National College of Art & Design

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Faculty of Fine Art, Painting Dept.;

Ressurection Within Postmodernism By Colm Henry

"Submitted to the Faculty of History of Art & Design and Complementory Studies in Candidacy for the Degree of"

B.A. Fine Art Painting 1993.

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SEMEN 1983. Guache on linen 7'9" x 13', Francesco Clemente



### Introduction

"Perhaps the central problem for postmodernism in the visual arts is that, although we live in a culture of proliferating images the future has no image." (Newman, Michael @86 ICA documents institute of contempory arts.)

This statement was made during the heated discussion that took place in the eighties about postmodernism. The term postmodernism cannot be avoided when discussing contempory visual art. However mor often than not the term is used in a negative manner. Through postmodernisms use of parody and pastiche it is often portrayed in a regressive light. The result of pastiche and parody is seen to be despair and isolation in the arts. For some however postmodernism is the renaissance. It is the shift in cultural sensibilities that can bring about change. postmodernism is seen as a form of liberation for the arts, leading evetually to celebration of pluralism in the planets culture.

As the term postmodernism implies, it is related to modernism. Postmodernism is not however another stylistic change in aesthetics, within the parameters of the modernist period. The term postmodernism refers to a cultural shift indeed it is described as a condition rather than a stylistic shift. Since the final reductive stage of the modernist period was arrived at in the sixties with pop art and minimalism. although the term was first used in architecture postmodernism was applied to all visual expression or representation after the modernist period. The term expanded past the small section of the visual arts throughout all cultural spheres to be regarded as a condition faced by all.

Extending this discussion to the visual arts, in particular painting, it seems that critical theory and art became divided. Previously in the period of modernism theoretical discourse aided and supported artistic practice. The modernist period left many traditions and formulae's for change. Such as reacting against the norm of the time. The trend was upwards and forwards. Modernism was the story of heroism and change. The result lay ahead in the future. The aesthetic divergence displayed in the modernist period however led only to dispair or rejoicement for the contempory artist or critic. It seems as if anything goes in contempory art. This can be an extreme advantage or disadvantage for the artist and critic today.

Previously artistic discourse in the modernist period had been a series of actions and reactions against the accepted aesthetic norm of the time. Cubism for example was a deliberate stylistic change questioning the frame and validity of two dimensional representation or imagery of the time. Those who led these reactions were the avant garde, so called due to their insights into the future image. The avant garde were supported and spread around through critics and dealers who valued their work. The time for this stylistic rapid change accompanied the economic and industrial upheval of the time. The Italian futurists would be a clear example of this as their images directly supported the technology of the time.

The modernist period according to critic Habermas created an answer, however this answer lay in the future. Thus the pattern of renewal and reduction progressed into the future. However as modernism

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The modernist porfet accutding to cittle Babermas created an answer, howerer this answer lay in the Future. Thus the puttern of renewal and reduction progressed into the future. However as modernical progressed upwards and forwards reducing the forms it created, the answer still lay ahead, in the future. This pattern continued. The modernist period becme tunnel visioned and the vision pointed always to the future. The subversive were celebrated as genius and it was the avant garde that would reach the imaginary goal at the end of the tunnel. This according to Habermas was how the modernist period eventually had to recede upon itself thus remaining incomplete. Their work however opened up possibilities and created a huge aesthetic divergence to work from.

Interupted by world war two art resurfaced noticably in the United States. The avant garde unlike those of dadism and surrealism neglected the politics and concentrated on the aesthetics. As time wore on more and more the forms and 'styistic decoration' of art was stripped bare ending at minimalism. Pop artists had already opened the audience up by taking popular culture as their roots for image making. Their imaginary goal sought in the future had been grounded. In the sixties the counter culture seemed to start off on a subversive note. However as time passed many of the ideas raised in the counter culture were consumed and commodified. Although there was much divergence in the sixties it seemed as though they were unified and labelled under the ideology and its institutions. The sixties is now an era of 'flower power' and 'free love'. It has been and gone.

Many of the advantages and dis advantages of postmodernism stem from its prefix post. By detaching itself from contexts and defining narritives it creates a vacuum of decision in which seemingly anything goes. Indeed we value postmodernism through its prefix. In the advent of anything goes the artist is free to pursue whatever form his or her career takes. This does leave critical discourse traditionally the artists supporter or decipher undecided on which textual discourse to pursue. Meanwhile the artist is free to pursue his or her work but with the threat of indifferent acceptance over his or her head. From such a wealth of theory formed out of social political and scientific schools, postmodernism must not be allowed to become negative isolated and repressive within the field of visual and textual discourse.

By examining the contempory criticism on the modernist period and the idea of modernity the distinction between modernism and postmodernism may be better understood. Evaluating how philosophies of science aesthetice and politics merges into theory it will make clearer that through this blurring of distinctions the idea of modernism came to be so confused.

Examing the history of modernity has changed will also aid in the discussion. The eventual outcome will be to show the modernist periods downfall was,

- a) The prognation if the myth of the new, that an imaginary goal lay in the future.
- b) By its self critical reductive nature the modernist period receeded in on itself through its own limitations.

Using the text of Jurgen Habermas 'Modernism , an incomplete age ?' it will be possible to clarify the shortcomings of the modernist period and pave the way for an approach to the postmodern.

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Baris the foot of courses Hohemans "Bodemarss", as incomplete ago 7' at will be paralise to clarafy the chartconings of the modernist period and save the way for an approach to the postwoders. Taking Fredric Jameson and comparing his view of the postmodern condition with that of Andreas Huyssen it will be possible to point out the shortcomings of Jamesons marxist beliefs to do with also capitalism and the positive aspirations of Huyssens alternatives. Using both their discussions will offer textual pathways through the postmodern. At the end of this pathway Francesco Clemente and the transavantgarde can be mapped onto the postmodern.

Having looked at the pros and cons of both modernism and postmodernism it will be possible to apply these theories to the Italians in particular Clemente. Staying within the field of painting chapter three will look at what Clemente has to offer to contempory art and how he relates to the postmodern condition today, thus showing how postmodernism can be conceptualised positively.

By promoting the work of Clemente and other artists working in the postmodern the conclusion of this thesis will be concerned with investigating the seemingly growing cultural sensitivity which is also important in the idea of the postmodern. Taking sensibility as a mode of percipitation and response this thesis will conclude on the question of change within the cultural sphere. Taking Frederic Jameson and comparing hus view of the pustwoodern condition with that of Andrean Hoyasen it will be possible to point out the choircomings of Jamesons marginst balled, to do with also capitalism and the positive asplications of Royascus alternatives Using both theoret discussions will offer textual pathways through the positiveness of of this pothway Francesca Clemento and the transavantgarde can be mapped onto the postmodern.

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When discussing the term modernism it must be acknowledged that the term dates back through history due to its renewal the idea of modernity covers quite a range of thought. Often the phrase is used and confused covering complex relationships of language. However it is not always the case that something is regarded as modern because of the ideas of modernity it is supposed to contain pieces of music and other works of art quickly termed modern and often this term does not apply to them. It is difficult to be precise but using Habermas text points to the first us eod the term was in the Christian and Roman period to be modern was a way of reviewing the transition of old pagan beliefs to the new christianity. Jurgen Habermas see's no need to trace it further. The common ground he see's for modernity in those times was to be part of the changed sensibilities of the time.

Following Habermas discussion artistically speaking the term was reshaped in the Renaissance the term was taken beyond its antique reference and christian mode into the domain of nature and the sensual. He goes on to tell us how with the arrival of French enlightenment once more modernisms meaning altered. Refering to the ancient philosophies for inspiration, the french enlightenment school believed that the arts and science would evolve moral and social betterment. Modernism proposed evolution and advancement in the human condition, the problem once more is that the better way always seemed to lie ahead in the future.

Modernity came to the twentieth century meaning a break with the previously established norm. Radical modernity gained great momentum in the modernist period ending in the nineteen sixties. According to Habermas when the spirit of radical modernism came into being it freed the term modernity from the past. The artists of the modernist period such as Braque, Picasso, Max Ernst and Marcel Duchamp were all reacting against the establishment. They were taking the work of the institutions and attacking it and the basis of art museums of the time, Duchamp exhibited a painting signed R.Mutt attacking tradition and mocking the gallery and the art institutions. Picasso questioned the painted surface in cubism. The surrealists and Questioned and tried to change the levels on which a work of art belongs albeit aesthetic, political or theraputic. These artists were the avant garde of the time change perspectives and viewpoints of the art object. They were innovative and brougth the new and different outlook on the artworld. The idea of modernity became one of progression and change. In this period there was a lot of technological and economical growth and change. As the avant garde worked within these historical conditions their work grew and altered alongside the economic change. Modernism became progressive and reductive in its form. Picasso questioned representation on the two dimensional surface. Pollock questioned representation completely turning to the emotional current. Warhol questioned the culture that we question ourselves, in with each evaluation of art came a reduction of form and 'decoration' of an image was stripped away ending eventually in minimalism. Modernism was a process of self criticism and reduction. The idea of modernity pushed the artwork into an imaginary goal in the future.

