National College of Art & Design
Faculty of Textiles

Contemporary Baroque

By

Lynn Kenny

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*Submitted to the faculty of history of art and design
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I would like to thank Gerry Walker for all his help, encouragement and enthusiasm in the completion of this thesis and also my sister, Julie for the hardwork she put in typing and editing it. I would also like to show my appreciation to the staff in the library.

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INTRODUCTION

When asked to explain the term Baroque and evaluate its existence, many will refer to a certain period of time, to its artforms and mostly to its elaborate, excessively ornamented type of architecture. But Baroque, however, rather than being a category of artforms, or a period in the history of culture, has continued as an aesthetic, a spirit within a lifestyle, throughout its developing existence in the past few centuries.

In the seventeenth century, Baroque was an uplifting, theatrical form of expression, which was received well by its people, who were thoroughly impressed, excited and immersed within its new and innovative form of expressive art and it has continued to occur, where people find themselves attracted to the delight of the opulent, fantastical and intoxicating elements of such a theatrical artform.

This thesis hopes to provide the reader with an insight into the wonderful and exciting sensations of the Baroque, especially its great revival within contemporary culture.

By tracing back to its historical definition and selective group of practitioners, a basis will be provided to understand its existing and original underlying characteristics.

It will proceed to discuss the existence of contemporary Baroque, in media consumption and in the works of three artists of the Baroque "spirit".

By choosing three artists, admiration has increased greatly, with the accumulation of research and knowledge into their work.

Three different categories have been chosen for discussion: photography by Angus McBean, which suggests how Baroque exists within this century, let alone in the present culture; film, by Peter Greenaway, who represents the expanding enthusiasm of new techniques in cinematic works; and architecture, by Nigel Coates, who creates a thoroughly new and innovative way of providing the cityscape with imaginative forms of architecture.

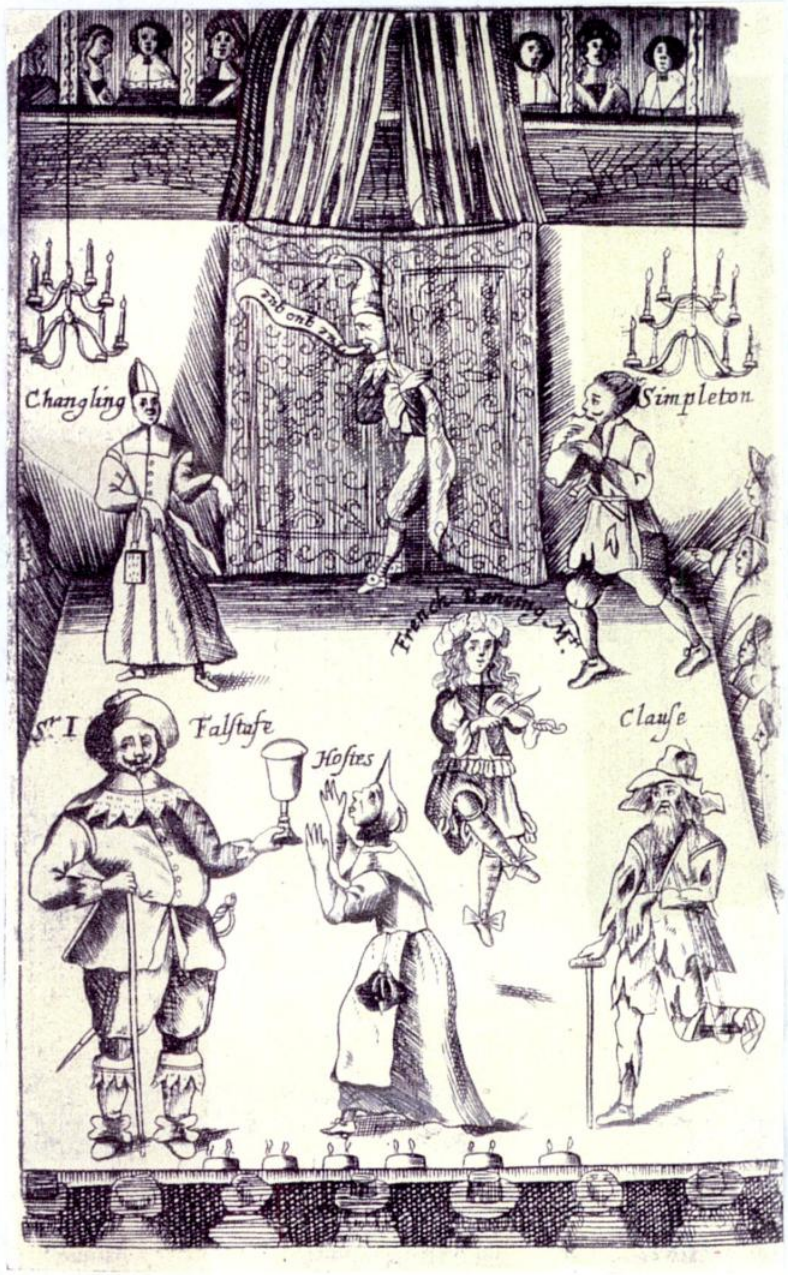
CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL DEFINITION OF BAROQUE

Baroque in the early 17th Century grew out of the highly intellectual and eccentric visual excesses of the mannerist phase of the late renaissance (1500's - mid 1600's). After classical art (late 1400's - early 1600's)and before the Baroque age (1700 - 1800), the mannerist trend was a complex development, diverse in style and emphasis mannerist artists either carried the classical principles of the renaissance to extremes, or reacted against those principles entirely, with constant experimentation achieving exaggerated and distorted effects.

It was a highly theatrical age, where artists succeeded to externalise passions dramatically, impressing the audience, allowing them also to join in and release themselves. Even though the Baroque style was primarily known for its ornament in architecture, it was the theatre that inspired artists in each field, hence the theatre being the most influential of artforms within this period (Fig. 1a & 1b).

Artists drew ideas from the immediate effects of the technical and creative aspects of the theatre, which was the most direct realistic vehicle of expressionism, which achieved to attract and immerse the audience into the depiction of the theatre. By combining each artform - architecture, sculpture, painting and music, artists created a unified wholeness in the same way in which the theatre incorporated various forms of art:- musical, plastic and dramatic, likewise to create an uplifting atmosphere.



THE STAGE ABOUT 1670

Notice the spectators on either side of the platform stage and in a gallery at the back. Notice also the chandelier lighting and the footlights, of which this is the earliest representation.

From Kirkman's "The Wits"

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Fig. 1(a) - Typical 17th Century Theatre Stage.

Fig. 1(b) - 17th Century Concert Scene / Louvre / Paris.

Within the 17th to the 18th century development of the Baroque in Europe, artists sought to integrate every sort of artistic expression into a harmonious whole, the synthesis, however, reached the climax of the Baroque aesthetic within the 18th century in the age of the Rococo, which transformed an extravagant and theatrical high baroque, into a more sophisticated an intricate artform, suggesting an age with a love of power and wealth. It was in the experimenting and large amount of ornament and theatricality that made Baroque so significant within people's lives.

The Baroque word originally meant 'fantastic' or 'misshapen', hence the name given to the bizarre and eccentric style. The Portuguese used it to describe a large, irregular shaped pearl, while the Italians applied it to rhetoric, using it to describe a far-fetched or fanciful argument.

The previous renaissance period, which categorises the art of the 15th and early 16th century and is mainly referred to Italian art, revived the classical principles of beauty, reflecting an inquisitive, informative and idealistic age, where artists sought to recognise a deeper truth within humanity. Baroque, on the contrary, provoked excitement within the fantastic, as it succeeded to astonish, enchant and transport passions, rather than looking for perfection.

With architecture in the 17th century built to impress, major commissions were only for palaces and churches. With the church being regarded as the House of God, Sovereigns (like Louis XIV) saw themselves ruling, by divine right. Baroque dynamism was felt to be an appropriate source of decoration for both palaces and churches.

Instead of the Holy Roman Empire, the King of France Louis XIV and his palace, Versailles, were seen as an ideal for the rest of European sovereigns, who wanted to express their positions through elaborate Baroque surroundings and extravagant lifestyles, transcending themselves into a 'make-believe scenario'. With the political fragmentation of Germany, where some 350 free cities existed side by side, a favourable environment was created for the arts, with the development of absolute monarchies on a small scale. German princes turned to France and French architects for inspiration and advice, so that they could create palaces similar to that of Versailles. Ecclesiastical patrons also turned to French architects as they needed men who could manipulate space

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Indeed of the Holy Roman Empire, the King of France Louis XIV and his palace, Versailles, were seen as an ideal for the rest of European sovereigns, who wanted to express their position through elaborate Baroque surroundings and extravagant lifestyles, transcending themselves into a 'make-believe' scenario. With the political fragmentation of Germany, where some 350 free cities existed, only by 1789, a favourable environment was created for the arts with the development of absolute monarchies on a small scale. German princes turned to France and French architects for inspiration and advice, so that they could create palaces similar to that of Versailles. Ecclesiastical patrons also turned to French architects as they needed men who could manipulate space

and light to produce more striking and effective church interiors. It was in the first half of the 18th century that there was a great flourish of palaces, monastery and pilgrimage churches, which produced strong characteristics of the Baroque style in Germany and Austria. In protestant countries of Europe their was a much more limited amount of Baroque architectural style.

The theatre was the focus within court lives and it was not unusual to have several theatres within one establishment. An important form of theatrical activity was the allegorical masque often in the form of a ballet, which was shown for some ceremonial or political occasions. Sovereigns took the opportunity to show their wealth off even further by taking part in the drama and acting out the role of the monarch in costumed disguise. These entertainments, whether in theatre, palace or open-air, lasted up to several days, weeks or even months (Fig. 2).

After destruction of the 30 years war in Rome in 1527, the Church fought back by reforming itself, with the help of influenced missionaries, who reaffirmed and clarified all the basic Catholic beliefs. The Church was successful in securing itself and plenty of commissions were allocated for religious buildings. The Baroque celebratory style was found to express the new religious spirit and the Catholic Church and Papacy became largely responsible for the revival of Rome and an artistic centre.

Artists succeeded to produce visually excessive and powerful overall impressions through extremely expressive and ornamented visual artforms, which provided the Church's congregation with an uplifting medium for worshipping.

Baroque art radiated from Rome in the 17th century. By becoming a religious centre, it held many great examples of Baroque architecture, holding the purest example - St. Peter's. It was therefore not surprising that artists from all over Europe flocked to Rome for inspiration. Rome, as well as having prime examples of the Baroque, was also rich in ancient and renaissance artifacts.

Fig. 2 - Masked Ball in 17th Century Theatre.

Another reason for artists to arrive in Italy was that it was only marginally effected by the 30 years war and with the reform within the Catholic Church, there was a more peaceful and civilised way of living, for foreign artists who wanted to escape their war-torn lands.

