupt and the atoms would shatter into confetti strings, indivisible particles that no god could reassemble ever again. These are the words I felt so elementary to share those days; I considered them in the nights, and reality would be choking me in the morning.

I would like to begin with a story, and want to tell you slowly and quietly so that we can enjoy it together. Isabel Allende, Chilean-American novelist refers to the Jewish saying, “What is truer than truth? Answer: The story.” Madeleine L’Engle, author of *A Wrinkle in Time*, asked why we tell stories even though she knew the

276 Rav Eliyahu was a humble, observant man, Jewish, and the ninth generation born in Jerusalem. He communicated this way to his wife, children, friends, and me—his great-grandchild. His ninety-two other great-grandchildren and I called him Saba Eliyahu.

277 Dulled bronze pins along the seat and back of the chair held the cushions, covered with an aged-green felt, in place. Saba Eliyahu tended to sit in this chair at the head of the table, studying in his robed religious grey and black. Somehow he didn’t look important, a humble old man learning is what made him so big.

278 Auguste Rodin (1840 – 1917) French sculptor. ‘The Gates of Hell’ was originally commissioned as a doorway for Paris’ Museum of Decorative Arts in 1880. The museum was never built but Rodin worked on the piece throughout his lifetime and the 186 figures, after Dante’s *Inferno*, comprised some of his best independent works.

279 Teeth and lips.

answer. It has something to do with faith that our little lives matter, matter cosmically.²⁸⁰

My first introduction to an indigenous community in the Northern Territory of Australia was in the middle of a story, the parallel and sacred existence they call *dreaming*.²⁸¹ I believe that I had left at the end of one, but am not certain. I could not tell you an indigenous story—because I am white, middle-eastern, Jewish, American, and grew up in Israel—nor could I refer to the Kabbalah—because Jews must fulfill certain requirements of age and mitzvahs²⁸² before taking it on—though I would like to generate mine at the navel as well. Bruce Chatwin's Presto!²⁸³ Your umbilical cord has been cut and you have been slapped on the ass, you look up and the stars are staring back at your navel. I see thousands of mutts, dogs sniffing the earth in search of something and not sure of what. "We grow eyes everywhere—in the armpits, between the lips, in the roots of [our] hair, on the soles of [our] feet"²⁸⁴

280 Madeleine L'Engle, "Children's Writer, Is Dead" The New York Times. Sep. 8, 2007. Madeleine L'Engle, author of *A Wrinkle in Time*, asked, "Why does anybody tell a story?" even though she knew the answer. "It does indeed have something to do with faith," she said, "faith that the universe has meaning, that our little human lives are not irrelevant, that what we choose or say or do matters, matters cosmically."

281 Australian aboriginals believe in two forms of time; two parallel streams of activity. One is daily objective activity, the other is an infinite spiritual cycle called *dreamtime* that holds more meaning than reality itself. Every person exists eternally in the *Dreaming*, and this essential part, a spirit-child, existed before the life of an individual begins and continues to exist when an individual life ends. It is only initiated into life by being born through a mother. Whatever happens in *dreamtime* establishes the values, symbols, and laws of Aboriginal society. It was believed that some people of unusual spiritual powers had contact with the dreamtime.

"Dreaming" is also often used to refer to an individual's or group's set of beliefs or spirituality. For instance, an Indigenous Australian might say that they have Kangaroo Dreaming, or Shark Dreaming, or Honey Ant Dreaming, or any combination of Dreamings pertinent to their *country*. Many Indigenous Australians also refer to the creation time as *The Dreaming*. The *Dreamtime* laid down the patterns of life for the Aboriginal people, and *The Dreaming* was the time of creation.—See Bruce Chatwin's *Songlines*.

282 Divine commandment or deed.

283 Bruce Chatwin. *Songlines*, 68.

284 Miller, *Tropic of Cancer*, 288.

according to Miller, and like Kac's glow-in-the-dark rabbit²⁸⁵ we are experts on what we know today. We impregnate names and institute definitions, proud ramblings concealing our inabilities. We're in constant flux amusing ourselves with the surface and shed our skin with age until we find ourselves returning to the dead center, where only a name remains.

Our discoveries are gestures of hope, hope disguised as 'advancements', in our battle to recover the wisdom we lost with the knowledge to speak, the concise innocence regained with age. Giacometti²⁸⁶ was not trying to learn or create something, he was trying to understand why he could not.²⁸⁷ The sense of victory, humanity's most ancient invention, is deceptive—achievements are forged among friends to confirm each other's pride and consummated with foolishly confident pats on the back. Bonds deepen however, they last longer when we salute each other's defeats. I watch you swallow, committed to the endless struggle with the determination of a rose, and it so clearly pronounces our primary purpose: to honor the gift of life, in the way a Bonnard celebrates the moment we enter a room for the first time and it takes more than ten minutes to get through one of Zola's²⁸⁸ doors. Tolstoy's²⁸⁹ *War and Peace* and Borges' *Funes, His Memory* complete John Ruskin's essay *Of Modern Landscape*:

The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think, but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion—all in one.²⁹⁰

285 Eduardo Kac, born in Rio de Janeiro in 1962, is best known for his transgenic art projects. In his recent *GFP Bunny* project, he birthed a mutated bunny. Alba, the glow-in-the-dark rabbit, is phosphorescent under certain UV light. The door to his studio at the Art Institute of Chicago was shut and locked.

286 Alberto Giacometti (1901 – 1966) Swiss sculptor and painter—Figure 70.

287 Giacometti to a critic: "I don't know if I work in order to do something, or in order to know why I can't do what I want to do."

288 Émile François Zola (1840 –1902) French naturalist writer.

289 Leo Tolstoy (1828 – 1910) Russian realist author of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. *War and Peace* is his epic prose placing the individual in history. It travels between landscapes of battle, war, and personal consciousness, considering their effects on one another.

290 Ruskin, *Of Modern Landscape*, 150-212.

When I did something wrong, rather than get scolded and sent to my room, I would be ordered to sit down and be told a story. This happened often and I collected over the years. Anansi had given you the carved wooden box he earned from Nymbre. You would tell me on leftovers of sleep, and on those nights I would not have to dream like a poet overcoming effulgent stages; I would lay on the roof stealing comets from the sky—Kunitz’s “Halley’s Comet”²⁹¹—waiting for the world to end.

The story’s characters are a boy, his grandmother, and a chicken. Mornings have many options, and this one begins on a spotless, blameless day when the boy,

291 “Halley’s Comet” by Stanley Kunitz

Miss Murphy in first grade
wrote its name in chalk
across the board and told us
it was roaring down the stormtracks
of the Milky Way at frightful speed
and if it wandered off its course
and smashed into the earth
there'd be no school tomorrow.
A red-bearded preacher from the hills
with a wild look in his eyes
stood in the public square
at the playground's edge
proclaiming he was sent by God
to save every one of us,
even the little children.
"Repent, ye sinners!" he shouted,
waving his hand-lettered sign.
At supper I felt sad to think
that it was probably
the last meal I'd share
with my mother and my sisters;
but I felt excited too
and scarcely touched my plate.
So mother scolded me
and sent me early to my room.
The whole family's asleep
except for me. They never heard me steal
into the stairwell hall and climb
the ladder to the fresh night air.
Look for me, Father, on the roof
of the red brick building
at the foot of Green Street—
that's where we live, you know, on the top floor.
I'm the boy in the white flannel gown
sprawled on this coarse gravel bed
searching the starry sky,
waiting for the world to end.

woken to the sound of milk, to the rhythmic circulation of all things we encounter, is taken by his mother's mother to the market. And it becomes saturated—fresh bread towers, mounds of turmeric and cumin, sacks of nuts, dried fruits in a sea of citrus, good-natured bickering, the sounds crunching in the air. At barely four feet from the ground, the boy starts drowning—dragged in waves of sandals, faced by schools of staring fish, heroic flesh, man devouring man, and the overwhelming smell of boiled urine with nutmeg; and it is set this way because it is hard to imagine things which did not happen to me. I was seven, the earth was swaying, and she gripped me and kept moving to stay on. There was of course nothing that could not be fixed with a rest and a Magnum milk chocolate ice cream near a halvah²⁹² booth. Beside our resting point and at eye level below the tables was a box of chickens, fluffy white and brown ones stepping on one another in some funny ritual dance—a perfect ending to the morning's carnival. I got involved laughing at the chickens, and was thrilled when my grandmother told me I could pick one to bring home.

The next ten minutes looking for the best one felt like ages. The selection process included quietest, fluffiest, cleanest, and of course most elegant feathers and silliest step. I found my favorite all the way on the left: perfectly delicate, cute, and it even had a smile. I pointed at it, youthful and embarrassed, for the stubbled man behind the table to see. My grandmother asked me if I was sure, and I said yes. She gestured again. I nodded. He picked it up by the neck. Quickly, he laid it across the table. And cut its head off. In one hard slice I felt full of blood, alive.

Emptiness seems easy to look at when you are faced with hopelessness. It is then you want to scream back at the *Guernica*, or whisper—something to announce that you exist. It was perhaps the coldest 102° day of my life, but also one which brought me closer to this strange, for me anyway, human race.

Over the years those dancing chickens—the birds in and outside the crate—have grown wings even for short flights, because they know something; they know they must leave, remove themselves from the earth and survive against Klein's blue²⁹³, and in December 2004 they showed me. On a roof in Raipur, India, I was

292 Tahini(sesame paste)-based eastern Mediterranean sweet, particularly tasty with pistachios.

293 Yves Klein (1928 – 1962) was a French artist, prominent in America, who wanted to kill the birds. He felt hatred for birds “which flew back and forth across [his] blue, cloudless sky because they tried to bore holes in [his] greatest and beautiful work.” He wanted to own the very symbol of natural freedom—Figure 71.

having tea and biscuits and watching children play cricket. Across the city's rooftops I noticed a peculiarity even for the thick green haze recognized as the sky in this sanctuary of the world: hours away from Tamil Nadu²⁹⁴ all the birds were in the sky at the same time. All species were breathing heavily, struggling to remain airborne. It was as if they feared touching the earth. Each instant of landing sprouted another chaotic ascent, another etching of frantic patterns in the air. It seemed they were calling below as the critters emerged unsettled from between the cracks, but the children had not noticed and the noise of the vendors below had not varied, so I dismissed it as an unfamiliar environment and resumed attending to the surrounding colors. Hours later, commotion in the streets revealed there had been a tsunami 900 miles away. The birds had perched on the branches of trees again and stared at me—with the same look the chicken I picked at the market had given me—like answers, answers to questions which have no words. Watching the birds, I finally cried.