The problem with the modernist periods process of renewal was that

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"The prontes will the model first periods process of renewal was that



Seated woman nude 1909/1910, Pablo Picasso.

This painting is one of the earlier analytical cubist pieces. Cubism was later to become a highly stylised way of painting. Because of this it was dropped as more and more modernism moved away from the colours of Cezanne and the forms of cubism.

Seated woman mide 1909/1910, Pabla Picasson This painting is one of the eachier analytical minist preces. Chhism was later to become a highly stylised var of painting. Because of this it was dropped as more and more modernism sound away from the colours of Geranne and the forms of cubism

each new style tended to wipe out the ideas and values of the old style. Expressionism vitoed impressionism and so on. Therefor in keeping with rapid developements of the economic and industrial growth the changes in artistic styles came fast and furious. According to Habermas this made it harder to place each style into its historical context which is vital in the bearing of modernisms evolutionary context. Through hindsight each body of work within the modernist period contained valuable social context specific to the period. The futurists in Italy portrayed a love of the war machine whereas the dadaists were clearly politically unsure about events of the time. They questioned the activities of the state and the culture. So it can be seen how although the answer or the solution lay in the future for the artists of the modernist period, their work was confined to specific economic and social issues of their era. Although their images were supposed to be of what was to come their images were in fact reflective of the time they were made. This problem gives rise to a conflict in their images for contempory art debate.

Through hindsight a pattern may be observed the avant garde being the vangarde of modernism reacted against the given norm of the period. Fighting bourgeois ideology and consumer quality of capitalism the avant garde pushed back the boundaries of visual communication and imagery on one level. Om another level though, through their tunnel vision the artist if the modernist period caused their own downfall. By stripping away the decoration and emotion from their images they reduced the imagery to barren emotionless forms. This is what is meant by their process of self critical reduction. They were extremely self critical of their work. If they were'nt content with one aspect of their work it was removed. This meant that quickly the images were reduced through a process of self evaluation until eventually ending up in minimalism. Both on the left and the right politically speaking, modernism flurished at the time of the industrial revolution in Europe. This was sharply interrupted by the second world war to later be imported by the U.S.A.. However a lot of the political and social ramifications of the modernist period was not imported to America. While this took place the institutions and dominant patriarchial ideologies adopted the creations of the modernist period. Acceptance can be another form of dominance as Robert Hewison argues in his book 'Art of the Nineties' Hewison, raises this issue in respect to questions of sexual identity. Indifferent acceptance is although subtle, another form of control. By tolerating the actions or work of the artist still means the person or body of people such as the institution, are still the controllers of the situation.

"Modernity revolts against the normalising function of tradition: modernity lives on the experience of rebelling against all that is normative". (Habermas, Jurgen 1984 'Modernity an incomplete project' page 4).

On this point modernism receded upon itself. Modernisms revolt became subjected to indifferent acceptance and eventual support and promotion. The subversiveness of modernism which gave it its energetic push, was engulfed and consumed by the ideology, joining the totalising timeless system of the grand narative. Its historical and cultural significance was consumed and the modernist period became the norm. Modernism became lost in the scientifically

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(Top) The voice, oil on canvas, Edvard Munch, 34.5" x 42.5". (Bottom left) The scream 1893, Edvarde Munch, oil on cardboard 36" x 29".

(Bottom right) Inca mummy from Peru.

The references the expressionist took from were those of newly viewed forms of other cultures. Yet their concern was in the physical form. Munch and the other expressionists worked in this manner until the arrival of the industrial age when concern shifted away from emotions to the machine.

(Top) The volce, oil on canvas, Edvard Munch, 31.5" x (2.5") (Bottom left) The scream 1893, Edvarde Munch, 611 on cardboard 36" x 29",

(Dottom right) inca memmy from Peru. The references the expressionist took from were those of newly viewed forms of other cultures. Yet their concern was in the physical form. Munch and the other expressionists worked in this manner until the arrival of the industrial age when concern shifted away from emotions

## dependable rational norm.

Modernism never fulfilled its potential of change and renewal within the accepted norm. As Habermas puts it modernism became an 'open incomplete cycle'. Habermas raises an interresting relationship between the avant garde and history, using a reference to Walter Benjamin's jetzteit he presents a different view on the avant garde jetzteit means that the present is a moment of revelation, "A time in which splinters of a messaic presence are embelished." (Habermas, Jurgen 1976, 'modernity an incomplete project') The past that it reacted against was historically specific the history they attached was part of the grand evolutionary narrative structure of western time. Through hindsight we know that history as a source of valuable concrete reference can be decieving due to the patriarchial dominant structure running throughout. The questioning of this relationship of history with the avant garde anticipates the role of transavantgarde into postmodernism.

In the small cultural sphere of painting and the fine arts modernism within the modernist period has been reductive. By discussing the previous style for the merits of the new and by deconstructing aesthetics in a very self critical manner, image and concept were separated. The artwork was stripped bare of all sensory stimuli and logical rational discourse replaced excited revelation. Modernism not only receded in upon itself visually but audience wise it also isolated the various recipients and consumers of the artwork. The divide became apparent between high and low culture as the art industry emerged consuming all remains of communication left in the cultural sphere. Art was loosing in the battle of commodification within capitalism. Visual and literal discourse on the image seperated into isolated cultural identities. Nostalga became the mode of reception for the artwork.

Modernism for some is the tale of western evolution through its progressive structure of change it accelerated our sense of the present into the future. Through its format it raised much change and difference discovered by modernism was accepted by the cultural ideology pertained to unity. Art according to Habermas was grouped into an autonomous sphere where modernism was consumed and institutionalised it became the norm. Art was left to its own devices and could call upon any laws or views on aesthetics to support itself. The ideas of artists were grouped into the institution which accepted indifferently their subversiveness. The feeling of anything goes became apparent and art was as Habermas puts it grouped into an autonomous sphere.

Modernism was left incomplete when the avant garde was overtaken and co opted by the triumph of capitalism. After world war two however, this sense of consumer commodification supported by the dominant (patriarchial ideology) was now globally compounded in the postmodern condition.

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Hoternics never contributed the potential of change and teneari would the accepted uses. As Raberass ruises an interresting rotationship incomplete dyals'. Haberass ruises an interresting rotationship between the owned garde and interry, using a rotarence to Walter. Brojamin's jetatoit he presents a different view on the areast garde (etattent means that the presents a different view on the areast garde (Haberass, Jurgen et/M, 'modernity an incomplete project') (Haberass, Jurgen et/M, 'modernity an incomplete project') (Haberass, Jurgen et/M, 'modernity an incomplete project') as a structure of revelation which relative and infatory they are the called and the garde of each of each of each of the grand evolutionary narrative a structure of orstean time. Through hindelight we know that history as a source of each of each of the reference can be decived as fatories the paraticle of the source of the structure of the source of th

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modernian van bett incomplete vien the avant garde war overtaken and co opted hy the roumen of additalism. After world our two however, chis sense of communication supported by the dominant spatriarchial ideocopy) was now globally compounded in the postadorm condition. Chapter Two - Frederic Jameson and Andreas Huyssen.

Raising the question of postmodernism with reference to the writings of Frederic Jameson and Andreas Huyssen will hopefully illuminate the previous chapter and expand on the concepts of time raised by modernism and the modernist period. Also it will help define a clearer position for Clemente and the Italian Transavantgarde in their relation to femininity, history, matriarchial cultures and humanity on the whole.

The postmodern condition came into being due to the inadequacy of the term modernism to describe the artwork that began to appear in the seventies. Because of modernisms shortcomings the prefix post was added to denote the position historically of this phase of artistic evolution. The prefix can often cause confusion to the proper understanding of both modernism and postmodernism. However it also aids in distinguishing the two. Postmodernism is a broad cultural Phenomenom which takes many forms. Taking its artistic context Andreas Huyssen and Jameson offer clear guidelines to the postmodern territory.