The 30 years war originated in the religious and nationalistic conflicts in Bohemia. It soon became a European conflict involving France, Austria, Spain, England, the German Princes and Sweden. Half of the population within Germany and German-speaking countries were not to see another period of artistic prosperity until the 18th century and Prague, which had been established by Rudolph II as a Centre of Mannerist Art on a par with Rome and Florence, was totally eclipsed. In the Low Countries war didn't prevent arts from flourishing. The Southern Netherlands enjoyed the finest artistic flowering since the 15th century. Antwerp became one of the artistic poles of Europe. England, torn by civil wars, ended with the execution of a king but remained artistically more or less a tributary of Holland, except in architecture, in which the dominant influence was Italian.

Hapsburg, Spain, in the 16th century had the greatest power in Europe and with the uneasy relationship between Spain and the Low Countries, Holland and Netherlandish Provinces rebelled against Spain's traditional and rigid Catholicism and formed the Dutch Republic in which they glorified Protestant virtues and Bourgeois life.

France in the 17th century, had been exhausted by the effects of the 30 years war. French art disintegrated and French artists such as Poussin, Claude Lorraine and Möise Valentin left France to develop their artistic skills in the Roman School.

However, Louis XIV was determined to make his country richer in arts, therefore, through his help in the late 17th century, France became the new Centre of Europe's artistic interest. He encouraged artists to belong to the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture through which they obtained independence from the guilds. With this royal patronage, the King could create an environment in the royal palaces where architecture, sculpture, gardens, mural decoration, furniture and textiles, music and drama, could together form a unified setting for the most powerful monarchs in Europe. This signified the opulent age of Rococo (Fig. 3).

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Flourishing, again, in the 16th century had the greatest power in Europe and with the newly established Dutch Republic, the Low Countries had cast off the yoke of Spanish Hapsburg rule and formed the Dutch Republic in which the Protestant values and Bourgeois life.

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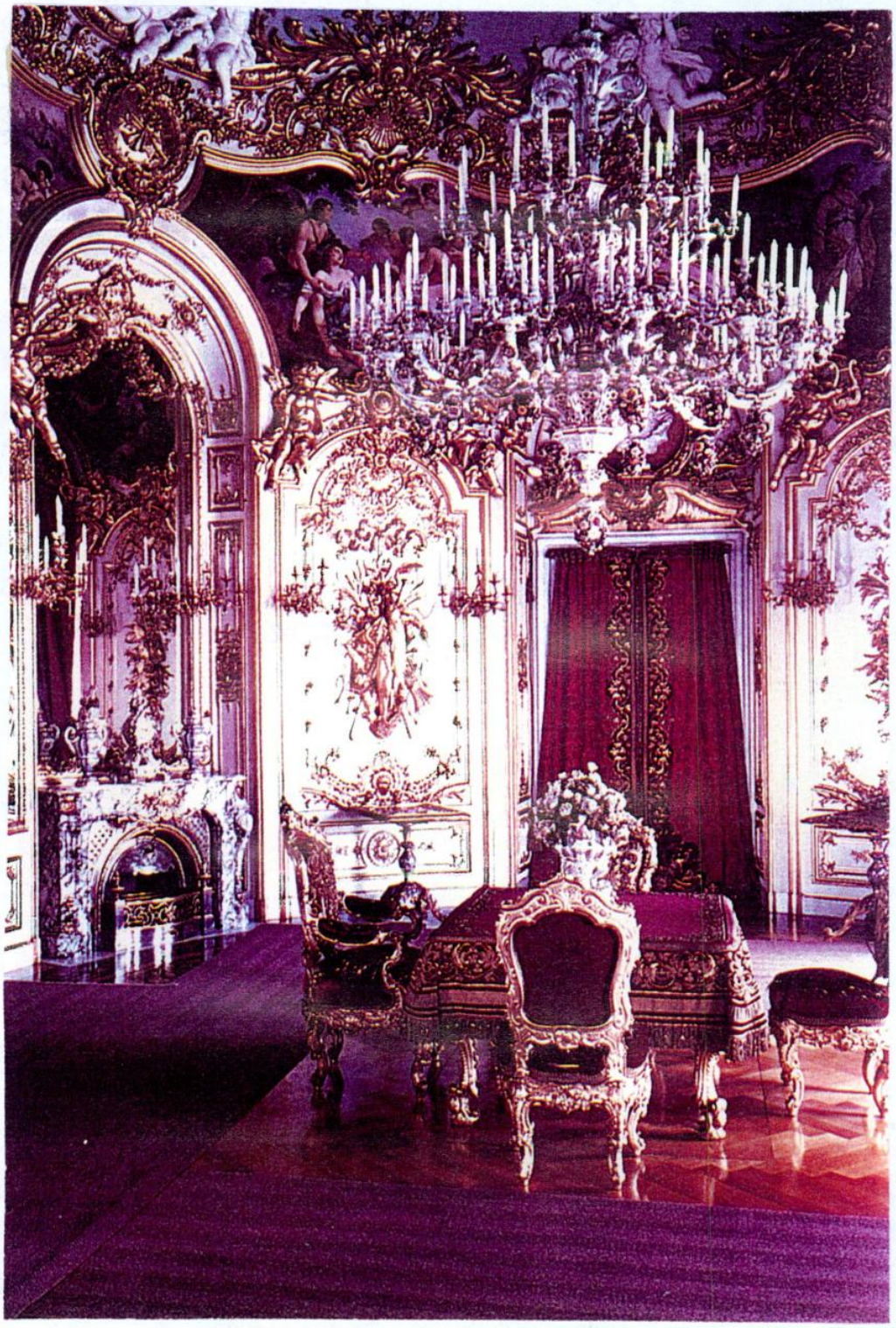

Fig. 3 - Rococo Style Interior of a German Castle.

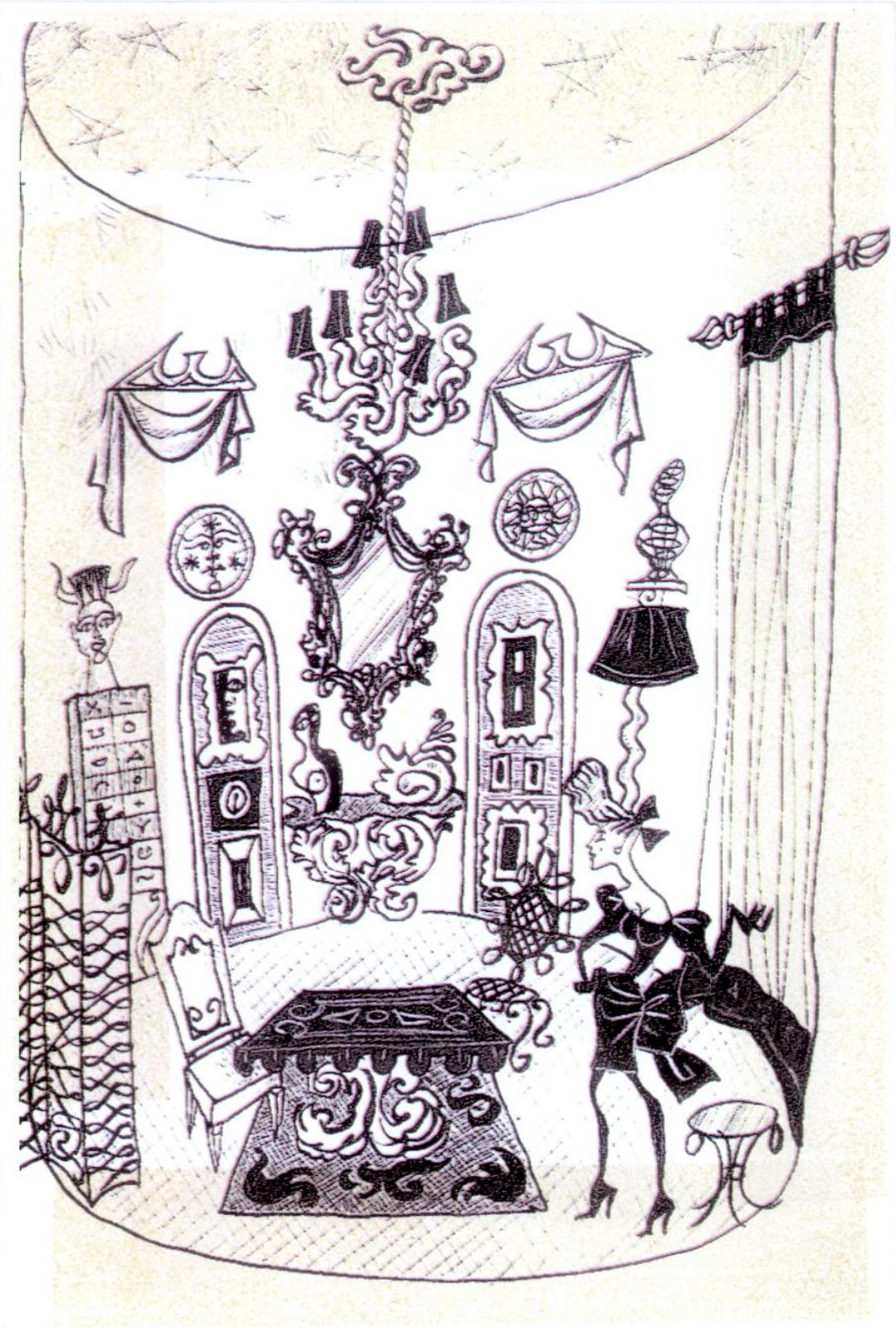

Fig. 4 - Artists Impression of Neo-Baroque Interior.

"For never were the rich idler or richer; nevertheless we must remember Lord Chesterfield sent his son to Paris to learn that ease, those manners, those graces which are certainly nowhere to be found, but in France". (Long, 1996, p.34).

Paris therefore, took over from Rome in the 18th century as the most influential and artistic city in Europe.

The original Baroque period was only the beginning of the continuation of its eccentric spirit.

After the climax in the Rococo period of 1725 - 1740, Baroque revived itself distinctly in the age of the romantics, praise of individualism and imagination, love of challenge and the desire for the synthesis of the arts, in the 19th century. In the first 30 years of the 20th century, Baroque attitudes of extravagance and opulence were relevant in all matters of taste and with the highly strung, nostalgic years of the Second World War, Baroque imagery was used within a neo-romantic sensibility. After the restrictions of the war, there was a need to turn back to the fantastic and frivolous aspects of life.

In 1924 Sacherevell Sitwell, revealed for the first time the underlying sensibility within Baroque which existed within the 17th century origin, in his book 'Southern Baroque Art', which opened an architecture and style of decoration to his readers, provoking a favourable aesthetic for the twenties, which he and his family were marked leaders of. This appreciation of decaying charm and essential fantasy played a part in the realisation of the continuing Baroque aesthetic, which began to spread from its initial highly exclusive circle. With this acknowledgement of the Baroque phenomenon, it was suggested at this point that its aesthetic characteristics were held within its present modern generation.