Pirandello²⁹⁵ believed that “we’re not interested in living, but to see ourselves living”²⁹⁶. Amazing achievements are ignored, like a boy falling out of the sky²⁹⁷, and

294 900 miles away.

295 Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936) Italian dramatist, novelist, and short story writer was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1934.

Six Characters in Search of an Author (*Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*), his most famous and celebrated play is a satirical tragic comedy. It was first performed in 1921 at the Teatro Valle in Rome and received as "Manicomio!" ("Madhouse!"). Pirandello re-edited the play multiple times providing a foreword to clarify the structure and ideas within.

296 In the preface to Pirandello's *Naked Masks: Five Plays*, Eric Bentley explains Pirandello's belief that “we’re not interested in living, but to see ourselves living”.

no one notices the splash of noble failure but Auden, Brueghel, and my grandmother. It takes a backbone to acknowledge the hopelessness. Pirandello felt the earth quaking in Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*, a divine creature—the kind that takes Matisse's goldfish from its bowl and eats it—flinging its bowls at the desperate sphere; he understood humanity's miserable affair limited by senses. Without engaging them, we lose ourselves—the tragic comedy. *Six Characters in Search of an Author* was first performed eighty-eight years ago, yet right now, somewhere there is a graduate student bleeding into a dissertation about something absurd—rubber labels on the heels of shoes. We must preserve sensation, the way Matisse raised doves, ancient preservers of hope reassembling the Hellenistic columbariums²⁹⁸ in his

297 “Musée des Beaux Arts” by W.H. Auden on Brueghel's painting *Fall of Icarus*.

About suffering they were never wrong,
The Old Masters: how well they understood
Its human position; how it takes place
While someone else is eating or opening a window or just walking dully along;
How, when the aged are reverently, passionately waiting
For the miraculous birth, there always must be
Children who did not specially want it to happen, skating
On a pond at the edge of the wood:
They never forgot
That even the dreadful martyrdom must run its course
Anyhow in a corner, some untidy spot
Where the dogs go on with their doggy life and the torturer's horse
Scratches its innocent behind on a tree.

In Brueghel's *Icarus*, for instance: how everything turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

Brueghel, Pieter the Elder. *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*, 1555—Figure 72.

298 As a boy, I would climb through a series of interconnecting caves in the Judean Hills imagining the greatest adventures with my brother and cousins. During the Bar-Kochba revolt against the Romans (132-135 C.E.) this maze of over forty interconnected underground rooms was tunneled out of the area's soft limestone (calcium carbonate, or chalk). Distinguishing the one larger bell-shaped room are carved triangle niches surrounding the inside walls of the chamber. Archaeologists call this room a columbarium after the Greek *columba*, or pigeon. They believe the carved cubbies were built to raise pigeons. The birds would nest in the protected area, dove-dung was collected as fertilizer, and their meat was used as food.

studio²⁹⁹. Rather than distilling the senses, the register at which we receive them must change. In the sum of all sounds, the dissonances heard by Rabbi Nachman of Breslev's³⁰⁰ *Exchanged Children* lost in the primeval forest, is the sublime song of all creation; Its profound echoes reverberate with the same shift in concentration that occurs in the first thirty minutes confronting Matisse's snail³⁰¹ against the halls of the Tate.

I was eleven or perhaps twelve and had the pace of a man's voice when I first told you about the gift of the chicken. I can't remember if it was you, what I had witnessed, or if I was changing my throat. Apples are the only fruits that grow before their leaf comes in for protection. I will die in you, and if you die before me I will need your cane and your hat. You were sitting across from me, a man who had never had velvet between his vertebrae, and you had a pause in your voice—like waiting for a train to slow down a little so you can jump—because you knew; I was not upset at my grandmother.

I loved my grandmother for the way she looked at the sky. Quietly, without disturbing the sunrise, every morning she walked to the corner store on the other end of town for the day's fresh load of bread. The people of Ramat Gan saw an old, widowed woman walking carefully and barely speaking, and they respected her. They must have thought she had been looking down at the shadows, perhaps to make sure she would not crash into the earth or maybe they thought she saw them everywhere—shadows in the shape of Baghdad, of my grandfather before the stroke, shadows of the gypsies, of the home she had built and had left behind. But no one knew my grandmother like I did; on the mornings when I got up early enough to take those walks with her, while my mother and brother were sleeping, I watched

299 Matisse moved to a studio at Villa le Reve Marie, France in 1943, where he made his *Jazz* cut-outs. He raised doves and two cats among his arrangements of porcelain, textiles, wine glasses, and shells.

300 Chassidic rabbi Nachman of Breslev(1772-1810) wrote *The Exchanged Children*, as one of thirteen Jewish mystical tales. In the referred scene, the true son of the King and son of maidservant are lost in primeval forest. The two youths refuge in the tree of the Man of the Forest, a non-human creature. They hear dissonance and with shift of concentration it becomes the most beautiful music the true son has heard. Within the sound, he hears the sublime song of all creation. Hyman Bloom's, American painter's, works were driven by this and other Jewish mystical tales.

301 Matisse. *The Snail*. 1953. Tate Modern's hall, third floor. This painting has not yet been answered.

her—she was looking up. It was an intent, fixed look that absorbed the sky as it was at the moment, and it was never a circus she saw, but a vast arena like a Tiepolo that completes your breaths with no room for air of the past. She was grounded looking up, because even the faultless morning skies carried the ferocious triumph of an El Greco, and while most people get scared seeing shadows of their limits and take comfort in the misleading security of the stars, my grandmother saw the sky consenting to the seasons, taking no rests. In today's enlightenment we measure the clouds and it makes me question knowledge. Cézanne's *Les Grandes Baigneuses*, Morandi's etchings, and Van Gogh's drawings arrived at different conclusions, and even in her late years, she could place her hands on the earth like the first human being. My grandmother was looking up the entire way—she just knew the way home.

Like Anselm Kiefer, my grandmother saw angels, cherubim, and seraphim. She was not interested in categorizing the angels by their different wings the way he did; she looked at the ones who were not flying and observed the varied ways in which they folded their wings. Among them were the fallen ones and the special messengers whose natural, distinct feathers she studied. In the nights of January 2008 my grandmother was at the Museum der Moderne in Salzburg turning all of Kiefer's paintings upside down, confusing heaven and earth, when no one was looking; I hoped she would leave one for me to see in the morning.

In our need for strong leadership we expect our preachers must speak Greek and Latin, but in the last twenty years of Parha Kugeman's life—the years I witnessed—without knowing how to read and just able to sketch a signature, she made marmalade in a burnt pot over a small stove in the little town of Ramat Gan, Israel. I could tell you what she did before my existence: giving away a series of shochats³⁰² to escape Baghdad³⁰³ including her home and entire copper oil-lamp

302 Money or gift given as a bribe to silence a soldier, neighbor, politician or driver to silence them from knowing that you are escaping.

collection³⁰⁴, arriving in Israel to a tent on a camp with four daughters and a few cloths and standing in line for hours at a time to collect a bowl of soup for each daughter, putting plastic ends onto shoelaces in a factory for 12-hour days and then bringing home boxes of rubber flip-flop straps to put through their foam bottoms in the nights over the next thirty years. It is quite a biography. I could act as if I understood it, but the simplicity with which it looks written down is perplexing. I cherish our walks, the ice creams were sweet, and I respected my grandmother for stomaching her days, but what resonates strongest is the sudden pounding—a Turkish coffee cup was flipped, slammed upside down against the wooden table—and before recovering from the blink, she had initiated reading my fortune in the leftover grains like the gypsies taught her. Yet mostly, I learned that marmalade making is a process in which bitter citrus and spice are placed under extreme pressure until a greater force, such as she, turns it sweet. Years later, I witnessed my mother lose my grandmother—she went from being her mother to what stone do we get? We are all resigned to death; it is life we are not resigned to. I looked at my grandmother the way the Senufo people of Mali look up into trees and see the hornbill³⁰⁵. She was alone preserving marmalade in a silent kitchen, proud of her daughters' successes. Death in its truth arrives the moments airtight sealed jars are broken by the very people for whom they are preserved. When I heard I decided to stop for a few days, as ridiculous as it sounds, to let the marmalade settle. Nothingness and absence, I do not want to confuse the two. There is a necessary absence we describe as forgetting. Velázquez painted the hand in the center of *The*

303 The King of Iraq's tailor died in 1951. He was my mother's father. It was not safe to be Jewish in Bagdad. He changed his name from Shalom to the Arabic, Salach, and while he walked longways down the main road, Shaara Rashid, past the red cinema, Cinemat Ri Hamerahuh, to his shop every morning, his wife would meet the gypsies who had brought the finest materials with the brightest dyes from far-away lands. She greeted them with teas and heard stories from their travels. Three of the four daughters would listen and the youngest, my mother, was still in her mother's arms, the same position in which she was held while fleeing to Israel through an underground movement. He spoke kindly to the military leaders and sold his business to allow his family to run away, and died of a stroke before seeing his family leave safely or reaching the land of Israel himself.

304 Gypsies gave them to her as presents for hosting them on their travels bringing material from the orient to my grandfather in Baghdad.

305 The hornbill mates for life and then nests in a hole in a tree and hides within it to protect its children. For the Senufo in Mali and Poro society in Liberia, it carries the symbol of fidelity and motherhood.