"Specific reaction against the established forms of high modernism... the university, the museum, the art gallery network and its foundations..." (Jameson, F 1982, 'Postmodernism and consumer society' page 111 postmodern culture edited by Hal Foster) Secondly there is,

"Transformation in western societies, a change in sensibilities for which the term postmodernism is actually at least for now wholy adequate." (Huyssen, A 1986, 'After the great divide' page 180)

Postmodernism has come under greater scrutiny in recent years. It seems that three issues continuously surface. It has been proposed that postmodernism is just an easily out moded style and that modernism is a more valued form of aesthetics. Postmodernism secondly is populist whereas modernism is elitist. Finally postmodernism means that anything goes, which according to Jameson's marxist conclusion means that caitalism has succeeded consuming all aspects of culture and because this nothing works.

Part of the problem in analysing these teachings according to Huyssen is that our own modernity encloses codes of being classic. The established gap between modernity and classicism has been lost in historical context and therefor there is a form of classical modernity existing today. Historic reference again crops up in the arguement. The problem with assessing postmodernism is that many of the postmodern works of art must be desconstructed by starting with the work of art itself. Other works of art can be approached with, the information known about the era or the medium or content the postmodernist piece mixes these codes of knowledge. Art from Papa New Guine can be recognised because of its pigments style or form along with a sense of history about the place with regard to its culture. The postmodernist piece can come from anywhere and uses myth and reference from a broader cultural sphere. The same could be said for a piece from the expressionistic era although that would be recognisable through hindsight. The point being is that the postmodern piece must be taken and assessed on face value to formulate an opinion. It is not time specific or rational. It is a cross referenced mixing of imagery. Therefor, a certain amount of

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Ease of Prederic Janean and Andreas Huyssen with reference to the writeness of Prederic Janean and Andreas Huyssen will nopefully eliminate the resolves chapter and expand on the concepts of the roleed by addernish and the modernist period. Also it will nelp define a clearer position for Clevence and the Italian Transvontgards in their relation to remainity, history, watchorchal coluters and the meanity on the value.

The postmodern condition name into being due to the indequecy of the term moderniam to denoring the activent that hegan to appear in the activentics. Because of modernisms similarities that hegan to appear in the added to denore the posture information flate posture of activities independent to the posture of activities independent to the phase of activities evolution. The posture calls of the tables confine to the proper it and added to denore the active often tables confine to the proper active and postmodernian. However it and and moderation the transformer of and postmodernian is broad collared by the active proper active independent of the proper it and postmodernian is a broad collared by the active formal independent is a broad collared by the active formal. Total context clear flate the active is a broad collared by the active of the postmodern formal independent of the postmodern the postmodern to the postmodern the postmodern to the postmoder

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Three flags, Jasper Johns, 1958, encaustic on canvas. The questioning began the American dream and the emblem of America is challenged by Johns work. Taking a cultural symbol its clear to see how the counter culture was almost begining, and that its message was 'change'.



Three flags, Jasper Johns, 1958, encaustic on canvas. The questioning began the American droam and the embies of America da challenged by Johns cort. Taking a cultural symbol its creat to see how the counter culture was almost begining, and that its message was 'change'

Plate No. 5.



(Left) 'Red plant', John McCraken 1967, painted plywood. (Top right) 'Genghis kahn', Phillip King 1963, plastic. (Bottom right) 'Untitled', Robert Morris, 1970, mixed media. Some examples of minimalist work the final result of the reductive process of modernim. Its clear to see how the form have been stripped of all decoration through a process of self criticism. At this point it seems that modernism could go no further.

Left) Red plant, John McCraken 1967, painted plywood (Top right) Geneins Rain', Phillip Ring 1963, plastic (Bottom right) Untitled', Robert Morris, 1970, sized media. Some examples of minimalist work the final result of the reductive process of modernim. Its glear to see how the form have been stripped of all decoration through a process of self orficism. At this point it seems that modernism could go no further. 'openess' must be used when regarding the postmodern piece.

According to both Jameson and Huyssen postmodernism dawned in the sixties with the beginning of the counter culture. For Jameson, "The nineteen sixties are in many ways the key transitional period in which the new international order (neocolonialism, computerisation and electronic information) is at one and the same time set in place and is swept and shaken by its own external resistance."(Jameson, F 'Postmodernism and consumer society' 1982, postmodern culture edited by Hal Foster page 111).

This feeling of resistnce was contained briefly in the form of 'Cage-Warhol-Duchamp, axis' according to Huyssen. The sixties was a time for counter cultural art in the form of anti authoratarionism and on the other side it was the boom time and consolodation period of capitalism. These are two very conflicting streams of cultural perspective. Maybe it was due to this conflict that the optimism of the sixties never fulfilled its potential ?. This would be reflected in the return to conservatism in the mid seventies and eighties.

Huyssen guages the fall of the sixties with,

"It was felt to be the apocolyptic desperate strain and the visionary celebratery strain."(Huyssen, A 1986, 'After the great divide' page 189)

Enterring the seventies according to Huyssen, postmodernism took the shape of negative revision of modernist aesthetics. The seventies carried a sense of abandon. Refusing the past and denying the present coupled with the abandonment of the future left despair within the 'state of the arts'. The postmodern condition was ascribed certain symptoms. They were those of 'pastiche' and 'schizophrenia', referred to both by Jameson and Huyssen.

The process of fragmentation ascribed to postmodernism stems from both the above symtoms and is also a key to understanding the postmodern condition and eventually the position of the Italians.

Jameson's description of pastiche is quite clear. He refers to by comparing it with parody. Parody he says makes fun or capitalises on the traits of a distinctive style in a positive or negative way, with constant referral to a grounding norm. However due to diversity in modernism the parody has become restricted to one of the fragments of each individual style. So due to the huge diversity of styles and no reference remaining to a norm because of fragmentation 'a blank parody' as Jameson puts it, is left. This form of ungrounded parody is known as pastiche. Artist like David Godbald take images from the high renaissance and place them alongside Disney characters. The image could be of 'Madonna with child' and 'Goofy'. This form of pastiche is an example of the postmodern condition. Another example would be the artist David Salle who in his painting 'Colony 1986' appropriated images from the serrealists combining it with imagery from Gericualt and with a evocotive image of a young woman.

The use of schizophrenia is another form of the postmodern condition of image making, the image being part of the fragmentation of identity for the self. The schizophrenics identity is linked to his/her reading of signs in language. We as Jameson puts it read a sentence, as a sentence to gain its meaning. We also use historic references to guage our sense of time in the sentence by using

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'Untitled No.118', Cindy Sherman, 1989, cibachrome. In this image Sherman calls on codes of sexuallity engrained in our society, simply by trapping an inflatable doll in a mechanical world. She uses the horror movie format of the fifties to create a sense of doom. It is in fact a very intense present for Sherman, one of the symptoms of Jameson's schizophrenia in the postmodern condition.
tenses. Our identity is formed out of our personal reference to us and time and experience of context. The schizophrenic however has no identity through his/her inability to read the signs (as in a sentence) collectively. The schizophrenic is therefor unable to relate to these sign groupings as it were and also he/she is unable to relate the signs to a time context causing further problems for their own personal identity. Rather the schizophrenic experiences very intense moments in the present.

"Our present is always part of some larger set of projects"(Jameson, F 1982, Postmodernism and consumer society', page 119).

The schizophrenic therefor has no commitment to continuity over time and so suffers on.

"Undifferenciated vision of the world in the present"(Jameson, F 1982, 'Postmodernism and consumer society' page 120)

What Jameson takes out of this interresting comparison is the intensity of the individuals signifyer on a sensory level. By using Beaudillards work 'sign culture' Jameson argues that the images of the postmodern are merely images of images. They are without a signifier such as history and thus some collective set of references. These images bombard the viewer with some form of unity behind them when in truth the unity is deceptive as it is from another sphere or time. In the work of artist Cindy Sherman she often presents the viewer with startling images. These images are mostly to do with male and female objectification of the female body and her place within society. These images tend to be shown through stereotypical images of a woman amid contempory society. However a lot of the time she uses themes and emblems of mass culture to underpin the real implications of these everyday images. In a series made between seventyseven and eighty using small black and white photographs she draws on the gendre of the fifties B movie. She herself is cast as a stereotypical social type such as a prostitute or the girl next door the point being that she uses the sense of time of the fifties to evoke a contempory awareness of how women are seen in the modern mass consciousness. There is unity in the images but the unity belongs to another era. This unity is only as a device to emphasise the present. The story and idea is emphasised by the over artifice of these images. Therefor by combining these images and sense of time of different eras she presents the issue of the contempory woman. This is what Jameson refers to as deceptive unity.

Jameson's analysis of schizophrenia tends to come across as pesimistic for the future of image makers. He holds some hope for change though. His determination for the postmodern symptoms stems from the marxist view that we are reaching monolythic global capitalist economy which priveliges practibility and profit in a world market economy. In this market economy there is no such thing as society. Its easier now to see from where his pesimism stems.