However, in the period up to the 1980's there was a reaction against the restrictive aesthetics of the modernist age. The phrase 'post-modernism' was introduced, covering an expanding diversity of theories and practices, and with this experimenting and expansion of phenomenons, the arrive of "The Great Baroque Revival" was marked. With the emphasis on visual sensation, which in contemporary culture allows art to appear within the level of consumption, Baroque in the 20th century, like that in the 17th century, allowed both spheres, the masses and people in power, to both enjoy the effects of Baroque. Baroque in its origin was part of a lifestyle where today it still remains to be seen as an aesthetic need within society where we allow ourselves to be hypnotised by the visual possibilities and extravagance of contemporary artforms.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL APPLICATIONS

Nowhere can the change into Baroque be better seen than that at St. Peter's in Rome in 1666 (Fig. 1). Baroque started from 1620 - 70 in Rome in the development of the Roman church and, although it spread, it always retained fundamental characteristics developed in Rome. In Flanders, even though sculpture followed the great work of Bernini, architecture remained mannerist, until the latter part of the 17th century where we find an architectural equivalent of the Baroque architecture that started in Italy.

St. Peter's in Rome shows the beginning of the freedom from the more structured and restraint architecture of that from the previous classicism. Architects rejected the idea of simple, regular forms using complex forms instead. They preferred curves to straight lines and found that the oval structure (rather than the classical circle) provided more variations, which they could introduce into their complex plans, therefore intensifying a feeling of movement.

Architects began combining painting, sculpture and architecture (Fig. 2), letting each artform overflow into the next, which intensified the overall effectiveness of the building (Fig. 3). Decorative sculptural elements filled in the place of architectural supports, while colour likewise in painting, was introduced into sculptures in form of illusionist marble inlay, by imitating the texture of velvet or silk, or by creating effects of false perspective. Working with the idea of illusionist paintings (Fig. 4a) where architectural elements were painted and integrated in with more figurative depictions (Fig. 4b), painters created an effect similar to what architects achieved in 3 dimensions.

Fig. 1 - View of St. Peters, Rome.

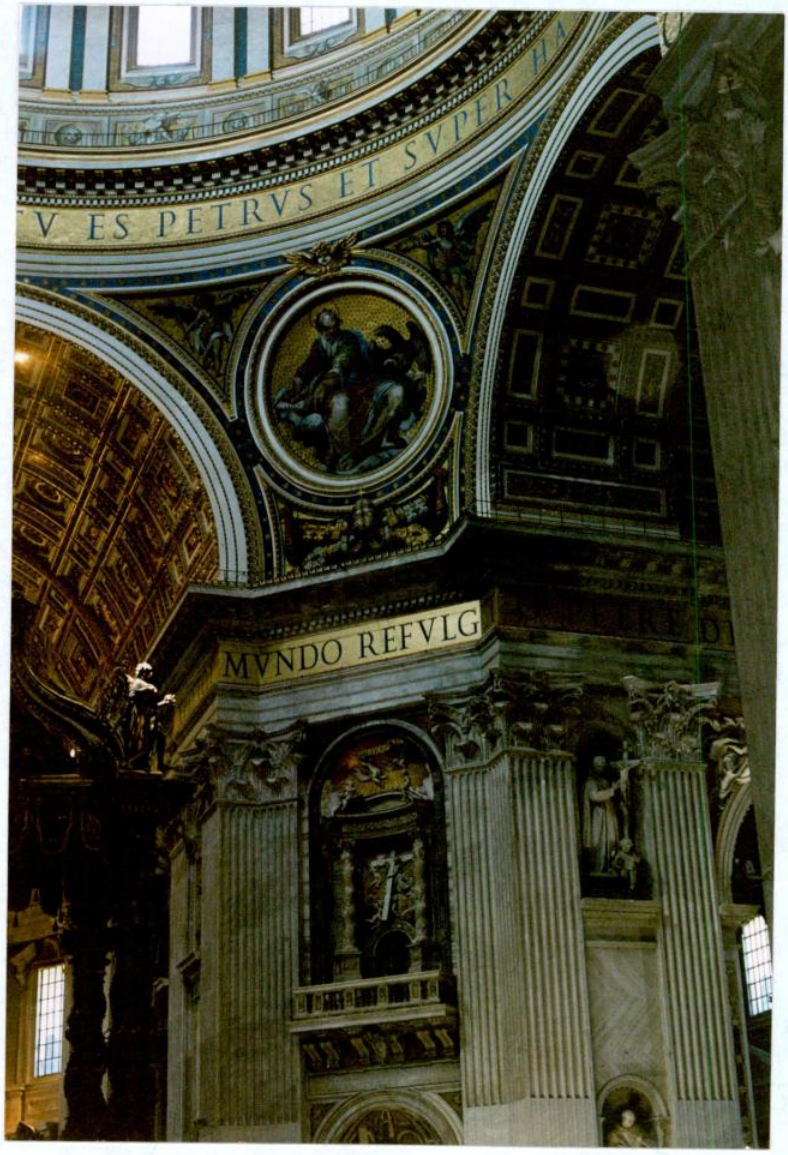

Fig. 2 - Interior of St. Peters, Rome.
- Shows combining of Artforms.

Fig. 3 - Interior of Rococo Style Church, which shows overall movement and effectiveness created by curves and combining of artforms.
Abbey Church of Asterhofen, Bavaria. 1726-32.

Fig. 4(a) - Illusionist Painting.
Correggio: The Assumption of the Virgin.

Fig. 4(b) - Figurative and Architectural Illusionist Depiction.
Pietro da Cortona: Frescoed Ceiling / Barberini Palace, Rome.

Baroque architects often heightened the striking impression created by their Churches by the use of ornamentation and rich materials (Fig. 5). Baroque architecture was first appreciated for these features, but it is not significant in every Baroque work of art.

Another important element in the effectiveness of Baroque architecture was how light was carefully controlled. Architects directed it, either to highlight some particular feature or to shine it on a fresco from a concealed source. Light was also an important component in the depicting of realism in painting.

Baroque architecture also tended to treat facades like sculptures, setting columns into walls, opening them up with niches or varying scales and with this, instead of treating flatly curved whole surfaces of facades.

Baroque architects worked impressively with excessive amounts of space. This love for a large scale also manifests itself in an interest in the town-planning and Roman Baroque architects produced some of the most celebrated examples. The Piazza of St. Peters occupies a vast amount of bordered space, creating an overwhelming effect (Fig. 1).

The use of a giant order, which was devised to embrace 2-3 storeys of a building, had been re-discarded in the 16th century, but was only being used extensively in the Baroque period.

Techniques such as giant orders, oval ground plans, mannerist fresco effects, the device of extending action over the whole space of a chapel and false perspective colonades in three dimensions, were all devices used by renaissance artists, but in a separate manner, which left the combining of all these ideas to the Baroque artist who therefore created a more dramatic whole than anything seen in the 16th century.

Although the Baroque was fundamentally a new and original style, many elements had been invented in the previous century, which were being interpreted in the Baroque period in a different creative manner.

Fig. 5 - Interior of St. Peters - Baldacchino Canopy.
- Shows wealth of ornament and rich materials.

Gianlorenzo Bernini (1598 - 1680), famously known for his work with St. Peter's in Rome, was an all rounded energetic artist. As a painter, sculptor and architect, he was also known to have written and composed operas and designed stage sets. All these interests are shown in his work as a sculptor and architect. His famous sculpture, 'The Ecstasy of St. Theresa' (Fig. 6), is presented in a chapel built to resemble a theatre, so that if we enter it, we are part of the audience. Its form is taken out of sculptural context, seeming more like a pictorial scene framed by architecture. Light is directed down on to forms from a hidden source illuminating the marble, creating a brilliant hallucinatory effect.

Though Bernini was working within a sculptural medium, he wanted to create a painterly feel by giving marble a soft, rippled effect, presenting the figures in a visionary state, giving sculpture a new dimension. By depicting this flowing state and the volumes of his figures, he created a great deal of movement, adding to the dramatic realism of the moment.

Bernini's intent was to express the ecstasy in which the body of the Saint becomes suddenly lifeless at the inrush of the Holy Spirit. He succeeded to do so in the expressions and the positioning of Theresa. Her limp body, half opened mouth, give expressive examples of the ecstasy in which she is experiencing. As he was so involved within the theatre, he wanted his sculptures to express and involve the audience as much as performers did within the theatre.

The technical ideas within sculpture were also relevant within Baroque paintings. The emphasis on light and shade, the disregard for simple balance and the preference for more complicated compositions are apparent.

Michelangelo da Carravaggio (1571 - 1610), co-existing with the Carruccio brothers in painting, was a pioneer of early Italian Baroque painting. He had a dislike for classical models and 'ideal beauty' and devoted himself to the depiction of realism.*[1] He used the human body repeatedly, achieving to paint figures with a theatrical reality of dramatic intensity.

[1]*The idea of realism within Baroque paintings can be connected in contemporary culture with 'hyperreality', where "if a reconstruction is to be credible, it must be absolutely iconic, a perfect likeness, a "real" copy of the reality being represented ... The "completely real" becomes identified with the "completely fake". (Ottmann: Eco, 1987, p.90)*