Thread Spinners in this way as did Vermeer the hand in the center of *Woman Holding a Balance* twenty years later³⁰⁶, and they clarify how awful it would be to make sense of the world otherwise—remembering everything with the same crisp importance. When nothing happens, there are no lines to remember or forget, entire empires can collapse and a broken compass remains, a meridian with no axis. And Grandpa, this is a silly way to tell you I notice you are always facing North in the photos, I can tell by the direction of the sun.

I want to tell you about the Friday mornings of 2007 that began with the sun in Turner's *Decline of the Carthaginian Empire* at the Tate³⁰⁷. I spent hours each Friday at the Tate³⁰⁸ staring at the painting. It holds up the far left wall in the first room of the Turner gallery and confronts the entrance, giving the length of the room to step away from the painting. The wall tag describes it as merging “elaborate mythological tales or dramatic contemporary events to a tragic vision of the vanity of human effort in the face of the awesome power of nature”. Dido's Carthage was built in 800 B.C.E. and the empire in Tunisia, Africa was destroyed entirely, and for the third time, out of fear of regaining power and overtaking the Romans in the Punic Wars. The gold infused within it is made from the remains of war, and yet the sun still rises, and so do you and I grandpa.

Grandpa, I want to tell you about it like the Cubists, those hushed conversations Picasso and Braque had between studios that we will never know

306 Velazquez, *The Thread Spinners*, 1645 and Vermeer, *Woman Holding a Balance*, 1665 both have a woman's hand painted in the center of the painting — Figure 79. Both hands are painted with less detail than other areas of the painting and barely grasping the items which they are holding. Perhaps the center of both compositions remains most relevant to the subject and its purpose is to describe the subtle loss of focus—the value in our uneven memory. In much the same way, Braque's late work carries an uneven temperature across a plane of color.

307 John Berger describes Museums as the great protectors of the most delicate things to survive in the history of the world; subtle line drawings, fragments of 5th century jewelry, thousand year old fabrics are all protected and shared in museums. The great privilege of being an artist is to be in conversation with the great artists of the past. You can encounter them in books, but there is nothing like meeting them in a museum where you come upon the work of artists past. He says what we call culture is very often that conversation across time. With the present.

The Koln archive collapsed yesterday, March 6 2009:

308 On the first Friday of each month, the gallery is open 18.00–22.00

about, because that's how I remember it. That is how those mornings in front of that painting have been abstracted, stored in my mind. I will describe the painting to you through its yellows. Yellow can be the subject of a painting, right? The subject of an entire artist's career can be one color—I want mine to be; the world makes sense to me in yellow.

Color equals architecture, like a Matisse, yet relationships within the paint—its thickness, transparency, collision of the substance—all relate to color. When one paints one draws; the more colors harmonize among themselves, the more precise the drawing becomes, and when color is at its richest, form is at its fullest. In this way, there is no contradiction admiring Poussin and Rubens. Turner is color to me, a flood of it. Whatever it was that created the sky to match Turner's paintings also has an expensive set of watercolors. Turner reveals the womb of the sky like Ribera's *Martyrdom* and Cézanne's *Bathers*. In my notebooks, in my memory, Turner's essay re-erecting the decline of the Carthaginian Empire on cowhide in 1817 begins the same every time I stand before it. I wrote in the margins of my drawings, across them, those Fridays:

First, you are confronted by the guilty sun. Fire, the golden-framed yellow covered in layers of waxy yellow, letting elements of natural yellow through. A glimmering of blond old warmth and then something goes potato yellow. Again covered in opaque frozen white, the gold of an Eastern aura weighs down the setting yellow and orange red. Alley yellow, different to park yellow or dog yellow, perhaps most clearly pronounced in dried flower hues, shadowed by nearby changing white. Antique golden sheafs—not a color [ref. Bernie Chaet³⁰⁹]³⁰⁹—pale the aged day's tired repetition through antiquity. Once a god, Galileo Galilei didn't know he had begun its reduction to a status as a mere spark among the stars of the universe, a utility supplying electricity and mechanical power.

309 I remember Bernie Chaet pointing to one spot, “this,” he knew—part of an apple or cloud or light— “this, is a color” (p42). “Right there next to it there’s an empty space,” because that was something he didn’t know yet, “...not a color”. He only made what he knew and nothing else. What a good conscience he must have had. Yes, a good conscience is what the wondrous men and woman in human existence have had. Rembrandt, El Greco—the good conscience they use is different; it takes on a new form when it is in use all the time. Rothko must have referred to this; his greatest compliment was to call someone a ‘human-being’.

Had Ferrous Oxide been in prehistoric vocabulary of solar cultures in Spain and France, would the great monograms of the sun be inscribed? Just one awful second, and an entire epoch passes. Two inches over, and generations have ended, Turner knows better than to reduce sun to a place—an effigy. We watch it rise and set, pursuing its path across the minute stage of our planet, but we know it is ourselves that move in some state of flux. We have lost. We have lost incandescence, we have lost another empire, and we have lost the cosmos. Light is only perceived against the background of darkness and decline, and Turner's fever yellow. It is all very short—the obscene horror which make this civilization look like a crater—and we are accordingly not surprised to find the earliest sun signs in gloomy underground passages and shadowy rock shelters.

The sun and fertility! Eyes wander to notice the yellow values closest where light reaches, in the deepest areas and womb of the walls' buildings. But they converge and return—anything from Re or Ra relating to Osiris, the god of vegetation—leaving Pharaoh in charge of the regency of the sun. Pyramids are solar monuments, astral sanctuaries (not mere burial-sites). Stonehenge in Wiltshire was an Indo-European sun sanctum linking the Celts to the worldwide network of sun cults: from Egypt, over the Aegean, and westward to the Andes. And the complex nature of the sun symbol produced in Greek mythology as Helios and Apollo was also the fearsome Gorgon—the reversed ruin-bringing sun of the Mexican and Aztec era—a sun magic associated with deathly anxiety of sunset. It is not summer yellow, the absolute master of the desert, but the misery left of the Punic wars, a third and defeated attempt toward rejuvenated yellow, and natural yellow. Cities, like great figures, are both unique and indispensable. Without Athens, Alexandria, Rome, Baghdad, or Peking history could not have been conceived. In 1817, in oil and varnish, a glimpse of depleted sun, debris yellow, failure yellow. The decline of Dido's 800 BC Carthage, like that of Jerusalem, is superlatively indispensable. Yellow is defeated. Reevaluating materials, it should read 'failure yellow on linen'. Fever yellow, disgust yellow. Put a

little white bird in a yellow sun. Yellow is not a color, yellow is a condition.

It ended, and a handful of feathers flew—a bird, grandpa. Is will power measured by the distance of the leap? There must be an accurate way to measure it. Wipeouts and exhaustion. Fatigue comes with overestimation and when a person runs away fear takes over. Too often, even the slightest distance, hesitation leaves one too far away already. Fatigue eats at the strongest wills, it rids the postponement and provides the easy—and often required—short answer, which often ends in familiar silence. I want to tell you another story about a boy who did not measure it, but leapt anyway.

In my childhood, I believed I could fly—without the aid of wings like a black-necked stork³¹⁰, eastern goldfinch³¹¹, or clumsy bumble of a fly. I did not have the strength of an eagle, of the most dangerous hawk, nor even the venomous nature of the vulture from my dreams. I could just remove myself from the ground beneath me, like a hummingbird, without Icarus' ambition to soar or go much higher than a telephone pole, but this alone was enough to instill the fear of a raven upon the most courageous of beefeaters in any castle. When I did this, I would make sure to wait for the neighbors to shut their blinds and walkers to pass by first. I conquered the inconceivable by simply running, stepping one foot before the other against the wind. The wind sustained me, held me up, and when it stopped blowing I would begin falling; I could sustain flight if I shifted weight carefully enough between my shoulders and waist.

I often wonder of the penguins' will to survive. Why did the first bird with a broken wing struggle to live? Why would it leave the others for a humble paradise? Science suggests that perhaps it was not a broken-winged bird, but a fish or once sea-abolished mammal that learned to breath in order to release itself from the water and extended its fins to wings. And yet all explanations seem *A Rebours*, against nature. I believe the crowned kings are the wise leaders who taught the others, questioned their ambitions and proud pursuit of colors—they believed they had evolved enough and their purpose was to show the creatures of the world a truer extent of

310 Storks are traditionally in the large-billed and long-legged scientific order Ciconiiformes. Storks also do not have a syrinx. They are therefore mute and have no bird call.

311 New Jersey's state bird

possibilities; they developed traits to endure the most demanding, untrusting conditions, spent their lives contending their 'mother's' inevitability, and took a sacred oath: to preserve a virtue and wait, still and silent, until all the others who had left and forgotten would find them. It may be a hoax or perhaps a secret they have vowed to keep silent about. Yet they remain waiting, and their secret is revealed only to their observers.

I am older now, and my childhood remains in dreams. When I sleep, conscience intervals interrupt and tell me I am dreaming and in the moments of fierce combat and terror, I am reminded of my will, the power to change anything. On nights perfume laden with flowers that have no color yet, I remember walking into the last room of the Courbet exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in April 2008 to two paintings of fish; I, and perhaps more importantly he, had never seen a fish painted that way before. I quickly wrote twenty answers and twenty questions and tried to match them like an embryo pushing through the neck of the womb. Everything is packed into a second which is either consummated or not consummated. Like the penguin, perhaps there is a reason I cannot fly now.

I want to have a conversation with the man, myself, years from now. I want to look back at the young, stupid kid I was then, talk to him, and tell him what a stupid thing he did, but I cannot. It reminds me, I want to thank you for giving me the nights in my studio that end at dawn, when I laugh, sit, dance, scream, love and cry—the moments that will always be mine. Seeing your life before you 8ft. wide and hung at 103 inches in adjusted light with the ability to look at it from a distance or up close becomes something larger than you; it seems to not be you that painted it, or perhaps it is not you who is starring at it.