Huyssen embraces the positive and negative prospects of postmodernism. It is through his reading of postmodernism that will allow for associations between the transavantgarde and the cultural phenomenom of postmodernism.

"The logic of modernism advocated by those critcs has become a critical dead end, to the extent that it has been upheld as a rigid guideline for further artistic production and critical evaluation." (Huyssen, A 1986, 'After the great divide' page 197).

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"Due ingle of modern as a substated by those end as becaus a contineal doed day, to the extend that it as becauphedd as a could condition for further actistic production and colifical evaluation." Ghywaro, a 1986, 'After the press divide' page 197)





(Top) 'Dynacism of a dog on a leash', Giacamo Balla 1912, oil on canvas.

(Bottom) 'Speeding auto', Giacamo Balla 1912, oil on card. The futurists clearly show how modernism was fueled by the economic and industrial advancements of the time if photography sparked impressionism then the industrial revolution spurred the futurists. Postmodernism however came into being due to the dissatisfaction culture experienced as a result of these advancements.

(Top) 'Dynacism of a dog on a leash', Diacamo Balla 1912, oil on canvas

(Bottom) "Speeding auto", Ctacamo Palla 1912, Cil on card, The futurists clearly show how modernism was fileled by the accommic and industrial solvancements of the time if photography sparked impressionism then the industrial revolution spured the futurists. Postmodernism however came into being due to the dissatistaction culture experienced as 8 result of these advancements. The resistance to postmodernism stems from postmodernisms animation through the market generated consumerism of the first and second worlds. The identity of the postmodern condition lies in the resistance and indifference to the consumer commodification of art. It plays on the axis of high and low culture. The split between the artwork and theoretical discourse has led to indifference on both sides as to the correct development of artistic culture in the postmodern. This measure or split has led as Huyssen puts it, to a reduction in the mode of production. In saying that he means that artist will stop producing work as 'anything goes' or 'nothing matters' because everything worthwhile has been done. It will also mean the critics will cease to aid the artwork. In the visual arts mode of production is the key to evolvement. The more work an artist produces insures that he or she may develope their work. There can be no change without the work being made so that change may take place. Instigating indifference hampers the project of postmodernism. Huyssen continues.

"The problem surfaces when their (the artists of the modernist period) greatness is used as an unsurpassable model and appealed to in order to stifle contempory artistic production." (Huyssen, A 1986 'After the great divide' page 205)

This is applicable to the artist and critic who become complacent or uninterrested and give in to the indifference.

Huyssen raises post structuralism as some form of new theory on 'modernisation', however he himself agrees it is still confined to the aesthetic level. It seems modernism in its reductive progress has been stifled in its negation of some styles such as cubism over others such as impressionism. Huyssen goes on to say,

"Such heroic visions of modernity as a force of social change (for that matter resistance to undesired change) are a thing of the past, admirable for sure but no longer in tune with current sensibilities except perhaps with an emerging apocolyptic senesibility as the flipside of modernist heroism." (Huyssen, A 1986, 'After the great divide' page 217).

Art as it were does not has have to play out the end of modernism nor is confined to an apocolypse or blind irrationality and fear. Currently according to Huyssen and others such as Suzi Gabilik there is a growing sense of cultural liberation going on. This liberation is not confined to the spere of high art. This turn around is due to the changed sensibilities of our time. It is the artist albeit from whatever form or background in all cultural spheres, that is expanding the field of experience as a new cultural sphere or otherness (as Huyssen calls it) evolves. It is taking many forms. This new sensation operates within the tensions aroused by the postmodern condition. Change is apparent in the form of favouring some ideas over others. Huyssen raises the issue of race, class, sexuality and other cultural concerns. This is contrary to Jameson's arguement which promotes that despite resistance, capitalism is succeeding. Huyssen's issues illustrate resistance to commodification by capitalism. Embracing difference and not becoming indifferent gives new hope for cultural developement.

Huyssen Titles his arguement under four headings For him the most noticable fields of change are feminism (sexual identity), ecology, other cultures and the end of imperialism. By juxtaposing images and styles from the past and bombarding the cultural sphere with these "The resistance to parturate state transition positurdernites annation (humph 'so wares generated comevaeries of the first and merch worles. The next the of the posturodes conduction like to the resistance and built recence to the fourneer commodufication of ort. It plays on the unit of the nucle of the fourneer commodufication of ort. A twork and the units of high and new colored, the place between the statest as to the units of high and new colored, the place between resistances as to the units of the and new colored to individe postaneous and the control trade duotoures has held to individe the ortho attempt with the ande or product the last held as Survaen puts it the restories in the ande or products as led as Survaen puts it the restories will stop production and the respine that held the soft the of the ande or production to respine that held the restories the orthogonal everythers control the rest been the of the attempt the orthogonal everythers contained the rest been the stated anode of production is the boy to an individe the state interande of product to its the boy to another the ande to be an it the ace the orthogonal the the work here and the rest to be a first attempt with state the the boy to a solution when the state is not the ace of the respect to the work here any the ande to be a first and and the orthogonal the the boy to a solution of the ten ace of the rest the the work here any the orthogonal that the hyperce of the orthogonal the orthogonal the ten of the ten here the the state here any to be and the rest ten orthogonal the here the orthogonal the orthogonal the rest been the stated at the here the orthogonal the work here the state place. The the here the here the state here any to be the ten of the here the the state place of the ten or the state place. The the here the orthogonal the state place of the ten or the state place.

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'Colony 1986', David Salle 1986, mixed media. The image of the elizabethian praising of the late Albert Ayler is appropriated from Picabins loeil cacodylate 1922, one of the serrealists and dadists colaborations. The severred head is lifted from a painting by Gercault. For Thomas Lawson Salle was the last possible exit painting could possibly go Salle's fragmentation and use of pastiche is clearly seen. The evocative naked woman is purely for badness its images such as this that premote despair in the postmodern. Salle's work offers no solutions.

# ROBERT PINICUS - WHITEN

#### September 1981

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Boston, 21 November 1986

Moderny 1985, David Salla 1986, mixed media. The image of the alisabetilian prateine of the late Athart Avie, 18 appropriated from Picebins Locil cacedvlate 1922, one of the serrealists and dadista collaborations. The severated head is lifted from a painting by Cercault. For Thomas tayson Salle was the last possible exit painting could possibly go Salle's fragmentation and use of pastiche is clearly seen. The evocative naked waman is purel for bedness its images such as this ther premote despair in the possible of pastiche is clearly seen. The evocative naked waman is purel for bedness its images such as this ther premote despair in the postmoders is work offers no solutions. combinations of pastiche and parody postmodernism creates a new cultural space. In this space where anything goes image wise, there is room for a serious line of enquiry into the subjects raised by Huyssen. In the postmodern the values and tradition of modernism are being questioned by the artist. Also more importantly alternatives are being offered, taking postmodernism away from the modernist era. These alternative come from the changed interrests of the culture in the subjects raised by Huyssen. Some artists of the postmodern are addressing these issues directly. For Huyssen postmodernism is, "Our problem and our hope" (Huyssen, A 1986, 'After the great divide' page 221).

Postmodernism limits itself with its ties to modernism but it has also broadened and expanded possibilities through fragmentation. Postmodernism has created a tension of issues and opened the cultural awareness along with revitalising the individual in his/her cultural sphere which is one of the positive outcomes of this phenomenom. The transavantgarde are useful to discuss the postmodernist expansion. Through their imagery they (along with the other neoexpressionists) brougth the visual art painting to the fore. They professed a new awareness of the issues raised by Huyssen and worked along these changed sensibilities. Implying the change they have provided more room for change. They still produce, aware of the negative dogma and yet continue to defend their place. Their merits can be found to be the merits of the postmodern condition and hence they must be looked at in order to promote within postmodernism the idea of a ressurection (further). "White Lice of partners and pareody permaneterization encates a new cultural space. In this space where anything gues have vise, there is even for a sectors life of enquiry into the subjects raised by hoves in the pastered in the values and training it of monethias are being questioned by the artist. Also more importantly alternatives at using critered, triing contraderniss any from the modernist on These alternative come from the changed interneties of the outputs the subject function by Having the changed interneties of the subject function by Having the changed internets of the postsodern are addressing these tases directly. For Hovesh justices is, "Our problem and set tages" (Boyesen, 4 1986, "After the great divide depare 121).