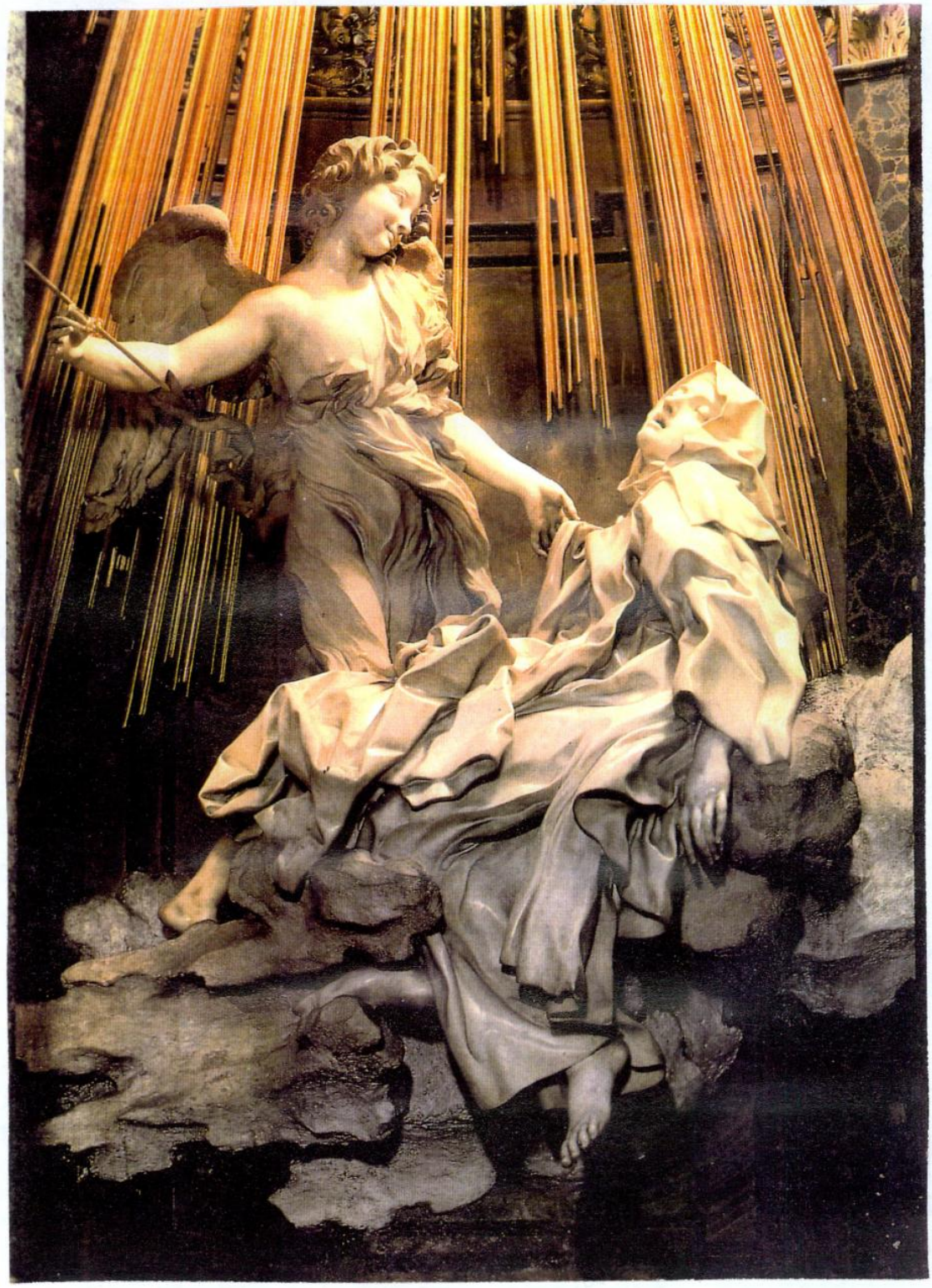

Fig. 6 - The Ecstasy of St. Theresa, Bernini.

Previous renaissance painters had used a means of overall lighting to define the human body, but by focusing on Carravaggio's painting 'Supper at Emmanus' (Fig. 7a), his use of strong light was focused only on the important aspects of the men's actions. With the controlled lighting his figures emerge from the dramatic shadows of the painting, allowing the volume of the figures to stand out within depthless space creating a somewhat sculptural and three dimensional quality and making it even more real and tangible.

Carravaggio succeeded to create dramatic potential between figures seated around the table. He paid great attention to the positioning of the figures and the thoughts and feelings of the men are conveyed through violent movement and expressive gestures (Fig. 7b), which draw viewer's attention into the scene and allowing figures to proceed into viewer's space.

When adding detail, Carravaggio was careful that it did not distract the eye of the viewer from the emotion of the scene, but instead adding to its effect, for example, the instability of the half-perched bowl of fruit on the table created more intensity to the moment (Fig. 7c).

Baroque was primarily a product of Catholic and Monarchic Society, but within the Protestant areas of Flanders, artists such as Rubens, Rembrandt and Hals used Baroque characteristics to portray ordinary subjects, representing the mental world they lived in.

Peter Paul Rubens (1577 - 1640), who introduced Baroque to Northern Europe, had spent 8 years within Italy, learning Italian traditions and with his talent, experience and approval, had gained an equal status to that of Bernini as an Ambassador in the Courts. His paintings depicted landscapes, portraiture, myths of antiquity and religious themes, portraying these subjects with a great deal of movement.

With the painting 'The Kermis' (Fig. 8), his voluptuous figures, which link physically or integrate by flow of cloth or correspondence of gesture, capture the energetic rhythm and complex movement of composition. He gave his forms volume by his translucency of the brilliance of paint, (Carravaggio was great inspiration for Rubens as well as many other painters from the Netherlands) and with northerner's love of detail he defined the moment.

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Fig. 7(a) - Supper at Emmanus (Carravaggio).
1600-01 55.5 x 77.25 - National Gallery, London.

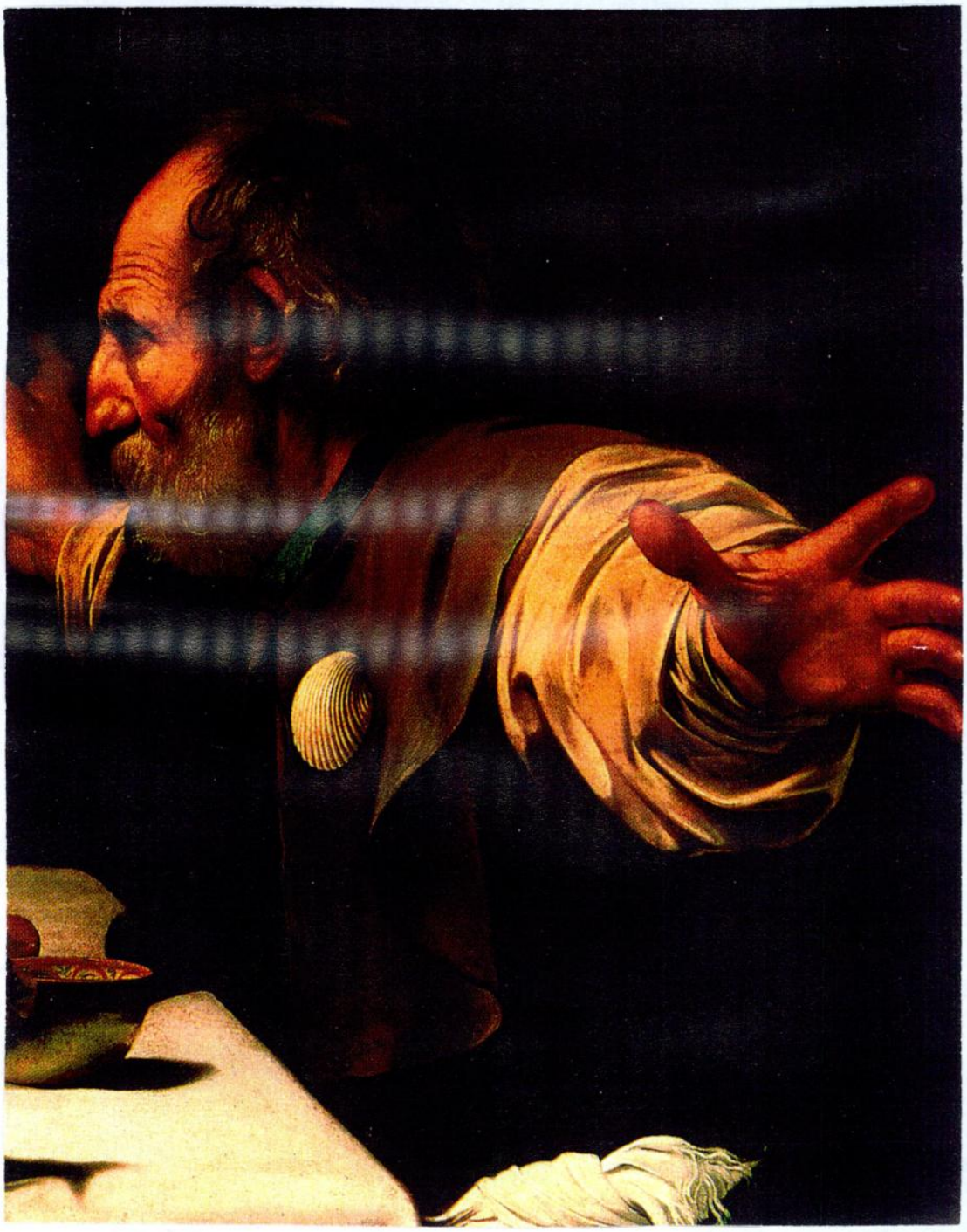

Fig. 7(b) - Detail of Gesture. Supper at Emmanus.

Fig. 7(c) - Detail of Bowl of Fruit.

Fig. 8 - The Kermis. (Rubens).

Also relevant within a Baroque age, is the depiction of the village wedding, where drinking, eating, etc and the ideal female fashionable figure was beyond an average or healthy point, representing therefore an excessive lifestyle in both appearance and consumption.

> **"He created a new type of portraiture: life-size, three quarter-length figures so vividly posed and brilliantly lighted that they seem to engage us in conversation". (Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 185).**

Portraiture was a dominant theme within Dutch genre painting and Rembrandt Van Rijn (1606 - 1669) who was well known for his self-portraits, used them to honestly and psychologically record his ageing process, showing his obsession with the life of the soul (Fig. 9a & 9b). He presents to his viewer, the expressive use of his face, to convey his emotions, scepticism, courage, melancholy and calm stages through his life.

Rembrandt had a great ability of portraying human character with more spiritual depth than other co-existing artists. He used painting as a way of exploring mythology, picturesque of life and through tragedy in his life, he turned to the use of religion in his work.

Rembrandt studied the Baroque emphasis on gestures, expressions and used contrasts of light and dark to create realistic but also a spiritual intensity and mood to his work. He also liked to use rich traditional costumes within his paintings which provided a more theatrical but also realistic aspect to his religions and portrait paintings.

Franz Hals (1610 - 1666) was an influence in the spreading of portraiture within the north. He was especially known for his rapid, violent, brush-strokes which captured the feeling of gestures and expressions in his sitters, creating movement and portraying dramatic momentary poses. He enjoyed the theatrical aspect of dressing his sitters in rich costumes, which usually involved his characters in musical, celebratory atmospheres. He emphasised the expressive gestures and expressions of his characters by placing a brilliant illusionist light on the sitter's face and hands, creating a more dramatic effect (Fig. 10).

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Fig. 9(a) - Young Portrait of Rembrandt.
1620. New York - Private Collection.
61 x 47cm.

Fig. 9(b) - Mature Portrait of Rembrandt.
1667-68. 114.3 x 94cm.
London, Kenwood House Iveagh Bequest.

Fig. 10 - Malle, Babbe 1630-33.
29.5 x 25.25cm, Staatliche Museum, West Berlin.

With all this artistic wealth in Northern Europe and Italy, France in the late 17th century, which had been affected by the 30 years war, was growing artistically stronger again with the help of Louis XIV. Baroque - Rococo example of architecture - Versailles (Fig. 11a & 11b), which set a standard for the rest of Europe at that time and for the following centuries to come, showed the continuing need within civilisation to be surrounded and delighted in the fantastical and richness of things.

Within the romantic age of the 19th century, a thick revival of the Baroque period was significant. A prominent figure in this period was King Ludwig II from Germany who was known for his admiration of Louis XIV. He spent all of his money building whimsical castles of theatre sets, creating surreal layers of insulation to capsulate him from the real world and his fear of crowds.

By building three major residences - Neuschwanstein (1868) (Fig. 12a), Linderhof (1868) and Herrenchiemsee (1878), he was able to fulfil his delight in the fanciful by the fitting of his castles with references from Rococo Interiors, Eastern Art, themes from the opera of his idolised Richard Wagner and mythological and romanic subjects.