There was a survey conducted as to whether or not a person would want to know the exact day of his death. 96% said yes. What if instead, you were only told the moment at which a severe and critical change had happened—perhaps some alteration, a tilting of the earth on its axis? What if it was a Saturday in April without a cloud in the sky, and at 10 am., you were told that you had reached the juncture, the instant you had crossed the tipping point beyond the fulcrum³¹², the point from which you were looking at something from the other end, and from that point forward you were moving toward a closure, the end of an existence? How much more would a person be able to prepare, or should we always be preparing, or at least

312 The center point of a balance.

be ready? Perhaps this is the point at which you stand beside Bonnard's figures and look back across the table, or looking at Las Meninas from beside the mirror in the silence of the far end of the room. Perhaps you meet the awareness of Velazquez's Venus, looking beyond yourself in the mirror and perhaps we paint to become comfortable with the notion of dying. What if that juncture was now?

To avoid confusion, this letter is not for Moshe Shapira—my father's father—the man whom I sat across the coffee table outside Faran Street listening and asking. However, these are the words I felt so unnecessary, marginal, primary, undeveloped, unconsidered to share. I could talk for hours and he would just say a sentence that was so much stronger, and this is why I write this. Any sentence would resonate thru-composed against the eloquence in wisdom that comes with age. The only words in this letter dedicated to him—a reworking of his as I have understood them over the course of my lifetime—follow:

A person's life is summed with the ones left behind, perhaps love, and faith; it is what has been done between deaths, and can therefore not be meaningless. You have taught me more about painting than anyone with all you have wrung out of a lifetime, and that is to live the days of this life. May you reach the wisdom of 120 years, may we have many more lattes and bourekas on Faran Street, and may we not know when you will die nor when you will cross the point over the fulcrum. All I know about your death is that your heart, with all its achievements, will be open and your eyes will be closed. Saba Moshe, I believe you measure yourself by the people who measure themselves by you.

This letter and these words are not intended to be read now. They have a purpose, and will be read with renewed meaning later—Dear Grandpa, refers to me. I have written this letter to myself years from now, in 2065, when I turn eighty-five. When I read this again, I will be you—the remains after the decline of an empire.

With love and gratitude,
Aithan

Conclusion

You must believe in spring. Spring is not a process of birth but rebirth. Nature evolves—it survives by dividing and reforming its structure.

The fold is hope, a celebration of our ability to make limitless permutations collect as actively as we edit and shift recursively between perspectives. Deleuze expresses the ‘Baroque’ not as a period of inventing things, but rather the fruitful production of folds and the unfolding of Classical, Greek, Roman thoughts that celebrates immeasurable possibilities. The mosaic of borderless, imbricated placement of thought achieves moments of exactness, totality, and ultimately guides innovation—the expressive process of subjectivity. Congruously, contemporary neuroscience shows the importance storing rubrics of comparisons across brain lobes is fundamentally, intimately linked with the way in which we perceive. The brain’s practice of generating meaning and concepts is what makes us human, imperfect, unpredictable and fascinating. The contributing theories, research, and applications by artists surrounding the fold evaluate it as a framework for presenting multiple perspectives simultaneously, and moreover as a lens through which we perceive. I therefore also see it as a lens through which we make.

In this way, I believe Jorge Luis Borges himself perceived the word around him through the array of senses he orchestrated in his writing and the Cubist artists’ process absorbed the world through the same fractured, symbiotic relationships as their paintings; David Hockney’s way of forming his mother in photo-collage was actually the way he saw her; Alex Katz’s conflated modes of working between abstraction and detail is a perception built on his life’s experience of the art world; Ori Gersht’s process transforming Chardin’s painting is what he sees looking at today; and Gert and Uwe Tobias’ engagement with form through color planes and line is simultaneously an active engagement in folding the history of the subject. Determined through the study of this thesis and thirty years’ experience as an artist myself, I find artist’s process itself is a focus in matching one’s hand with the speed of one’s eye. The poetry is simply in how an individual processes the world, the patterns of relationships plausible by the folds one makes. An artist draws the world much like Walter Benjamin walking through the arcades in Paris³¹³, and the folds are

³¹³ Benjamin, Walter. *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999.

made as a function of his collected experiences. The origami of folds celebrates a life, a life lived.

In my studio, I am currently attempting to examine the process by cementing it at one of its states. The process of constructing the cardboard 'plates' for my collography prints has a fluidity afforded by the value and abundance of the material as I collage it. The fluidity makes it a terrific form of drawing to communicate with my paintings as well. I often pause the collaging process in order to draw from a particular layered state of the piece that may either inform a painting or offer developing details that may be reshaped into the collage as it progresses. The notebooks of drawings motivate more notebooks of drawings attempting to structure the subject from the kaleidoscope of folded relationships. My recent mold-making of the collaged cardboard 'plates' has introduced the ability to make fossils that I can then blossom into permutations. Creating concrete relief prints from the molds acts as a form of drawing in that it solidifies the edited state of subject. Preventing further restructuring of the collage motivates further assembling of relationships between forms by other modes of line, color, and treatment of space through drawing and painting directly onto the concrete, and the reproductive opportunity of the print format is allowing me to compare the various directions to then edit from. The aim is always to arrive at a more profound poetry of relationships pointing to the subject.

Australian Aboriginal rock paintings teach us about touching and preservation. In our culture we preserve what is special to us with layers of security and protection that distance us—alarms, guards, weapons, access codes, temperature and humidity control. To Australian Aboriginals preservation is a process of touching, touching the same thing over again with generations of hands. The more we touch, respectfully so, the more special what we touch becomes and we in turn want to preserve it more. Thousands of hands since Manet's have eagerly tried to claim something new, something as theirs—the first moments we reached the moon we hammered a flag to claim it—and again the indigenous teach us instead, that if you keep touching the earth and moving the layers of dust, what you have been looking for has always been there and rather just needed to be revealed. The artist's job is not to cover with each touch but to reveal. Perhaps what remains of art empires are the questions by which we characterize ourselves and perhaps we move

forward by positioned ourselves against them. The act of folding is the act of evolving possibilities.

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Image Catalogue

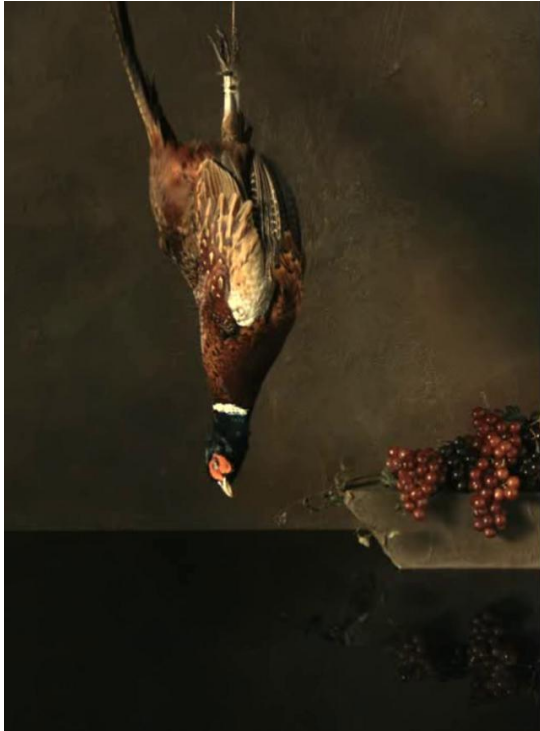
1. Gersht, Ori. *Pomegranate*, film still, 2006.



2. Cotán, Fra Juan Sánchez. *Quince, Cabbage, Melon, Cucumber*, 1602.



3. Gersht, Ori. *Falling Bird*, film still, 2008.



4. Chardin, Jean Baptiste Simeon. *A Mallard Drake Hanging on a Wall and a Seville Orange*, 1728-1730.



5. Gersht, Ori. *Blow-Up*, 2007.



6. Latour, Ignace Henri Théodore Fantin. *The Rosy Wealth of June*, 1886.



7. Tavormina, Paulette. *Oysters and Lemon, after W.C.H.*, 2008.



8. Heda, Willem Claesz. *Still Life*, 1632.



9. Zurbaran, Francisco. *Still Life with Lemons, Oranges, and Rose*, 1633.



10. Gert and Uwe Tobias. *Untitled*, colored woodcut on papers mounted on canvas 2007.



11. Knoebel, Imi. *Gartenbild*, acrylic on aluminum, 2012



12. Gert and Uwe Tobias. *Untitled*, installation Saatchi Gallery, London, colored woodcut on papers mounted on canvas, 2009.



13. Gert and Uwe Tobias. *Untitled*, detail, colored woodcut on papers mounted on canvas, 2009.



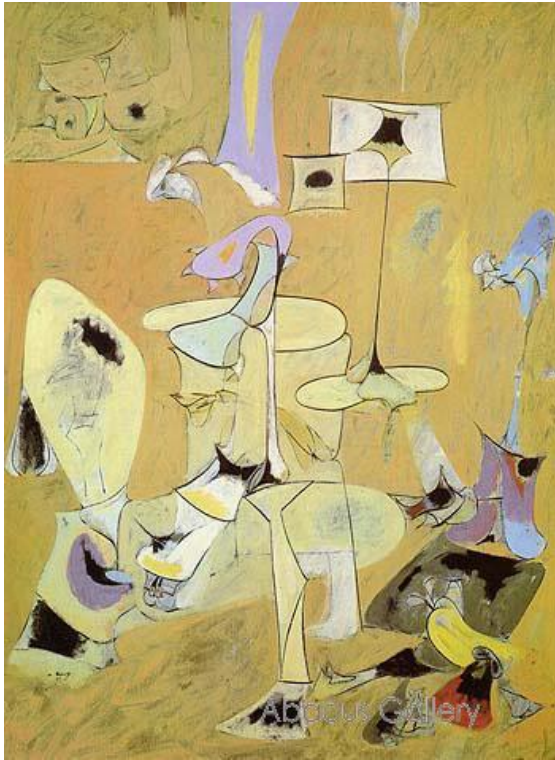
14. Gert and Uwe Tobias. *Untitled*, acrylic, crayon and woodcut on papers mounted on canvas, 2005.