Postmodernich finits fiend with its Liek to modergian but it has also broadened an expended possibilities through fragmentation. Postmodergius has created a tension of issues and opened the cultural and crease arong after revitations the individual in history cultural sphere which is and of the possibly outcomes of this phenemens. The framewangards are avoid to direct the restmodermist expedition. Through their issues rised to the possibly outcomes the restmentations framewangards are avoid to direct the outcome of this phenemens. The framewangards are avoid to direct the the restmodermist expedition, through their issues related by Huyman and acts of the set of the avareness of the issues related by Huyman and acts of the equilibrity these toos for change. They still produce, have of the organistic the avertice of the issues related by Huyman and acts of the set of the start and the issues related by Huyman and they have provided as a the avertice of the issues related by Huyman and the set of the acts of the start and the set of the issue of the issues and acts of the start and the set of the issues the produce is the set of the acts of the acts of the issues are avoid by Huyman and acts of the set of the acts of the issue of the issue of the issues of the issues of the acts of the issue of the issue of the issues of the issues and the act of the issue of the issue of the issues of the issues issues of the issue of the issue of the issues of the issues of the act of the issue of the issue of the issues of the issues of at in order to its of the issue of the issues of the issues of the issues of the issue of the issue of the issues of the issues of the act of the issue of the issues of the issues of the issues of the issues of the issue of the issues of the issues of the act of the issues o Chapter Three - The Italian transavantgarde.

In his essay on this group of painters, Italian critic Achille Bonito Olivia remarks,

"Finally pictorial pictures are taken up as an affirmative movement as a gesture which is no longer one of defense but of active, daytime fluid penetration." (Olivia, Bonito 1981, 'The Italian transavantgarde', page 5).

While the art market theory and image was engaging the cultural debate the transavantgarde were embarking on an alternative journey.

Briefly taking Italy as a country it is possible to see how such a move was more easily facilitated here. Italy is a country not unlike Ireland which has a tradition of blurring its past. Within this cultural amnesia Clemente, Cucchi, Chia, Mimmo and Paladimo were able to embark on their own strand of postmodernist imagery. Although Italy home of the renaissance has a strong artistic tradition, these painters were able to once more rebirth or ressurect the painted image, but with a more contempory outlook. Italy is a country with the capacity to disconnect itself from the past becoming a place where events can pass through to the burden of other countries and times an example would be its part in world war two. Italy just does'nt draw the same attention in the mind as Germany, Poland, U.S.A. or England does. Italy although it has a strong religious and political past has an openess to change this is important to show how it has been a breeding ground for events such as the seventies rebirth of painting while minimalism and conceptual work was strangling the body from art in the rest of Europe.

The transavantgarde looked inward and disregarded the external search for something new and different. They could be regarded as dealing with the 'now' of everyday experience, promoting the humanisation of art in the face corporate capitalism and fragmentation of the individual by artistic and sociological groupings of visual and linquistic discourse. Most arguements launvhed against the transavantgarde are launched from a progressive modernist stand point promoting the need for change to re-enmesh the artist and critic for the evolvement of the artwork. Using the transavantgarde, in particular Francesco Clemente as a stand point for the painting tradition, it will be possible to evaluate their importance in the postmodernist condition. Relating to Clemente to Huyssen and Jameson's essays will produce a positive arguement for the future of painting as not being dead to ideas. The visual tradition has yet to be fully revived due to the regressive attitude of modernism towards colour and form in other words reviving painting away from traditions that led to minimalism. Through this disscussion the need for change in awareness through the cultural sphere maybe be made clearer.

The issues of feminism, ecology and other cultures is aplicable to the work of the transavantgarde. Huyssen's hopes are clearly illustrated in thier imagery. They embraced a respect to other cultures and sexuality. Clearly 'a wider vision' of cultural sensibilities is aplicable to their work they mixed codes of history and time opening a line of enquiry into the symptoms of pastiche and schizophrenia raised by Jameson. Their work is not a reaction against modernism rather it neglects the modernist dogma of change. Through their use of history coupled with the content of their work, they

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(Above) 'Ring', Francesco Clemente 1978, tempra on paper.(Bottom left) 'Story of my country', Francesco Clemente 1979, guoache on silk.(Bottom right) 'Self portrait without mirror', Francesco Clemente 1979, guoache on paper.Clemente's diverse use of imagery takes many forms it is amid these forms and visual signifyers Clemente finds his identity not necessarily in the imagery depicted but in the thought pattern via there references.

(Abbve) 'Ring , Francesco\_Glements 1978, tempre on paper, (Bottom left) 'Story of my dougtry , Francesco.Clemente 1979, Eucache on silk.

(Buttom right) Self portrait Withous mirror , Francesco Clemente 1979, guosche on paper.

Clemente's diverse use of imagery takes many forms it is smid these forms and visual signifyers Clemente finds his looptity not mecessicily in the imagery depicted but in the thought pattern via there references. have created a space. However the transavantgarde because of this have been accused of merely celebrating the body such as the futurists had previously celebrated the machine.

For Clemente History is a false norm. This belief stems from Eastern philosophy. History is only the account of the victors and is therefor only part of the story. Although in his work Clemente atempts the impossible task of presenting 'the whole story'. Doing this he see's himself as never completing his output. He accepts the indescrepency of the past. This is very unlike the Western pre-occupation with conclusion and logic. Clemente is in flux. The imagery moves in and out of the field of day to day experience there are always spaces created for the external viewer to make their own connections, to complete the image. These spaces also provide the same for Clemente. The connections and gaps between his imagery for him, grasp at some form of identity and resolution of the image. This is a more 'honest' present (open to external and internal change) than a preconcieved edited present created through the history of the victors dominant ideology. At the moment capitalism is the victor. Jetztzeit is very relevant. In his work moments of messianic presence are enmeshed and moved to revelation for himself (Clemente) and the viewer.

Jameson regards the enmeshing of past and present images, as ungrounded in some form of tangeable historic reference. This for Jameson leads to confusion and dislocation from the normative conception of time (past, present, future), and leads to isolation. This could be true from the point of world dominance by consumer capitalism, where the individual does not exist and the person is an isolated 'subject' at the hands of the ideology. However for the Italians the space created by postmodernism, is a space for self realisation and the act of engagement of the individual. By using the hyper stimuli of the senses and enmeshing myth, legend and the ideology of the past a new space is created.

This space is removed from the progressive modernist trend. When questioned about fragmentation Clemente replies.

"It is a strategy that has to do with what we were just talking about (the question of who can make the last great piece of art ?, Clemente regards it as a return to the idea of Western conquest which is a glorification of the Western way, the ultimate perversion since modernism took that self righteousness away in the first place) fragmentation has to do with shifting the attention away from the way things look to the way things are made and inventing a territory inbetween that does'nt belong to any known taste or device." (Auping, Micheal 1987, 'Clemente' page 60).

Fragmentation clearly helps Clemente expand his language. Clemente talks of attention (territory) which ties in with Huyssen's future hopes for the artwork.

The art of the seveties has,

"Done away with the emotional, moralistic rigidity, bringing creativeness back into the mobile territory of an experience which is no longer rhetorical but fragmentory and metaphysical." (Olivia, Bonito, A 1981, 'The Italian transavantgarde' page 42) This issue of fragmantation surrounds Clemente. Through the vehichle of self portraiture he reintergrates art, artist, life and nature back together. The life world is something that can be shared and hare created a space. Hereven the Lancevantigane breaks or the have been accored of menaly oclehenting the body and as the renerate had previously relevanted the accluse.

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"Borey actor whith the smooth and instances right ty, "minging, entry eveness back rate the collife towartery of an arganizator which in instances frequential take to associately and astaphysical." Offera, admite, A 1981, "The Trains transactary and astaphysical." Offera, "Har tense of fragmantation spurfounds Clesento. Through the collebia of solid contractions a maintergrates, and , articly life and nature back constant. The life world is something that can be shared and





'Painting of the precious fires', Enzo Cucchi 1983, oil on canvas. In this work Cucchi conveys his sense of physical being when painting. The painting also refers to emblems of spirituality, Cucchi paints via a set of references and a black whole. His sense of being is felt in the painting but also there is almost a sense of a black whole being present also the image eludes to a mystical otherness.

Estimities of the precises tires', head Clecht 1983, oil on Canyan to this work Clecki conveys his sense of physical bains then unfucture the painting also refers to embleme of spiritually, Clechi prints via a set of reforences and a black thole als sense of heins is fait to the painting but also there is thank a sense of a tlack whole being negret also the lates eligies to a bracked otherpas. percieved. The artist is an active part of the life world. Clemente when asked about his working process, whether it is rational or intutatively based, replied,

"If you fall out of a window do you fall rationally or emotionally ?, a lot of life is like falling out of a window." (Kent, Sarah 1989, 'Turtles all the way down !' artscribe interview sept/oct page 54). The simplicity behind the process is presented honestly. His canvas's are laid bare, and through his work a sicerity supports him. Statements about his work are never complicated or underhanded. This is not to say that complicated work is wrong. All it points to is that Clemente's perception of the artist and his work is inkeeping with the changed sensibilities aroused in the postmodern condition. With the growing tension created by the feeling that 'anything goes', indifference and isolation are the probable results. However to act against this uncertainty one of the most important factorsa for the artist in the postmodern is his/her sincerity.