His building of the "Herrenchiemsee" earned itself the name of the second Versailles as a direct reference (the great hall of mirrors, for example) was taken from the original Rococo style building of Versailles. Herrenchiemsee was attributed to Louis XIV.

Neuschwanstein, his first building and by far his most dramatic, became the inspiration for Disneyland's Magic Kingdom. Its situation, perched on a rocky mountain peak, complete with medieval towers and turrets, transports viewers into a bygone fantasy world.

Linderhof, his third example, is known more for its bizarre interiors as Ludwig within this Trianon-type 18th century villa, constructed imitation rocky caverns, which he would sail through in elaborate shell-shaped boats.

With all his artistic wealth in Northern Europe and Italy, Francesco the late 17th century, which had been affected by the 30 years' war, was growing artistically stronger again with the help of Louis XIV. Baroque - Rococo example of architecture - Versailles (Fig. 11a & 11b), which set a standard for the rest of Europe at that time and for the following centuries to come, showed the continuing need within civilisation to be surrounded and delighted in the sensual and richness of things.

Within the romantic age of the 19th century, a thick revival of the Baroque period was significant. A prominent figure in this period was King Ludwig II from Germany, who was known for his admiration of Louis XIV. He spent all of his money building whimsical castles of theatre sets, creating several layers of insulation to capsulate him from the real world and his fear of crowds.

In building three main residences - Neuschwanstein (1869) (Fig. 12a), Linderhof (1884) and Herrenchiemsee (1878), he was able to fulfill his delight in the fantastic by the fitting of his castles with references from Rococo interiors. Indeed, Versailles from the opera of his idolised Richard Wagner and mythological and romantic subjects.

The building of the "Herrenchiemsee" earned itself the name of the second Versailles as a direct reference (the great hall of mirrors, for example) was taken from the original Rococo style building of Versailles. Herrenchiemsee was attributed to Louis XIV.

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Linderhof, his third example, is known more for its bizarre interiors. Ludwig, within this rococo-type 18th century villa, constructed intricate rooms, which he would sit through in elaborate shell-shaped boats.

Fig. 11(a) - External View of Versailles.

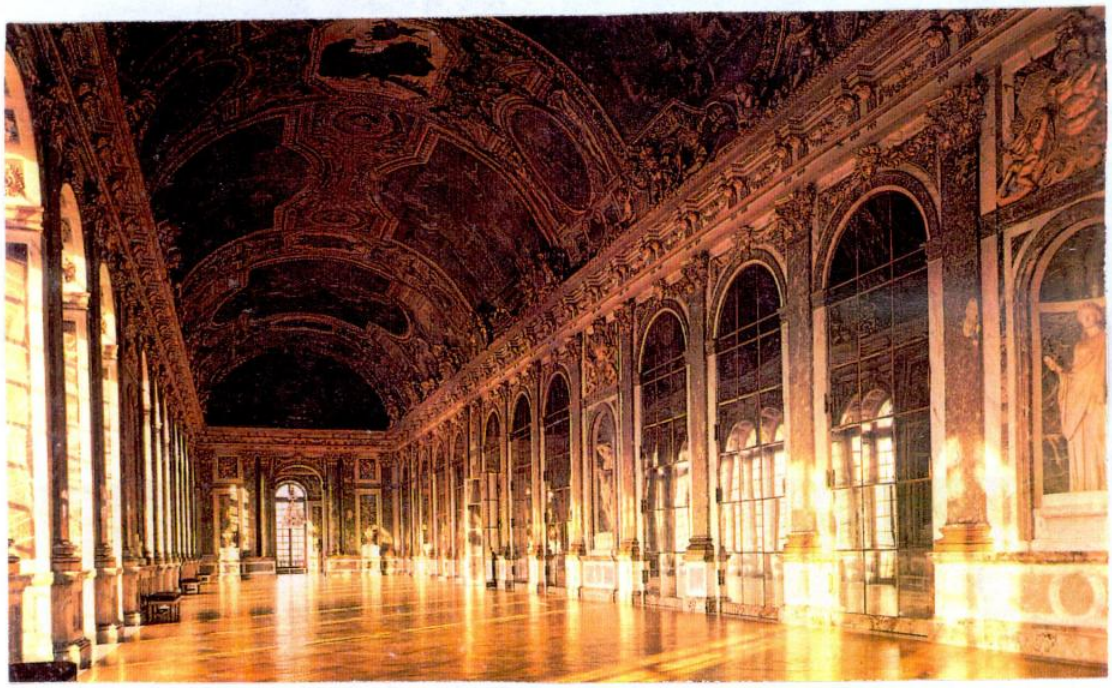

Fig. 11(b) - Hall of Mirrors, Versailles.

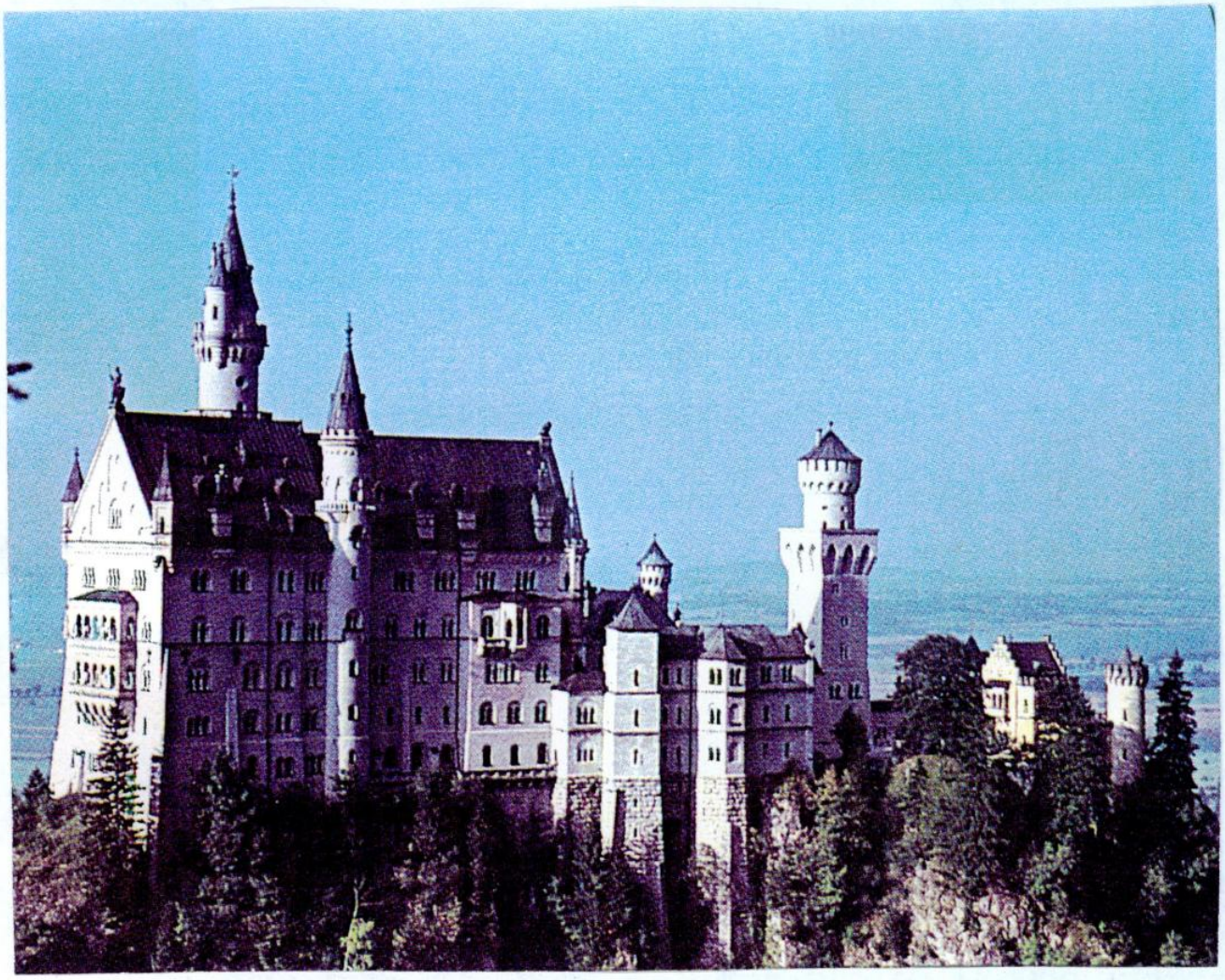

Fig. 12(a) - Neuschwanstein. (Ludwig). 1868.

Welcome to the land of Cinderella castles and fairytale prices.

Ludwig II of Bavaria. The King who built castles in the air

Once upon a time in a faraway land, there lived a king called Ludwig, whose dearest wish was to make all his subjects happy. So he built them fairytale castles.

Soon the land had the most beautiful castles in the world.

That faraway land was Germany – a land full of beautiful surprises. So, if you're looking for a fairytale holiday come to the land of Cinderella castles.

The land of Ludwig. The land of happily ever after. And here's the happy ending: your holiday in Germany won't cost you a fortune.

For a free information pack, please call 0891-600100, calls cost 39p per minute cheap rate, 49p per minute at all other times or simply cut out the coupon.

Germany

For further details please send this coupon to Department 95, German National Tourist Office, 65, Curzon Street, London, W1Y 8NE

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____ Postcode _____ 95L03

Fig. 12(b) - Contemporary advertisement using Ludwig's Castle as Imagery.

Ludwig went to great lengths to heighten reality within his illusionary grottos by introducing wave-making machines, kaleidoscopic lighting, powered by Bavaria's first electric dynamos and backdrops were painted to suit the theme with the help of a theatre designer.

Today Ludwig is judged differently to that of his contemporaries. His extravagance and love of the fantastical and opulence of decor is regurgitated within the 20th century, as imagery provoking the underlying aesthetic need within civilisation for the spirit of Baroque's theatricality and escapism into the grandeur of artistic wealth.

Architecture was the first artform in the Baroque style to show characteristics of its combinations, variations, complex plans and use of theatrical references. From architecture and sculpture, these aspects continued to be used within painting where they proved to create a great deal of movement and with the use of theatrical devices, an intensity within the moment depicted an immediacy within its viewers. It was the theatrical element of exaggerating and dressing up features that made Baroque so attractive and exciting to its audience, where they could immerse themselves within the depiction of a realistic other "scenario".

CHAPTER 3

CONTEMPORARY BAROQUE DEFINITION

Contemporary Baroque is not a direct return to the Baroque origin, but is really a 'Spirit' within our present culture that exists in different quantities in the most opposite selection of phenomenons. With the presence of this spirit, an association can be made between current scientific theories with forms of art, literature, philosophy and cultural consumption. Phenomena are therefore expressed, communicated and received through a shared Baroque 'Spirit' suggesting the existence of a "Social Aesthetic".

With the ability to notice similarities between phenomena that are extremely opposite, there must exist an underlying form, a form that refers to the concepts of our contemporary spirit.