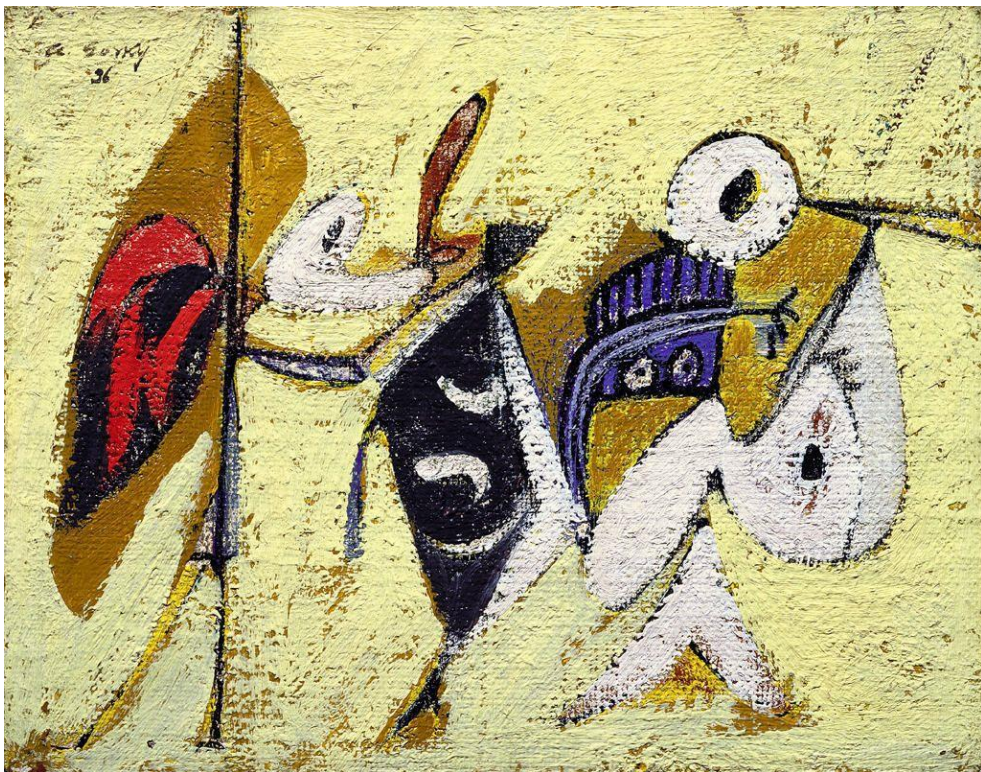
15. Gorky, Arshile. *Garden in Sochi*, 1941.



16. Gorky, Arshile. *The Betrothal II*, 1947.



17. Gorky, Arshile. *Battle at Sunset with the God of Maize (Composition No. 1)*, 1936.



18. Kandinsky, Wassily. *Sketch for Composition II (Skizze for Komposition II)*, 1909.



19. Kandinsky, Wassily. *In Gray (Im Grau)*, 1919.



20. Lobdell, Frank. *Pier 70*, oil on canvas mounted on panel, 1997.



21. Kandinsky, Wassily. *Decomposed Tension (Zersetzte Spannung)*, 1922.



22. Lobdell, Frank. *Pier 70*, oil on canvas, 2003.



23. Lobdell, Frank. *Bleeker*, oil on canvas, 1993.



24. Lobdell, Frank. *Pier 70*, oil on canvas, 2002.



25. Hartley, Marsden. *The Iron Cross*, 1915.



26. Hartley, Marsden. *Portrait of a German Soldier*, 1914.



27. Hartley, Marsden. *Pre-War Pageant*, 1913.



28. Matisse, Henry. *La Nègresse*, 1952-1953.



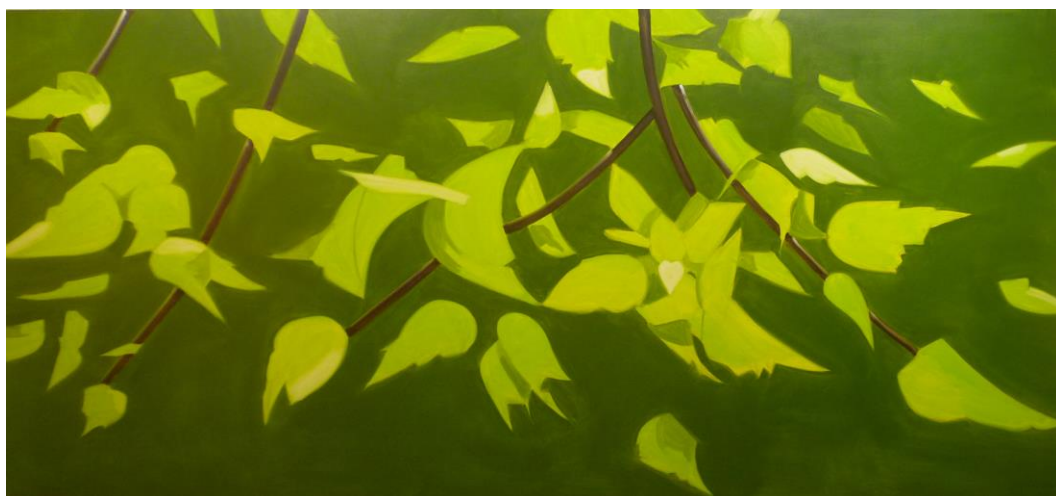
29. Katz, Alex. *Yellow Flags*, 2011.



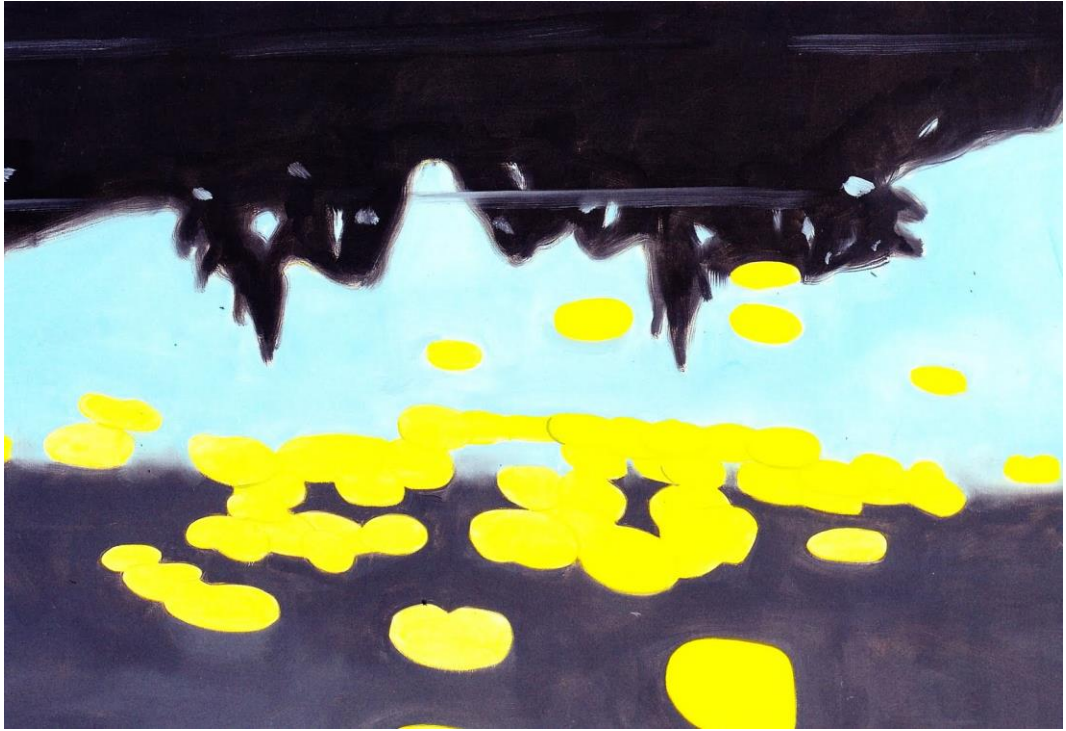
30. Katz, Alex. *Flowers 2*, 2010.



31. Katz, Alex. *Birch*, 2010.



32. Katz, Alex. *Homage to Monet*, 2009.



33. Matisse, Henry. *Red Room*, 1908.



34. Matisse, Henry. *Red Room*, installation Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1908.



35. Matisse, Henry. *Nude with a White Scarf*, 1909.



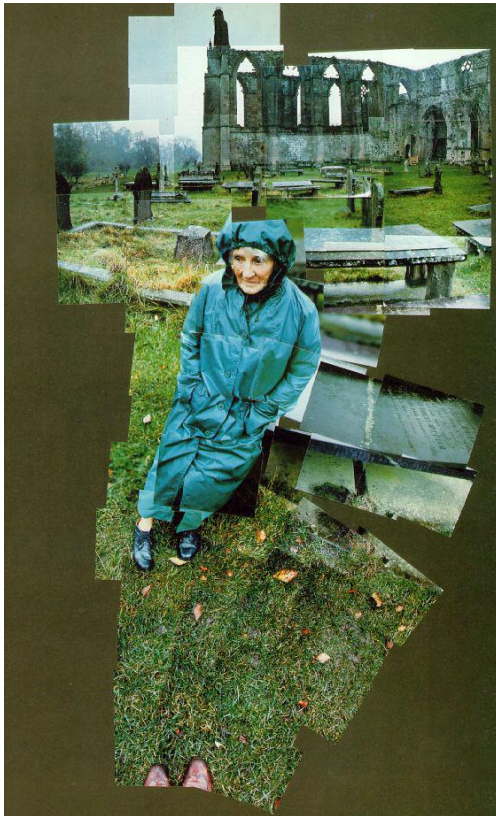
36. Matisse, Henry. *Nude with a White Scarf*, two separate paintings, 1909.