Clemente's relationship to the life world comes from his Eastern belief to always remember that death is the end result of life. Indeed he views himself as painting life from the side of death this opinion is shared by some of the other members of the transavantgarde. Foucalt refers to story telling as a protection against death (postmodernism, 1986,I.C.A. documents 4 & 5, page 39). Clemente tries to promote the sacrifice or murder of the self and Derrida claims that representation is death itself (postmodernism, 1986, I.C.A. documents 4 & 5, page 39).

Clemente as has already been stated regards himself as painting from the side of death, that way intensifying the living in his work. Clemente himself proposes that art is the last great oral tradition of the Western world. Therefor can it be said that Clemente and company are the emerging new story tellers ?. With the media and television the art of story telling has almost vanished. However going on Foucalt's belief, by using the images as a form of story telling Clemente is ensuring his 'stories' (paintings) keep their emotional intensity, just as the tales told by story tellers do. The story teller takes unreal images afterall and charges them with real emotion. Clemente takes unreal and unrelated images and charges them with emotion and presence through the picture frame. Going on what Foucalt, Derrida and Clemente stated its clear to see that visual representation in the form of painting still carries enough weighted ideas that it cannot be disgarded by contempory art practice.

The body often becomes the centre stage for the story. Using the body, Clemente uses one the most assesable signifiers of the life world. Doing this he mixes codes of sexuality and meaning for the individual.

According to Lacan the subject,

"Is born in so far as the signifier emerges in the field of the other but by this very fact this subject which was previously nothing if not a subject coming into being solidifies the signifier." (postmodernism 1986, I.C.A. documents 4 & 5, page 39) This comment might be better explained by Althusser's words, "Interpellation of individuals as subjects, the subjects reconnition of each other individually helps the subjects recognition of himself." (postmodernism 1986, I.C.A. documents 4 & 5, page 39) percissed. The artist is an active part of the cliq verish "text. Mean solid shout his workling property, which are it of rational of mutanticity based, realied.

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(Above) 'Self portrait as garden', Francesco Clemente 1979, twentyfour sheets of hand made paper. (Below) 'Story of my country', Francesco Clemente 1979, guoache on

silk.

Clemente mixes spiritualism, nature and sexuality in his work the images are a celebration of being and nature. By showing himself as the garden he combines the artist and nature into one experience contained within the frame. There is no ego.

o understand it. I'm doing the opposite: 'm adgesting the possibility of making i whole.

ill You have said that you thought

FG Yes, in the etymological sense — of bringing together all those bits and pieces. Religion comes from a word that means to come together, to unite.

and You often use imagery that has a monotive, archaic or non-Christian

(Above) 'Self portrait as garden', Francesco Glemente 1979, tventyfour sheats of hand made paper. (Below: Story of my country', Francesco Clemente 1979, Frasche on silk.

Clements mixes spiritualism, nature and sexuality in his work the images are a celebration of being and nature. By showing himself as the garden he combines the untist and nature into one experience contained within the frame. There is no ego By using the body Clemente iniates codes of assurance or anxiety for himself and the viewer. Referring to Lacan's reading on the Oedipus comlex reveals and exposes some of the basic acceptance of societies ideology. The visual language can also trip the switch of enquiry. Questioning identity through the figure, Clemente starts to reset previous accepted roles.

## Cucchi says of his work,

"One has to be able to feel the body in history. That is why I continuously refer to the earth through things that have to do with the body, if you have no sense of physical being you can't paint." He developes this to say,

"Painting is both a movement via references and a black whole, what is important is that one follows the direction of matter." (Cucchi, Enzo 1987, 'Testa' page 54)

Although this is quite narrow in opinion it bears the importance of the physical and the life world in the work once more Clemente can be referred back to the Oedipus complex on hism use of imagery.

According to Lacan the self is governed through reference thus a sense of otherness is felt by that subject who gains an image of him/herself through reference to others. The perception of the self therefor is mirrored image of oneself and is subsequently false. Clemente's image is inward and not outward, although this inward reflection is through outward associations. However some images are solely internal. Nevertheless by linking external signifiers the same sense of otherness is recaptured. This quest to comprehend the sense of otherness is mobile and in flux. Thus there is a point between vision and tension of otherness that Clemente seeks. This for him is like Joyce's process of the impossible task of including everything. "A dogmatic attitude, led artists to consider nature as a symbol of liberation and regeneration in contrast with a repressive artificial social sphere." (Olivia, Bonito, A 1981, 'The Italian transavantgarde' page 38)

Through his experience and methods of communication Clemente turns away from the Western industrial age. For Clemente fragmentation is not a process isolation and breaking down of parts to their constituents. For him it is a device to present the whole. Nature and art are both communicative to Clemente. The time for change is apparent when sensibilities such as those raised by Huyssen, change. The period of modernism ran with the industrial age. Postmodernism is fueled by the result of industrial and economical modernisation. Suzi Gabilik (1991 Reinchantement of earth) extendts this point when she concludes that needs to return not to modernism but before modernism back to the ancient shamans of old.

"The artist/semigod in harmony with the powers of myth and nature has been replaced by the artist who takes nature back into being a convention of art. The artist who discovers in art is one colour." (Olivia, Bonito, A 1981, 'The Italian transavantgarde' page 39)

Gabilik's stance tends to veer off into the irrational reprograming of the culture. However the issues of concern are the same nature and sexual identity. These concerns were the foundations of primative cultures Clemente's response to the position of an artist is a lot more rational.

"Art is an aspect of communication that has been going on since the beginning of our time and is relative to our functions one with the

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'Untitled', Francesco Clemente 1983, oil on canvas. "Representation is death" (Derida) "Painting from the side of death" (Clemente) "Storytelling is protection against death" (Foucalt) "Painting is the last oral tradition in the western world" (Clemente) Clemente's continuous representation of the self enmeshed with sexual and confrontational signifyers.



contributes to it in the simplest possible way. There is nothing mysterious about it." ('Clemente' 1989, artscribe Nov/Oct page 58) Clemente's ability to change and alter his work so much coincides emergence of pluralistic postmodern conditions. Clemente however unlike other artists of the postmodern does not attack modernism. It is the position of the dilettante as Michael Auping puts it, to experience many areas denied by modernisms progressively exclusive path.

"We live in a time when we're about to wipe out 90% of the diversity that has been built up. Like everything in nature culture is based on diversity I'm a partesian of diversity. You don't have to be an idealist to want more than a scientific diet." ('Clemente' 1989, 'Turtles all the way down' artscribe Nov/Dec page 53)

Painting has by some been considered to be a dead art yet through the hope represented in Clemente's workand through his diversity new prospects are opened to the painter. Not only is there observation but also association is aroused by the juxtopositioning of imagery.

Clemente's process of working avoids the logical construction and deconstruction of ideas. For him forms appear and grow through him, Clemente's images represent the issues raised by Gabilik and Huyssen. "You have all these nice notions and they are part of experience but experience is there without these notions though the notions are not there without the experince."(Auping, Michael 1987, 'Clemente' page 34)

This comment by Clemente may sound anti intellectual he is responding to the modernist dogma of progress for him,

"The basic assumption of the work is that there is no progression, it is more a matter of being."('Clemente' 1989, artscribe Sep/Oct page 55)

"Change yes progress no.I believe in the existence of change and influence but not movement upward or forward"..."I see change reoccurence and disappearance in any work but not progress." ('Clemente' 1989, artscribe Sep/Oct page 58)

His work he claims is firstly for himself. He has remarked that forms can heal he is talking in an etymological sense his work tends towards the change in sensibilities raised by Huyssen. His work relates to the inner spiritual experience. These experiences are excluded by Western logical catagorisation. Clemente and company have been accused of narcissism and self indulgence refusing to aid cultural progress on the whole. However this arguement does not apply when we look at the global issues raised by Huyssen, therefor can their work be criticised as being not applicable ?.