> **"Baroque as a form dislocated, gone astray, yet all the while spurred on by an intense pulse coming from within its very self and causing it to unfurl like a whirlwind". (Brea, 1990, p.125).**

Neo-Baroque relies on the evaluation of a form that displays a loss of entirety and a system in favour of instability, polydimension and change. In relation to the characteristics of Baroque's underlying form, current post-modern scientific theories are considered to be **"Catastrophe, factorals, dissipated structures, chaos and complexity"** which contrast to the previous rational scientific principles of modernism. **(Calabrese, 1992, p. xii).**

> **"Baroque longs to enter into the multiplicity of phenomenons, into the flux of things and their perpetual become - compositions dynamic and open and tend to expand outside boundaries". (Bazin, 1964, p.6).**

One of the most pertinent underlying characteristics of Baroque is the dissipation of phenomena into an expressive unification of a new order. The artists in the period of the 17th century were the first to experiment and unify the artforms of painting, architecture and sculpture, hence the first to change and combine phenomenons into one certification.

In the crossing of phenomenon thresholds, in stretching limits of extravagance and the eccentricity of that which escapes by breaking through an ordered system, suggests the experimenting and excessive nature of Baroque.

It is the experimenting and risk-taking of approximating between these phenomena that creates instability in an ordered system, creating an uncertainty and allowing a pleasure of challenge.

Baroque does not offer us perfection, fulfilment or static calm of being like previous classical and modern periods, but carries us away by an intoxicating and exciting force of anticipation, releasing us from reality into a theatrical tension.

> **"Only after having constructed theoretically and at the same time, historically the borders and characteristics of the Baroque, can one extend its heuristic function to other periods, movements and cultural systems". (Calabrese, 1992, p.20).**

With the association of Baroque's underlying forms with that of scientific theory, a basis is provided in which to evaluate the existence of the Baroque phenomenon within the climate of contemporary culture.

The phrase 'post-modernism' is an all-round definition for the evaluation of a contemporary trend within our expressive field, which marks the arrival of the great Baroque spirit.

In the period up to the 1980's there was a reaction against the restrictive aesthetics of the modernist age. Charles Jencks, a well-known critic was the first to define post-modernism in architecture and design spheres, as an aesthetic liberated from the old modernist dogma, resulting in an eclectic mixture, which freely combines elements of modernism, with a wide classical tradition and also to the anti-classical movements of the mannerist phase.

One of the most pertinent underlying characteristics of Baroque is the deciphering of phenomena into an expressive unification on a new order. The artists in the period of the 17th century were the first to experiment and unify the artforms of painting, architecture and sculpture, hence the first to change and combine phenomena into one creation.

In the meaning of phenomenon theoretically, a standing basis of [illegible] and the economics of that which escapes by breaking through an [illegible] suggests the experimenting and expressive nature of Baroque.

It is the experimenting and risk-taking or approximating between these phenomena that creates instability in an ordered system, creating an uncertainty and allowing a pleasure of challenge.

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The phrase 'post-modernism' is an all-round definition for the evaluation of a contemporary trend within an expressive field, which marks the arrival of the great Baroque revival.

In the period up to the 1960's there was a reaction against the restrictive traditions of the modernist age. Charles Jencks, a well-known critic was the first to define contemporary architecture and design practices, as an architecture liberated from the old modernist dogma, resulting in an eclectic mixture, which could combine elements of modernism, with a wide classical tradition and also to the small-classical movements of the mannerist phase.

He describes the emerging architecture as a vehicle for expressing meaning and symbolism in form and in which detail, surface value, use of ornament and quality of materials would all play an important role.

The phrase 'post-modernism' in architecture therefore becomes an elastic term covering a selection of styles and theories within contemporary architecture, ranging from reactionary architects based on traditional and classical inspiration, American neo-modern architecture, humourous whimsical mannerist modernism and the theoretical, visual emphasis of Nigel Coates.

> **"Camp is the consistently aesthetic experience of the world. It incarnates a victory of style over content, aesthetic over morality, of irony over tragedy". (Cryster, 1989, p.34).**

Baroque in the 20th century signifies the release from old design cliches, offering an alternative that indulges in the colourful, opulent, theatrical visual possibilities of excess - this is reflected in the present post-modernism, where the importance of visual sensation is emphasised, happening at the expense of substance, context and morality.

Camp is seen as valuable category of post-modernism, as it plays games with history and conventions of taste, dresses itself up, exaggerates its features and selects appropriate lighting summing it up as modern dandyism. (The romantic 19th century dandy was an eccentric Baroque character, concerned with his appearance and clothing).*[1]

With modern Baroque dandyism in architecture being the emphasis on surface qualities, symbolism and qualities of materials in the world of cultural consumption, it is the visual expressiveness of the media's selection of images, mixture and structure of phenomenons that refers to the importance within the present climate, of emphasised style and visual appeal over content.

[1]*Drag queens can be characterised as contemporary 'dandies', as they play games with the history of sex, exaggerate features, dress up to a greater visual sensation, creating a thoroughly opulent, entertaining, theatrical appearance, reinforcing their 'camp' appeal.*

"There was no radio or television in the seventeenth century but there were books, commercialised theatrical representations, paintings in abundance, songs in vogue, posters, programmes, Lampoons, etc."

(Maravalli: Ottmann, 1987, p.91)

Television, advertising and the cinema have taken over from painting the theatre and sculpture as the most important and influential artforms in society.

Television has got to be the most important and widespread of all three artforms. It consists of a wealth of new representational genres, which by the combining of phenomena, creates a fast and unstable method of communication, provoking excitement and intoxication.

"Ecleticism is the degree zero of contemporary general culture: one listens to reggae, watches a western, eats McDonalds food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wears Paris perfume in Tokyo and retro clothes in Hong Kong; knowledge is a matter for TV games".

(Jencks, 1992, p.153).

The fast pace of eclectic entertainment reflects the speed and variety in which life is lived, suggesting the neo-Baroque characteristics of instability and variations.

With the wide use of the remote control and vast amount of channels, there no longer exists a constant unified way of viewing. With the "zapping" of channels and the disruption of commercial breaks, the viewer creates new meanings and values from rapid meeting of images, from the mixture of phenomena, rather from the functioning of the contents within the television events. This type of irregular consumption is not just a collage of fragments, but also is a kind of aesthetic behaviour; an aesthetic behaviour that prefers the constant juxtaposing of images relating to the characteristics within the Neo-Baroque of:

"Scattered off-course sequences and chaotic collisions."

(Brea, 1990, p.125)

The constant change of images and dislocating of text reflects also the campness within Baroque of the importance of how the form appears rather than its actual context.

"With Baroque, durable plasticity is more important than form".
(Brea, 1990, p.125)

MTV is a very suitable application for the characteristics of the Neo-Baroque phenomenon, especially because it is aimed at a younger audience, who rely on its fast, energetic, eclectic form of structured entertainment to keep them excited and intoxicated. The structure of its 24 hour existence is fragmented partially into empheral pieces of documentary, which provoke questions and no answers, but leave a sense of suspension. Its advertising is so visually effective in its innovative mixture of mediums that it is hard to distinguish between the advertisement's and the artist's pieces of visual work, signifying the importance of the visual opulence in the Baroque phenomenon.

Each piece of fragment in motion which disrupts its structure relates to the Baroque Labyrinth idea and also relevant to Neo-Baroque is the combining of various artforms: animation, performance art, video, film, etc. The mixture of various styles of music shown within programmes or in conjunction of suggest the eclectism within music tastes in present culture. All these elements within MTV suggest the idea of variations, combinations, fractal instability, dynamism and visual opulence within the Neo-Baroque climate.

Coronation Street which celebrated its 35th years on TV suggests how the 'soap opera' phenomenon must be one of the most favourable parts of television viewing. The idea of anticipation is relevant in this phenomenon by the suspension created between each continuing episode, allowing viewers to get addicted, (addiction being an excessive habit surrendering to a habit of escaping reality)*[2]. The interweaving of stories and episodes which form sections of entire structures can be read in isolation or as a continuing context.

[2]*The idea of excess in terms of behaviour (eg. excessive drinking, smoking, eating) and hyperspecialisation (followers of cults, etc) reflects the Baroque characteristic of expanding outside boundaries.*

The constant change or images and dislocating of text article also the comprises within Baroque of the importance of how the form appears rather than its actual content.

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> (Eco, 1989, p.125)

MTV is a very suitable application for the characteristics of the Neo-Baroque phenomenon, especially because it is aimed at a younger audience who rely on its fast, energetic, colorful form of structured entertainment to keep them excited and interested. The structure of its 24 hour entertainment fragmented partially into original pieces of documentary, which provoke questions and no answers, but leave a sense of suspension. Its advertising is so visually effective in its innovative mixture of mediums that it is hard to distinguish between the advertisements and the artist's pieces of visual work, signifying the importance of the visual opulence in the Baroque phenomenon.

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Cinemation Street which celebrated its 35th years on TV suggests how the 'soap opera' phenomenon must be one of the most favourable parts of television viewing. The idea of anticipation is relevant to this phenomenon by the suspension created between each continuing episode, allowing viewers to get addicted. Addiction being an excessive habit surrendering to a habitual escaping reality[24]. The interweaving of stories and episodes which form sections of entire structures can be read in isolation or as a continuing context.

[24] Like Lyotard's notion of phenomenon (eg. excessive drinking, smoking, eating) and hyper-consumption (fashions, gadgets, etc.) exists in the Baroque culture as a coping mechanism against Sublime.

Within the Nescafé ads, the interpretation of the "soap opera" phenomenon has allowed Nescafé to create the same type of suspension. Each commercial is a section of a continuing storyline, which evolves as the commercial moves on in the structure. By its unorthodox way of advertising, by the combining of phenomena, the visual aspect and storyline, becomes more significant than the actual product, which therefore creates more awareness and publicity, and sells its product.

Benetton (Fig. 1) is also an example of a company which loses full identity of its products in advertising, by using controversial images as a way of creating publicity for both the images and its company.

> **"Ads used to tell us how good and essential a product was, now they say less about the product, but rather parody advertising itself by citing other ads and using references drawn from popular culture."**
> **(Boyd, 1995, p.3)**

By its combining of genres, advertising has reclassified itself as something other than an interruption in a structure, in which its visual content becomes equally, or more attractive to the viewer than normal television contents.

> **"When people shop in supermarkets, they are as interested, if not more interested in buying the packaging and the design of the goods on sale as the goods themselves. We don't consume products, we consume images." (Boyd, 1995, p.3).**

The Baroque characteristic of the importance of the visual sensation is also relevant in advertising, in the idealising of (super-model) perfect physiques, both male and female, which helps to sell products, disregarding the importance of the content, but instead fantasising it through the use of beauty and sex. This can be linked with the classical participation within Baroque in the idea of the perfect heroic physical beauty.