37. Hockney, David. *Mother I, Yorkshire Moors*, photo-collage, 1985.



38. Hockney, David. *My Mother, Bolton Abbey, Yorkshire*, photo-collage, 1982.



39. El Greco. *The Baptism of Christ*, 1600.



40. El Greco. *Christ in the Mountolive Garden*, 1590.



41. Braque, Georges. *La Portugais*, 1911.



42. Picasso, Pablo. *Portrait of Wilhelm Uhde*, 1910.



43. Picasso, Pablo. *The Yellow Sweater Dora Maar*, 1939.



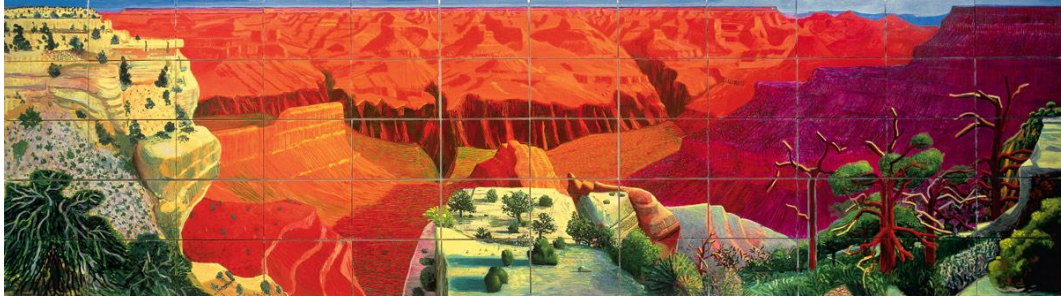
44. Picasso, Pablo. *Para Jacqueline*, 1970.



45. Picasso, Pablo. *Jacqueline*, 1970.



46. Hockney, David. *A Bigger Grand Canyon*, 60 continuous paintings, 1998.



47. Hockney, David. *Nov. 7th, Nov. 26th 2010, Woldgate Woods 11:30am and 9:30am*, film still - 9 digital cameras, 2010.



48. Hockney, David. *Woldgate Woods, 7 and 8 November, 2006*, 6 continuous paintings, 2006.



49. Matisse, Henri. *The Snail*, 1953.



50. Cézanne, Paul. *Father Of The Artist Reading L'Evenement*, 1866.



51. Goya, Francisco de. *The Forge*, c1815-1820.



52. Hirst, Damien. *A Thousand Years*, 1990.



53. De Kooning's, William. *Woman I*, 1950-52.



54. Freud, Lucian. *Reflection* (self-portrait), 2005. Detail.



55. Schutz, Dana. *Mulch*, 2004.



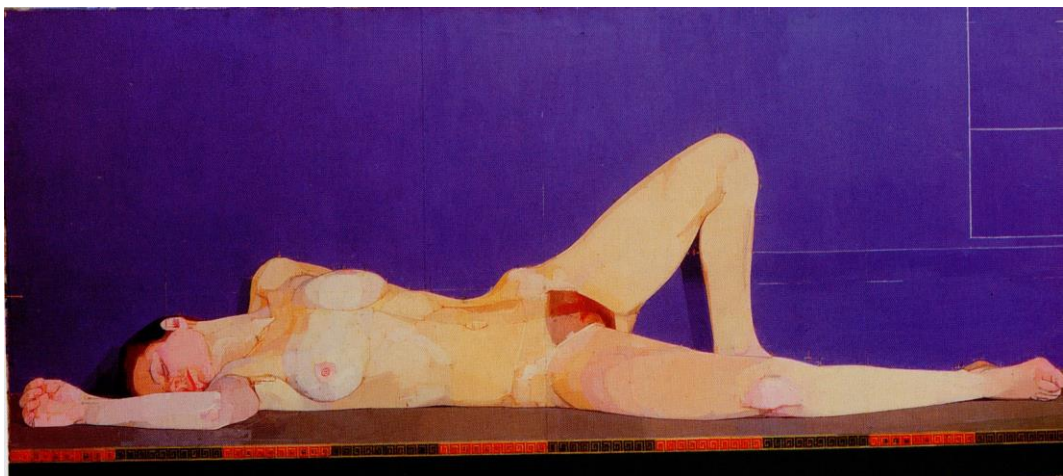
56. Steichen, Edward. *Brancusi's Studio*. 1920.



57. Beuys, Joseph. *Lightning with Stag in its Glare*, 1958-85.



58. Uglow, Euan. *Root Five Nude*, 1976.



59. Turner, William. *Decline of the Carthaginian Empire*. 1817.



60. *The Unicorn is Killed*, c. 1495-1505, Tapestry. South Netherlands region.



61. Uccello, Paolo. *Battle of San Romano*, 1438.



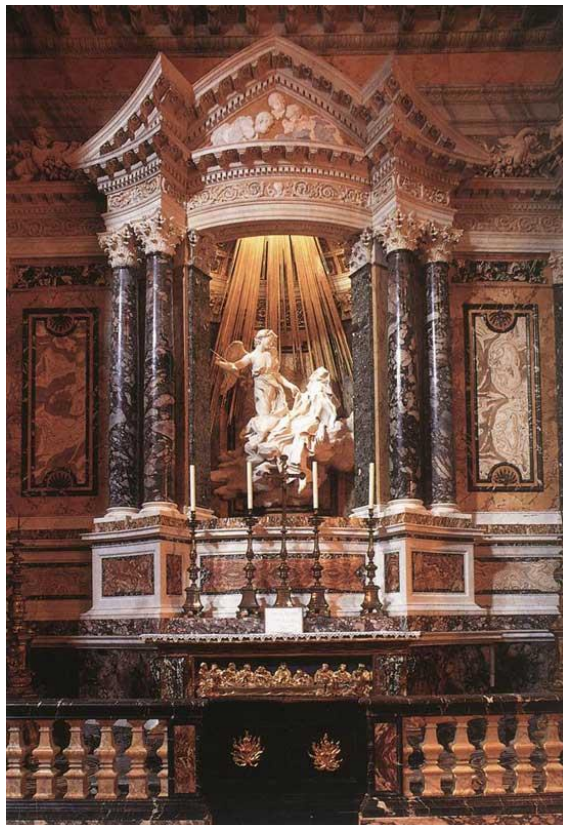
62. Raphael. *Battle of Ostia*, 1514.



63. Sassetta, Stefano di Giovanni. *The Funeral of Saint Francis* (left), *Saint Francis Renounces his Earthly Father* (right). Panels from *Altar of San Francesco*, Borgo San Sepolcro, 1437-44.



64. Bernini. *Ecstasy of St. Teresa*, 1647-52.



65. El Greco. *The Resurrection*, 1577-79.



66. Cole, Thomas. *River in the Catskills*, 1843.



67. El Greco. *The Burial of the Count of Orgaz*, 1586-1588.



68. Vermeer, Johannes. *Woman in Blue Reading a Letter*, 1663-1664.



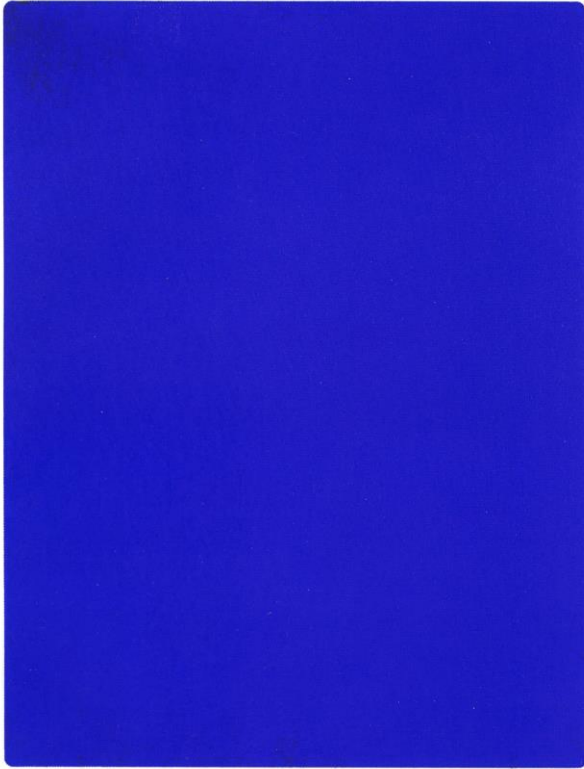
69. Cézanne, Paul. *The Bather*. 1885.



70. Giacometti, Alberto. *Head of Diego*, 1961.



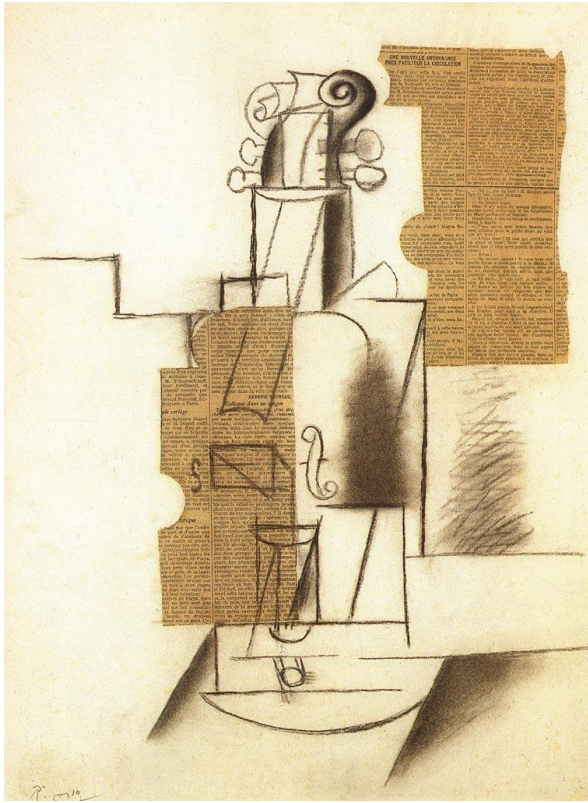
71. Klein, Yves. *IKB 191*, 1962.