In renaissance times the world was seen as a sensual place relative to the body. After the great industrial age according to Huyssen once more the culture is becoming disatisfied with its 'lot'. It seems that Clemente and company are very relevant to these issues of sexuality and ecology. Somewhere a rethinking of the direction of the visual arts, must take place. Paintings importance anyhow must be reassessed. It is a language after all expansion and communication of this language is the end goal of image making. It seems that if the postmodernist condition can relate so strongly to painters like Clemente who are in touch with current sensibilities and they can produce within postmodernism, it is necessary to pursue its outcome. contration to the property possible way. Then as not light way, then as not light way that the short the "" (Clearnate Trist) article should be backed to the should be backed at the bits work to much cubic the should be made to the should be backed at the bits work to much cubic the should be backed at the should be backed by article should be backed at the bits work to much cubic the should be backed at the bits work to much cubic the should be backed at the bits work to much cubic the bits work to much cubic the bits work to much cubic the should be backed at the bits work to much cubic the bits work to much cubic the bits work to much be bits work to much be backed at the bits backed at the bits work to much be bits be backed at the bits backed at

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Clemente reconstructs history and time through a grounding spiritually and firm belief in a more emphatic Eastern understanding of the planet. Clemente unlike the realisation of the modernist avant garde, has a realisation set in the present in the life world. The postmodern space refered to by Jameson is for Clemente and company 'the now' of daily experience.

Using the surface as Clemente and Chia Do empowers the image on many levels. Thier images are not confined to the intellect, but reach to the senses and irrational emotional side. They open the viewer to engagement through their many sided imagery.

Pastiche and schizophrenia are formal symtoms of postmodernism that can apply to Clemente and the transavantgarde. However unlike Jameson's postmodernism which is characterised as a submission to the tidal wave of capitalism and consumer society, the transavantgarde represents a resistance to that ideology. It stands as a resistance to the consumer/victim complex illustrating the individual and the components of life that form the individual. For Clemente the individuals bearing on life is all important. "The ideology is an imaginary relation required by capitalism to position individuals as subjects in the division of labour." (postmodernism 1986 I.C.A. documents 4 & 5 page 40) Olivia puts it.

"The motherland of protection and paternal embankment that indicates catagorial imperatives which we must obey." (Olivia, Bonito, A 1982, 'The Italian transavantgadre' page 32)

Jameson's indifference to the work of some of the postmodernist artists stems from the relationship of capitalism and ideology. For him the patriarchial based structure of capitalism is slowly becoming a global control scheme however in this light although there are many examples of this, suchas multinationals and others, on the flipside we have Huyssen's growing concerns aready mentioned. Compacency can be a form of dominance also but if artists such as Clemente are addressing concerns such as a more emphatic 'embracing of life', and in doing this are reflecting the growing concerns of Huyssen's world then obviously there is resistance to the consumer way. Resistance and communication are beginning to surface. It seems that the patriarchial structure of imperialism is no longer able to deal with the issues raised by current sensibilities. In this tension Clemente's art is most valid for the postmodern ressurection. "The partner of the world the hartony gives us is the partner of a dead parameter contar over his life. If the as if we are all parat, and we are looking at the particular plans resultion date as get appy from this raise constants, thereing, biomark 1983, "thereeter" parametry

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# Conclusion.

In the closing chapter of his book 'Future Tense' Robert Hewison raises the issue of pluralism in the postmodern condition. He relates it to the contempory debate sexual identity and roles within Westren society. This comparison of dominance and male and female roles can be broadly taken to represent the culture. Hewison supports pluralism due to its support for the minority. However he warns that this acceptance should not fall into the trap of complacency or indifference. The dominant ideology which pretends to be unified can merely be indifferent to cultural pluralism. This complacency has held the conservative right wing ideology of capitalism despite the counter culture of the sixties. The sixties were merely brushed over and eventually consumed through indifferent acceptance. Their rebelion was filtered through humour and commodification of their ideals.

The grand narratives of the twentieth century have given a sense of universal meaning to the groupings (socialogical/cultural) of our time. Accepting pluralism has seemingly led to loss and uncertainty. Thus Jameson's 'anything goes' despair. If we were to drop the grand narratives under pinning much of confrontational modernism, accepting pluralism would not be so difficult. Resisting the grand narrative according to Hewison would allow us to accept the grand dialogue created in the postmodern condition. Celebrating this dialogue of uniqueness, of minority would expand the field of communication. Thus isolation and despair and the negative associations of the postmodern would disappear.

Society is once more turning towards sensuosity and the unpredictable world of experience. Dick Heridice argues,

"Acknowledgement of an unstable flux frees artists and their allies to engage more directly in the moving equilibrium of competing forces." (Hewison, Robert 1990, 'Future tense' page 158) It is now time to open the communication between these divers subjects of pluralism, as in Clemente's work where the dialogue between the images creates a sense odf being. It is not a case of celebrating the desruptive forces better nor is it a case of celebrating the marginalised. Its a case of celebrating the identity they have formed themselves as a means as Hewison puts it of coping with the dominant ideology. This can lead to a resistance and debate which would celebrate the multicultural aspects of pluralism.

Artistic discourse has yet to free itself from the masculine sepratist mode of the modernist period where the artist worked and changed at the fringes of society. Now also there is a more feminine emphatic mode encouraging the engagement of art, artist and society. Already artists are exploring this avenue.

"It is no longer a question of good art but serious artists." (Hewison, Robert 1990, 'Future tense' page 99)

Pluralism has prompted such statements. There are as many gains to recieve from artwork as there are minorities to experience them. "The crisis of values in culture turns on the plural meanings mof value itself: the value of art is not exclusively monetary nor is it in that sense useless; its value lies its use not exchange. Uses that are social in terms of pleasure, emotional release, identity and self expression." (Hewison, Robert 1990, 'Future tense' page 170)

#### Conclussion.

In the closing cospeter on this much relative rease, where proceed and the relates of pluralism in the postancier condition. It calates it in the contemport dubate sexual intendity and roles within westron contects, julic comparison of dominance and milt and female roles that the broadity taken to represent the rolling metron date in the acceptance the tax apport for the algority. However ne varue that this induction the date of the taxe of the taxe of the completeness in the states apport for the date of the taxe of the taxe of the taxe that the contects the taxe algority is an acceptance the date algority. However ne varue that this acceptance the date of the taxe algority for the date of the taxe of the taxe of the completeness in the completeness in the contect of the completeness in the contect of the completeness in the contect of the completeness in the states are despite the taxe of the taxe. The states are despite the taxe of the completeness in the contect of the completeness in the context of the con

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'Three out of nine', Francesco Clemente 1988, pigment on linen. The grand dialogue created in Clemente's image between the mythilogical forms here celebrate each form within the image. The colours and shapes unite through a sense of 'otherness' generated between them it is a dialogue as Hewison puts it that will provide a solution to the postmodern condition.

The potential and divergence raised within the sixties and seventies has yet to come to the fore because of the trend of 'objective purpose' laid down in modernism. To some the reintroduction of painting in the seveties was a return to the modernist tradition of objectification. This opinion does'nt seem to hold up when the content of these neoexpressionist painters is examined. The dominant objective stare does not exist in Clemente's work. His work is not just to be looked at, it engages active participation between the viewer and creator from a nuetral unheroic stand point.

Thomas Lawson in his essay 'last exit painting' regards pluralism as the last hold out of modernism regarding art only existing insulated from the real world or as unreasonable babble. "Modern art as it were has begun to loose its standing." (Lawson, Thomas 1984 'Last exit painting', art after modernism page 154) This opinion is far too dismissive. "For some years now its rejections have been ritual repititions, rebelion has turned to procedure criticism into rhetoric, transgression into ceremony. Negation is no longer creative. I'm not saying that we are living at the end of art I'm saying we are living at the end of the idea of modern art." (Lawson, Thomas 1984 'Last exit painting' art after modernism page 154)

Again the discussion returns ti the meaning of the word modern to believe that modern art is over is again giving in to indifference yet the above statement is a good definition of most recent art. The eighties was a transitional period. It was believed that the last great period of change was the sixties with pop art and conceptual work. Already stated though the sixties ideal seemed to peter out. Importantly a political return to conservatism was led by a cultural awareness for change. Thatcherism in Britain led England almost back to Victorian times culture was shocked back into action. The complacency had to be dispelled. In painting people like Kiefer and Clemente reinvested the image with communication of ideas. Painters like David Salle who for Lawson was the last radical exit for painting led to comments such as the above on the state of the arts. Hewison however upholds an alternative to being modern and defends the visual in painting.

"The acknowledgement that reality is constantly shifting and that it is always necessary to reach beyond reality opens the way to the sublime he goes on to refer to Lyotard.

"It is in the aesthetics of the sublime that modern art including literature finds it impetus and the logic of the avant garde finds its axioms." (Hewison, R 1990, 'Future tense' page 175) He then talks of courage and commitment to their work. They try to mark those points that are unrepresentable by marking certain points and by marking certain points these realities may become clear through the making of abscence of these new realities. He himself (Hewison) regards this as being utopian but nonetheless couragous. In the face of dogma and indifference this point of 'production of work' lends a more positive assessment of paintings validity.