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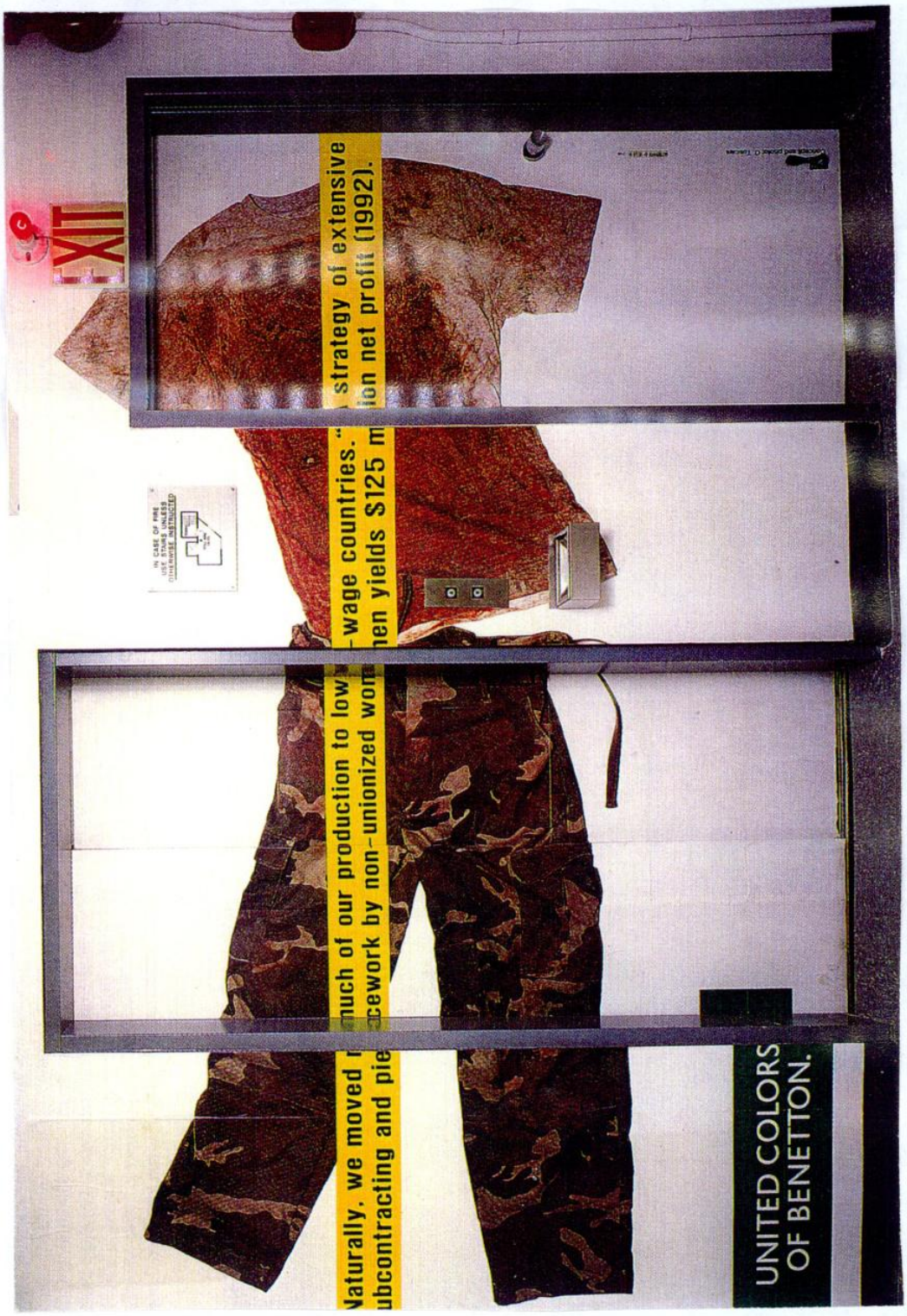

Fig. 1 - Benetton Advertisement.
"Dying for Benetton".

By the emphasizing of the visual appeal of products, advertising can therefore transcend the viewer into a fantastical representation, persuading the consumer to buy the product and its fantastical bonus. Baroque characteristics are therefore significant in advertising, by the accentuating of the products visual appeal or reference, producing an individuality and authenticity within the image.

Television has a growing and popular amount of events, surrounding the aspects of live transmission. The risk-taking and challenge within the broadcasting of these events, create a great deal of anticipation and excitement for the viewers, where performers and viewers lose effect of reality and are transcended into the approximation within game shows.

In television events (such as "Noel's House Party", "The Price is Right", for example) the viewers and audience find themselves transferred into the actual performance and vehicle of entertainment, closing the gap between reality and the experience of the entertainment. This is also particularly true in the idea of debate shows, ("Oprah Winfrey Show", "Esther") where the content of the event is performed by the commitment of the opinions in the audience, alias the general public. This also creates direct contact with the viewers, by the emotional content of the opinions being raised, producing excitement and tension by the challenging of ideas.

The idea of the labyrinth is apparent within the fragmenting of narrative and structures within television events, where a loss of a rational path, provokes us to use our intelligence to discover the continuing order. Labyrinths reflect complexity and constructed undecidibility, where every intersection causes more obstacles and traps, creating alertness within the performer (and the viewer). The labyrinth plays a major part in the structure of film especially in adventure, fantasy and science-fiction films, where the hero of the film is caught in an unstable universe and must succeed the unpredictability of the enemy*[3].

[3] *The hero of the film, who is caught in such unfortunate situations also signifies the classical participation within Baroque of the ideal, powerful physique of a classical model.*

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4. The hero of the film, who is caught in an unstable universe, must succeed the unpredictability of the enemy. The hero represents the image of the ideal, perceived dimension of a classical model.

The majority of video games existing on the market at the moment, have been influenced by the idea of the labyrinth*[4]. Video games involve a lot of participation of its spectator into the action. The text on the screen suggests that it is destined for us; the spectator, outside the screen in a theatrical space, where narrative skill is required to enjoy the game from outside; as a spectator and within; as adventurer. As an adventurer, we are always held in suspension, as we only have the ability to see the space around us and the inability of forecasting the obstacles and enemies ahead of us in the unpredictability of the next scene.

> **"The container corporation of America does not feature paper bags and paper cups in its ads, but the container function, by the means of great art. The historians and archaeologists will one day discover that the ads of our time are the richest and most faithful daily reflections that any society ever made of its entire range of activities."**
>
> **(McLuhan: Ottmann, 1987, p.91)**

It is the use of great art and the successful transporting of it into the sphere of the consumption of mass media, that advertising, television and film has become more effective. This concept of art within consumption can be referred to, as Klaus Ottmann in his article suggests, "Global art".

> **"Global art corrects the exclusion of the lower classes in bourgeois art and reconciles the spheres of art and consumption."**
>
> **(Ottmann, 1987, p.91)**

> **Ottmann suggests that this present culture resembles that of the seventeenth century where the historian Jose Antonio Maravall "defines it within the extremes of "exuberance" and "simplicity" in its global pretension, in the prevailment of appearance and manner over truth, in the interrelation of mass media and mass culture".**
>
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[4] *"Baroque differs from mannerism in its renewal of contact with the external world, its joyous release of the imaginative forces hitherto imprisoned in the closed cycle which Gustav René Hocke aptly calls a 'labyrinth'." (Bazin, 1964, p.18)*
The labyrinth is a recurrent theme within the Baroque phenomenon, but can also be found in gardens of many 17th and 18th century courts.

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The Global artist therefore finds himself, similarly to that of a Baroque artist, trying to keep a happy medium between the masses on one hand and the appeal of power and money on the other. He is therefore a mirror of society as well as covering the ground between two parties and it is advertising, television and film that have become the mediated forms of all social relations.

CHAPTER 4

BAROQUE CHARACTERISTIC IN NIGEL COATES & NATO

Nigel Coates is a great example of an architect, whose experimental and visionary work creates great excitement for the discussion of architecture within the boundaries of contemporary Baroque.

His theatrical work held a great influence in introducing a thoroughly modern, futuristic and Baroque dynamism into contemporary thinking about urban space and the new city scape image - examples shown in fig.4 to fig.7(a). In the previous generation, architects had not considered shops, clubs and other short-lived public buildings and interiors as important within the scope of architecture. Coates and the new architectural generation, saw a more liberated potential which allowed them to provide an imaginative solution to the problems posed.

Coates graduated from London's Architectural Association (AA) in 1974. In this period of the 1970's, talented "high" architectural designers graduated into the depth of recession and found themselves in a profession of few resources. Building activities were minimised and work in progress was quite conservative. The only option for talented graduates was to return to each, taking up paper architecture as a temporary profession. With the emphasis with architecture towards theoretical 'paperwork' building found a new site, the gallery - and a new form of spectative investment - the drawing.

With the crossover of architecture into the gallery, paper architects began to adopt theories of the art world, for the need of a more visual communicability demanded by the gallery context*[1]. What evolved was an emphasis on visual sensation rather than the complex dimensions of real space, suggesting the scenographic quality of post-modern architecture.

Nigel Coates was one of these talented graduates who taught within the ideas of theoretical architecture. The AA over the years staged a number of exhibitions featuring the work of Coates and his students, as well as publishing a magazine. Together with his students, Coates developed a controversial approach to design known as 'narrative architecture'.

London in 1984 was just emerging from the post-punk era when there was a vibrancy and urgency within the world of pop-music and fashion which seemed apparent on the streets and in the clubs. Architects however, were oblivious to this and it was not until NATO that architecture caught up with its surrounding activities.

> **"Architecture was being pushed to the periphery of people's lives. NATO helped to bring it back into the public gaze".**
>
> **(Manser, 1990, p.33-38).***[2]

Each project that Coates set for his students showed within their generating of ideas, how they disregarded the methods of conventional architecture by expressing NATO's experimental and anarchic type of architecture.

If it had not been for the near rejection from their external examiners James Stirling and Ed Jones, the teaching of narrative architecture and the provoking of a scandal through the school, NATO may have disappeared off the scene.

[1] *Within the NATO groups exhibition in the air gallery in London, similarly the idea of crossing architecture into the art gallery was used with the installation of objects and images representing the city, rather than the plans and maps that urbanists usually rely upon. (Hatton, 1986, p.102)*

[2] *The idea of NATO bringing architecture into the public gaze suggests the Baroque phenomenon of the global artist, who feeds both the masses and the appeal of power and money.*

With the crossover of architecture into the gallery, paper architects began to adopt theories of the art world, for the need of a more visual communicability demanded by the gallery context. Thus evolved was an emphasis on visual sensation rather than the complex dimensions of real space, suggesting the accompanying quality of post-modern architecture.

Nigel Coates was one of these talented graduates who fought within the ranks of theoretical architecture. The AA over the years staged a number of exhibitions featuring the work of Coates and his students, as well as publishing a magazine. Together with his students, Coates developed a conceptual approach to design known as 'narrative architecture'.

London in 1981 was just emerging from the post-punk era when there was a vibrancy and urgency within the world of pop-music and fashion which seemed apparent on the streets and in the clubs. Architects, for over, were oblivious to this and it was not until NATO that architecture caught up with its surrounding activities.

> 'Architecture was being pushed to the periphery of people's lives. NATO helped to bring it back into the public gaze'.
>
> (Manser, 1990, p.33-38).[2]

Each project that Coates set for his students showed within their approaching to ideas how they disregarded the methods of conventional architecture by experiencing NATO's experimental and anarchic type of architecture.