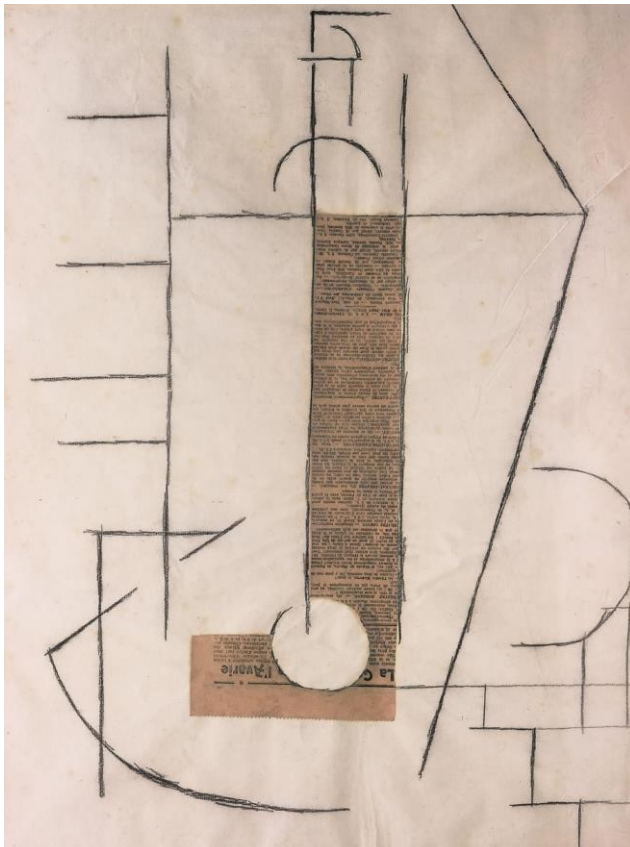
72. Brueghel, Pieter the Elder. *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus*, 1555.



73. Picasso, Pablo. *Violin*, 1912.



74. Picasso, Pablo. *Bottle on a Table*, 1912.



75. Brancusi, Constantin. *PrincessX*, 1916.



76. Brancusi, Constantin. *Leda*, 1920.



77. Brancusi, Constantin. *Torso of a Young Man*, 1920.



78. Brancusi, Constantin. *Young Bird*, 1928.



79. Velazquez. *The Thread Spinners*, 1645.



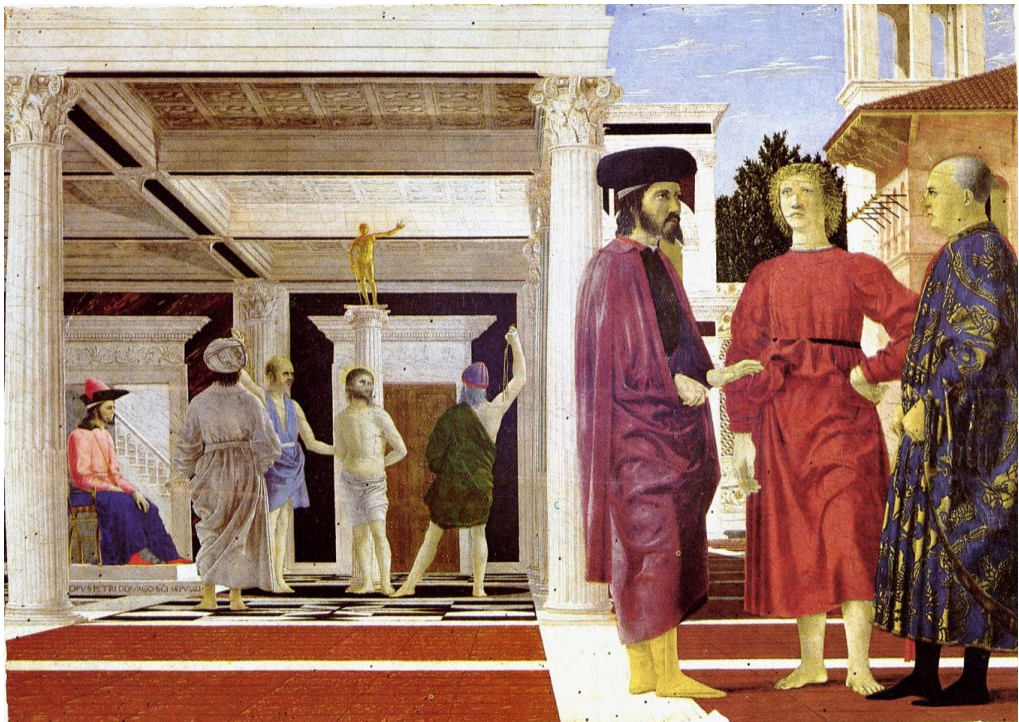
80. Vermeer. *Woman Holding a Balance*, 1665



81. Goya, Francisco de. *Christ on the Cross*. 1780.



82. Piero della Francesca. *Flagellation of Christ*, 1455.



83. *Unicorn at Bay*, c. 1495-1505, Tapestry. South Netherlands region.



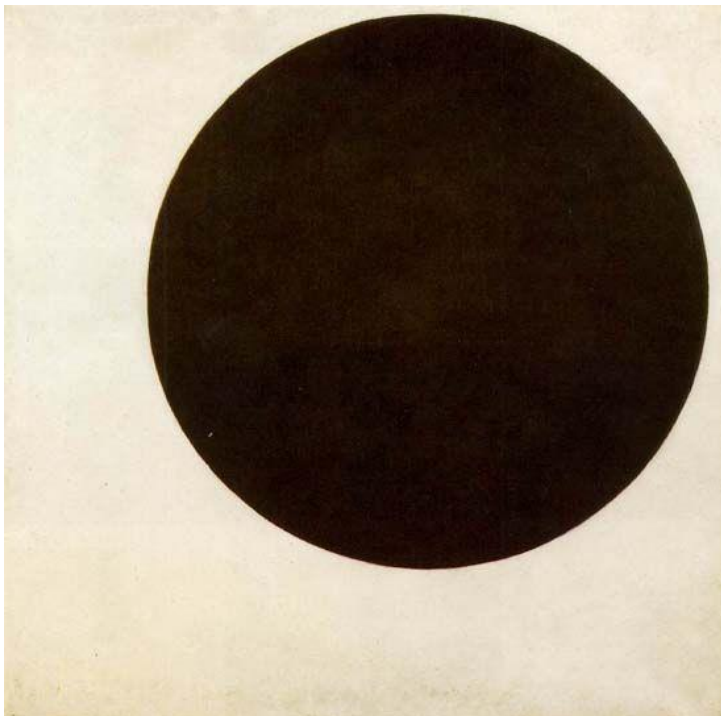
84. Duccio di Buoninsegna. *Maestà*, 1308-1311.



85. Poussin. *Triumph of Pan*, 1635.



85. Malevich, Kazimir. *Black Circle*, 1915.



Catalogue of Work Presented for Examination

The Carpenter's Workshop

etching, sugar lift, 78x103 in. 2010

Before the Carnival

collograph, 78x x 103 in. 2008

Today's Desert Cow

earth and olive tree ash on collaged canvas, 72x x 96 in. 2011

Hungerford Bridge

collograph, 78 x 103 in. 2009

Tree Pots and Life Saver

collograph, 78 x 103 in. 2009

Hortus Scaphium, Libraria Botanica - Hybrids

hand-bound book of etchings after botanical inventions, 11 x 15 x 2 in. 2008

Hortus Scaphium: Pulpitum

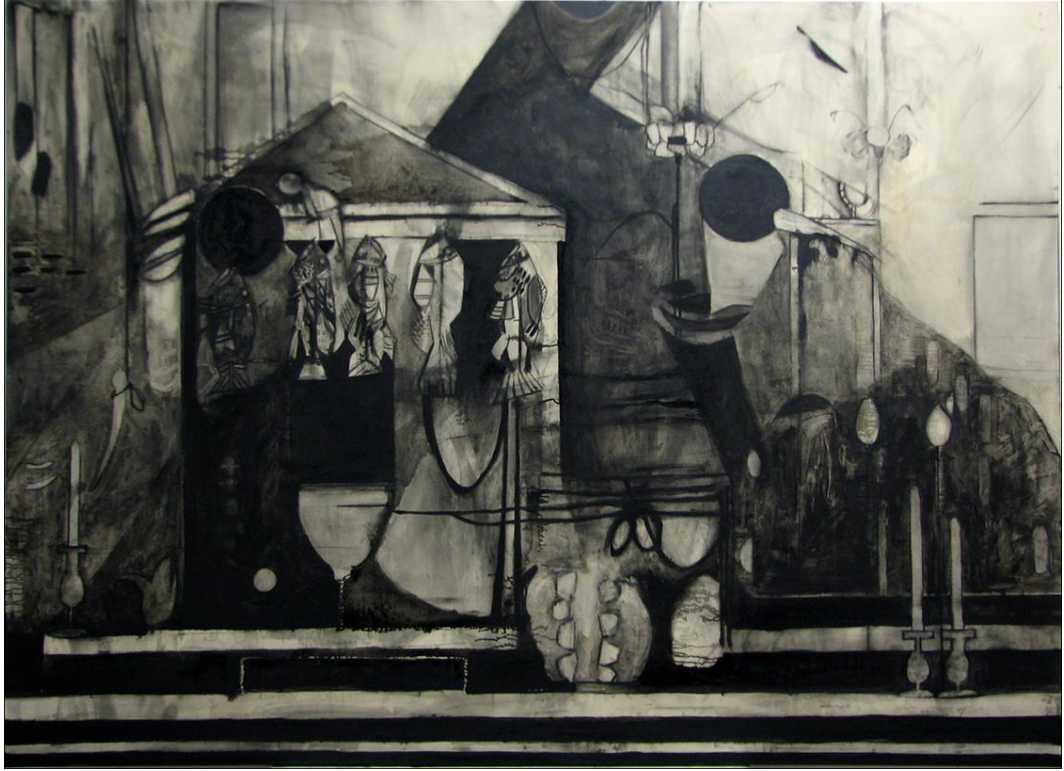
etching, aquatint, spit bite, à la poupée
4 copper plates, 6 x 8 in. 2008