"To overcome the loss and framentation in postmodernism we need to recover not modernism but a sense of modernity, the conciousness of a new epoch is a source of positive connections not negative comparisons." (Hewison, R 1990, 'Future tense' page173)

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Negation can cause the value of the artwork to be discarded to nothingness and despair. On the other hand blind acceptance is not the answer either. Now that there is so much going on, the audience must be made active to validate the image. Art therapy and community art are but some of the changes that show how pluralism has given the chance for active engagement in the renewal of artistic effort.

The advantage of postmodernism is that while it can hold modernisms adversarial stance it is also aware through hindsight of the closure it can impose on itself. This leads to a ressurection of effort in avoiding the pitfall of modernism by creating an alternative for artistic endeavor. The alternative veers away from indifference and isolation by embracing identity and nature, Clemente finds a universal subject which can generate widespread interest the divergencies of these has tended to slip into indifference as we approach the turn of the century the rebirth of nature based concerns can fulfill the projects started in the sixties. Expanding the acceptance of such paintings and actualising the awareness to the work can lead to active engagement for the viewer from whatever background.

For Suzi Gabilik the answer lies in premodern and nature. Yet through the points she raises via the shamen lifestyle of old have the same concerns of sexuality and nature, her alternative appears too drastic. To fall back into the creedo of ancient cultures steeped in magic and myth may be too much to ask of contempory post industrial culture. It seems though that postmodernism cannot be translated into a textual practice ?. It cannot be simply ascribed to a logical format and discourse without sounding trite or indifferent indeed textual writers would be those such as Beckett or Joyce who Clemente refers to. The sense of otherness generated by postmodern images can lead to indifference or irrationality. Criticism cannot be negated in the field of postmodernist pluralism, everything counts and adds to the communicative network.

Hal Foster elaborates on postmodernist systems,

"Postmodernism a system calling for corrections; translations, openings and negations is more usefull than an unformulated absence of a system." (Foster, Hal 1984, 'Re post, art after modernism' page 200)

This is a more usefull direction that Gabilik's premodern outlook. Removing the past is no solution to the present. Eventually maybe, through this change we will return to Gabilik's premodern time, however modernism is too much in the recent past to make such a huge leap.

Kate Liniker along with Hewison are closer to some form of critical discourse for the postmodern.

"Art history has turned although belatedly to confront the marginalisation of women and the definiton of creativity as male." (Liniker, Kate 1984, Representation and sexuality, 'Art after modernism' page 393)

Tracing the roots of language reveals its symbolic order. Language itself through its definition is constant forming and reforming of the subject. Because of this its transition, its flux has important implications for ideology. The postmodernist image celebrates this flux and transition. The image does not associate itself with some

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'Everything I know', Francesco Clemente 1983, pastel on paper. An unheroic approach one of vulnerability and uncertainty are repetative traits of Clemente's work. Clemente uses tangeable uncomplicated imagery to communicate his own vulnerability. Clemente's approach is both open and shy.

Prerviline 1 know, Prancesco Clemente 1-20, pastel on paper, An unneroic approach one of vulnerability and uncertainty are repetative traits of Clemente's work. Clemente nees targethie Uncomplicated imagery to communicate his own vulnerability. Clemente's approach is both open and shy. unified structure such as the grand narrative or dominant ideology. Rather its unification is found in the sense of otherness that refers to the transitory aspect of day to day experience. The postmodern image posses its own manoeverability just as each individual has a multitude of thoughts fears and emotions moving forward and backward within them.

Due to the dimension of subject and object Kelly regards the art representation as fetishistic in nature. Once again by representing what is representable what is unrepresentable may be somehow more easily specified. Using Lacan, Kelly (a theorist refered to by Liniker) goes on to develope the idea of representation as part of the network that through assertions and movement of the symbolic code, these images can spread throughout cultures imagery. For painting once more Clemente may be applied. He compares his work to Chinese calligraphy. A piece of bamboo represents a chair. The image conjours associations and through its movement bamboo begets chair. The danger is not to acknowledge associations. However in an age where image bombardment is intrinsic to our culture its difficult not to let these associations overload us making us deal with them indifferently.

If the individual uses references in language to unify and validate his/her own identity, by resisting commodification and caitalistic smotherring of that identity the individual may become more assured of his/her identity. It is better to celebrate fragmentation and the transition of identity than to succee to the consumer/victim complex. by communicating the self image through dialogue with others and resisting this commodification a more open network of relation may come into being.

Suzi Gabilik suggests that we have lost our sense of divine of. imagination dream and vision. Too much of a scientific diet has reduced our field of communication. She claims that we have become addicted to linear rational knowledge assurance. What is missing is any form of dream body and the magical world of images. Alienation is a form of rational detachment, one of the most negative symptoms of the postmodern. Science has a tendency to banish the oddities that won't fit in a formulae to the realms of mysticism or quirkiness. That is of course until it can safely encompass them. Science strives for the attainable based on what it has achieved. It is the tale of success and progress some of the most important changes made in science have been through revision. The light bulb for example, Scientist worked endlessly to try and produce something that would burn continuously under an electric current it wasn't until Thomas Edison reworked the idea by removing the oxygen from the glass bulbs so that the element would'nt burn due to the lack of oxygen previously no answer could be found until Edison discoverred that by creating a vaccuum the bulb would shine much longer. However science is also a reductive process. Through our belief in science and science being approved in the ideology we have become inactive consumers, depending only on the proven.

Myth and imagination are resistors to that dominance. Gabilik's interests are not too much out of context for a chaged sensibility. At least to some degree our sense of the unknown should be more accepted and not dismissed cynically.

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'Oblation', Francesco Clemente 1988/90, oil on canvas. Clemente plays on the religious themes of offering eucharist once more he combines images of vulnerability and offering mixed with images of sexuality that are both confrontational and vulnerable at the same time. Using these representations Clemente invites us into both truth and fantasy.

The series 'Testa' is a meditation on spirituality, 'testa coda' means dramatic reorientation, for Huyssen he would be an artist who courageously works inspite of dogma. It is only through his risk taking and constant change that he remains vulnerable. Clemente's work is many sided it is wholey personal experience it represents the heartbeat of life.

Objection Fragesco (lemente 1938/90, oil on canvas Clemente plays of the religious themes of offering sucharist once more he combines images of vulnerability and offering mixed with images of security that are both confrontational and vulnerable at the same time. Using these representations Clemente Lavites us into both truth and fautasy.

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"We are all being drawn to the multisensory phase of evolution." (Gabilik, Suzi 1991, 'The reenchantment of art' page 59) By using the word evolution again optimsm is the prospect for the future.

The consumer system is quickly being outmoded by vaster realities created outside the industrial addiction race for example unless the ecological concerns of the planet are worked on, such as the ozone layer, there will be no planet around for these technological advancements to exist in. The value of art in this context can be one of healing along with its other possibilities. Art that lets go of the ego (such as Clemente's), lets go of the seperate self. By not with holding some promise of perfection within the work is a way of acknowledging the present and signifying it as meaningfull and worthwhile.

The heroic ego contained in modernism must leave and a system of communication/interaction rather than isolation can arrive. The artist cannot be the nomad at the fringe of society. Society cannot be at the fringe of the artist. Integration and communication will lead to active participation of art and society.

By examining the issue of dominance contained within sexual identity and also by examining the grand narrative structure and the ideology that we have created new disclosures for change would become apparent. It would be possible that our tradition and progress has been a scientific and logical one. It has been a story of negation of outmoded styles and sensibilities and a continuous search for the new. Our culture at some point has been through experiences of extreme emotion and yet we have tended more to rely on the scientific and logical. However now with the planet under threat from ecological concerns and we ourselves threatened by economic fears and emotional fears of isolation, change is necessary. This change cannot surface without action and questioning of the structure that have led to a need for changed sensinilities they are begining to be examined through Huyssen's issues of feminism, other cultures, ecology and the end of imperialism. Questions are arising to do with political/territorial if not economic attitudes. The gulf war and the European common market are both issues that challenge the individual to active or passive acceptance. The eighties have been a period of re-evaluation that to the way beyond the negative hurdles of the progressive structure of the modernist period. Postmodernist pluralism has created a space for change and a way out of the postmodern. Investigating this space will lead to a broader, more sympathetic awareness that will let culture evolve once more. It will appeal to the sensuous and rational being. The only dilema will be what name to give it.

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'Heart', Francesco Clemente 1988/90, oil on canvas.



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