Balloon Carrying Bird

woodcut, 20 x 20 in. 2009



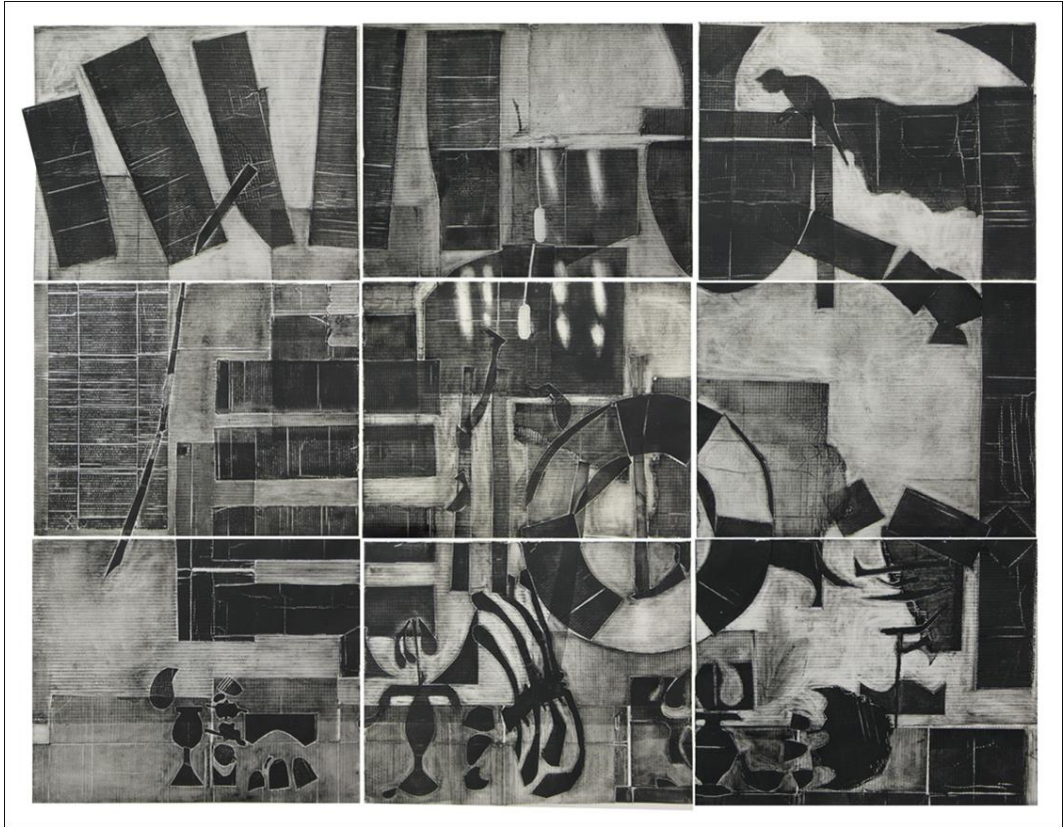
The Carpenter's Workshop
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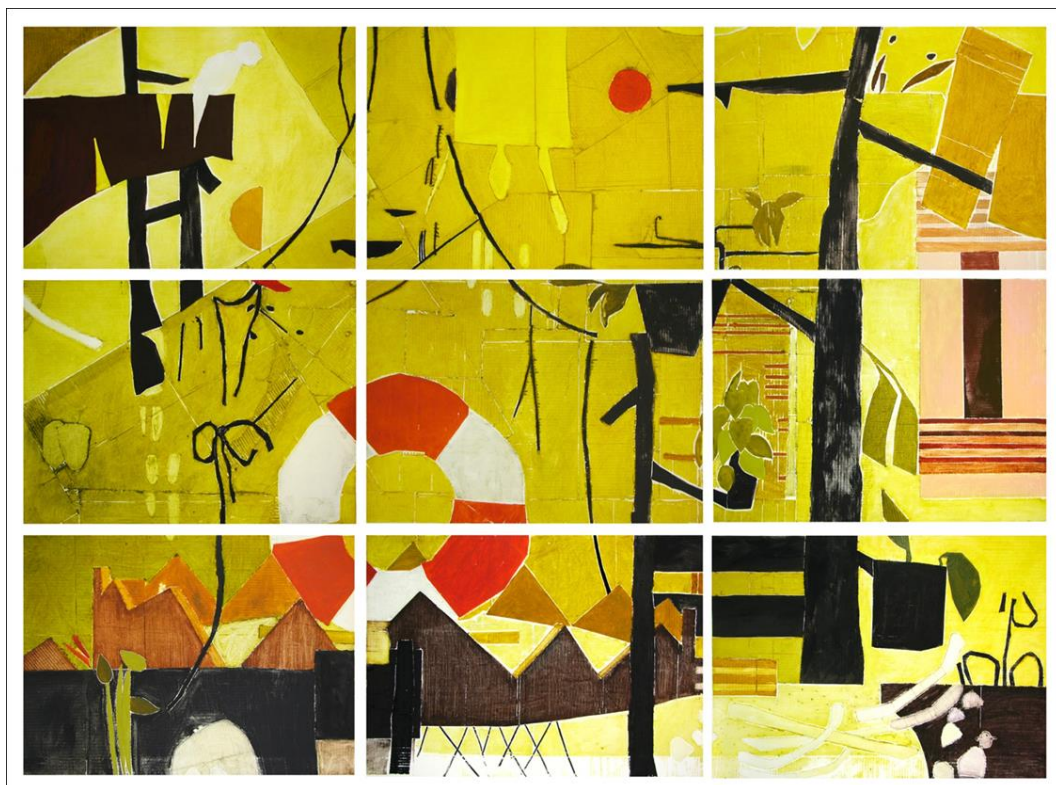
Before the Carnival
collograph, 78x x 103 in. 2008



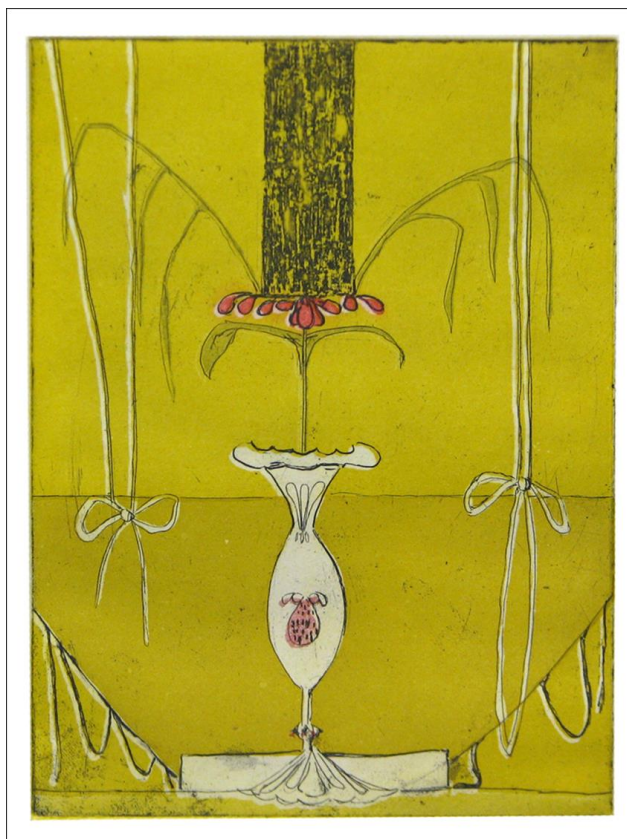
Today's Desert Cow
earth and olive tree ash on collaged canvas, 72x x 96 in. 2011



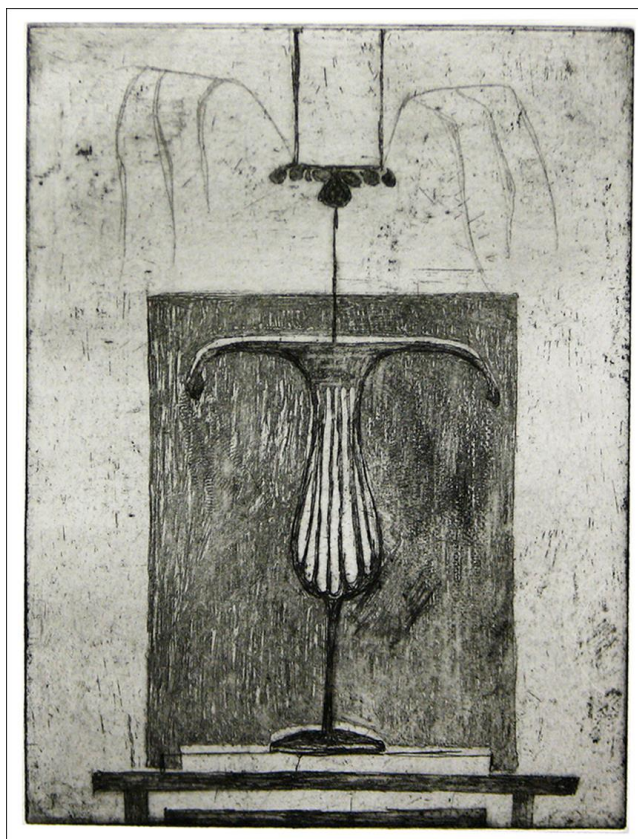
Hungerford Bridge
collograph, 78 x 103 in. 2009



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