It is had not been for the new rejection from their external examiners James Stirling and Ed Jones, the teaching of narrative architecture and the presenting of a scandal through the school, NATO may have disappeared off the scene.

[1] Quote due to NATO group exhibition in the art gallery in London, studying the late 1970's as different from the 'gallery quality' in a drawing with its 'soft lovely objects and murky impressionistic atmosphere that the mass-produced post-modernist reality only jeers'. (Dalton, 1988, p.12).

[2] The above quotation is taken from an interview with Manser, who suggests the European phenomenon of the 'global' architecture, that is, that all the same, with the absence of place and memory.

"All this, a seething ferment of ideas, was presented in what Stirling likened to a bunch of sketches and a few cartoons. He might equally have involved the image of a bombed city, a town in a nightmare. For the imagery was savage and there was not a section, a plan, or even a proper elevation in sight. However, if you worked at finding it, there was evidence of perception and originality in this disconnected and frustrating style of presentation". (Manser, 1990, p.33).

With the acknowledgement of a new architectural theory, the press gathered, particularly paper sections with pretentions to intellectual or style leadership, it was then seen to be reported in "building design" and Tatler, NATO being conceived in 1983.

With the improvement of Western economics, more room had been made for eccentric, unorthodox architects like Coates and for many years now he has established himself within the architectural scene and also in partnership with Doug Branson and with several built interpretations of his examples of narrative architecture.

Narrative in architecture relies on gestural, unscaled drawings (more akin to expressionist illustration than the actual traditional architectural drawings) and Coates' dynamic and expressive calligraphic drawing style, is a major vehicle for the development of his ideas and representation of his concepts to galleries and clients.

The idea of narrative drawings were to reject abstraction of the plan and replace the traditional means of organised space, with x-ray drawings of sections within the building's context of events. Fig. 1 shows Coates' impression of the L'Arca di Noé (Noah's Ark) in Japan 1988 which he completed with Doug Branson. The drawings reflect the distinct, whimsicality of the 'ark', while narrating the surroundings of events and suggesting the importance of visual and atmospheric qualities.

"Designing buildings that "looked good" on paper became a priority"
(Cryster, 1989. p.32)

"All this, a seething ferment of ideas, was presented in what Stirling referred to a bunch of sketches and a few cartoons. He might equally have involved the image of a bombed city, a town in a nightmare. For the imagery was savage and there was not a section, a plan, or even a proper elevation in sight. However, if you worked at reading it, there was evidence of perception and originality in this disconnected and frustrating style of presentation." (Maxwell, 1990, p.33)

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Variations in architecture relies on gestural, unscaled drawings more than the professional illustration than the actual traditional architectural drawings and it is this dynamic and expressive calligraphic drawing style, is a major source for the development of his ideas and representation of his concepts to patrons and clients.

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"Designing buildings that 'looked good' on paper became a priority" (Crysler, 1989, p.32)

Fig. 1 - Coate's drawn impression of L'arca di Noé (Noah's Ark).

Fig. 2 shows various views of 'Noah's Ark' which was the first entire building to be completed and which became a distinct Baroque landmark on the Island of Hokkaide. The building's unusual, boat shaped structure and its situation on top of a Japanese mountain, provokes a stunning, surreal visual impact.

"Noah's Ark is surely the 'primitive boat' of narrative architecture"
(Hatton, 1992, p.74)

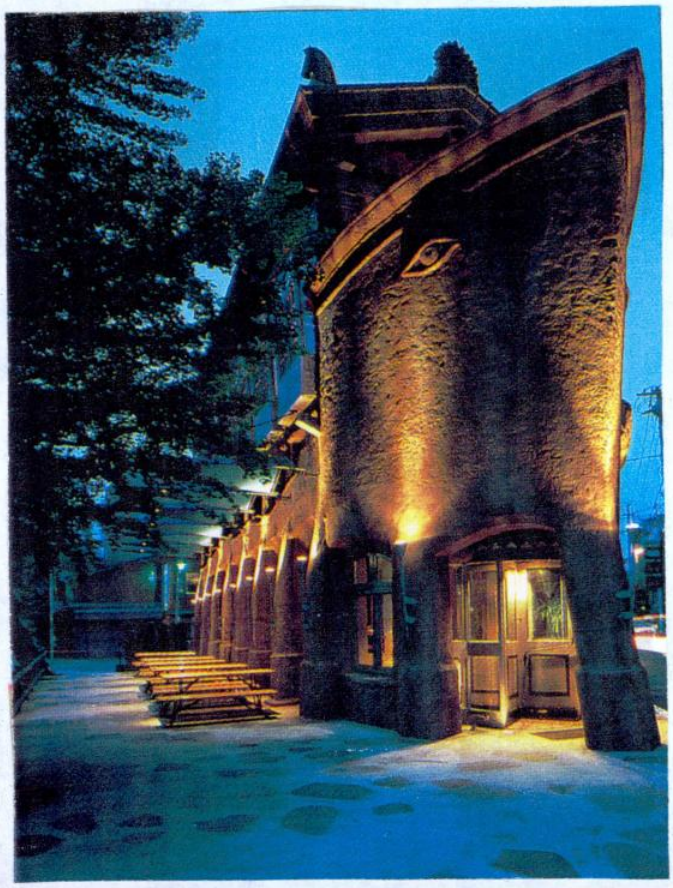
Coates found that by breaking down building's territories into a system of events, space could therefore be conceived as a system of processes, interactions and symbols. By rejecting the conventional notion of architecture, he found that a great unification between experience and place could be achieved.

"By fragment, the impression of suspense,:- an adventurous progress towards a solution, initially hypothesised and finally confirmed".
(Calabrese, 1992. p.75)

By inventing a quote in a text, (like above, for example) is to suspend the process of a system and create a state of anticipation. Likewise, in Coates architecture, by staging his building's storeys in fragments, his architectural language resembles that of a structure within TV and advertising languages, where the continuation of the storeys context is disrupted and fragmented, provoking intimacy, excitement and anticipation with the readers attention. NATO therefore actually suggests the collapse of narrative where its stones are staged in fragments, rather than narrating them.

By the playful collaging of fragments together, the aim of Coates' architecture was to reflect a present state and aesthetic need within our culture, suggesting how the consumption of architectural signs are so close to the real processes of post-modern culture.

"Gamma city is not a style, but a political, social and aesthetic attitude based on scrambling signs and processes". (Hatton, 1986, p.102).



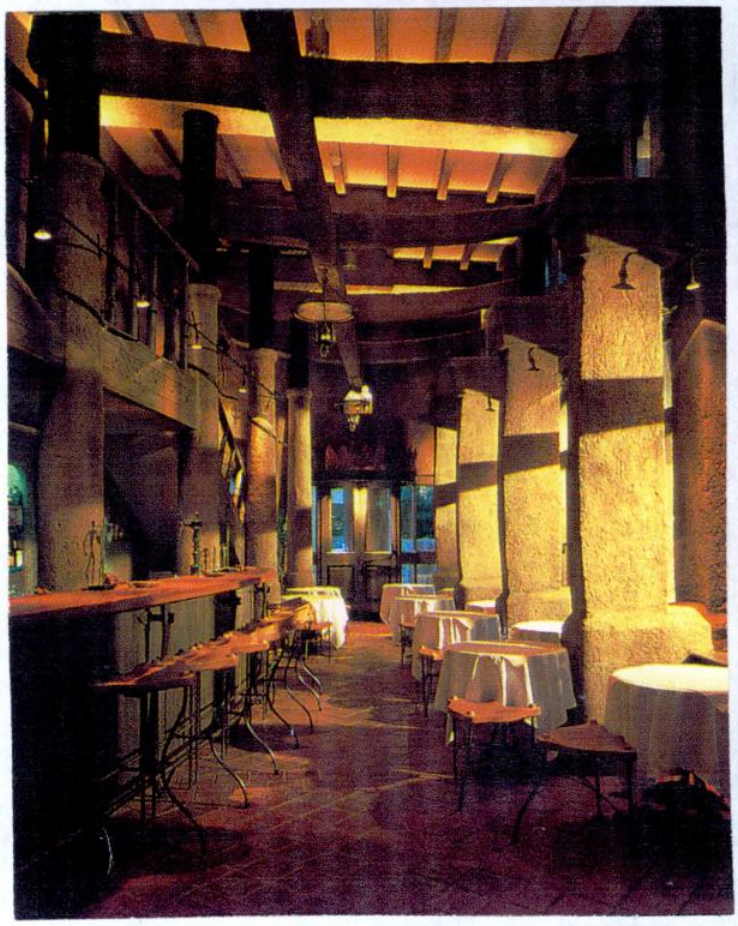


Fig. 2 - Various Views of Noah's Ark.

The above evaluation of "Gamma city" (NATO's exhibition in London) suggests the theory within the methods of Nigel Coates NATO architecture.

Within his combining of imagery, Coates reverts back to Piranesian classical references and fragments them among present cultural imagery selected from the imagery of modern air travel. His combining of old and new phenomenons suggest a present and future symbolism, alongside the appraisal of the grandeur of classical orders.

The interior of Caffe Bongo (Tokyo, 1986) Fig. 3 (which is built opposite his work of "The Wall" Fig. 4) presents his array of imagery. A mock airplane wing, extended to become a canopy over the bar, and the juxtaposition of classical architecture is apparently intended by Coates to memorialise Japan's fascination with the western world. The ceiling of Caffe Bongo Show's direct indication of Baroque influence in its imitating of illusionist painting and use of neo-Baroque drapery.

He continued to use the symbols of travel and foreign culture within other works by montaging a series of airplane seats with a view of a stage area, inspired by London jazz clubs of the 50's and 60'5. It is suggested by the metaphor that mass media is the airplane of culture. Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 show his drawings and models of the Tokyo Forum.

> **"A stage, a world theatre in the guise of a garden, a garden composed of urban events and artifacts the way that a traditional garden is made of plants". (Hatton, 1992, p.74).**

Coates' use of large, fantastical petal-like wings, which float above the forum stage, perhaps represent a transformation of his symbolic aircraft wings into their organic animated form, representing mass media within the organic theme, as being the advocator in 'the world' theatre in the guise of a garden of urban events.

> **"The forum is a staging of communications events in a theatre of artificial landscapes". (Hatton, 1992, p.74)**

The above evaluation of 'Gamma city' (NATO's exhibition in London) suggests the like-by within the methods of Miguel Coates NATO architecture.

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He continued to use the symbols of travel and foreign culture within other works by installing a series of airplane seats with a view of a stage area, inspired by London jazz clubs of the 50's and 60's. It is suggested by the newspaper that mass media is the airplane of culture. Fig. 5 and Fig. 6 show his drawings and models of the Tokyo Forum.

"A stage, a world theatre in the guise of a garden, a garden composed of urban events and artifacts the way that a traditional garden is made of plants". (Hatton, 1992, p.74).

Coates' new or large, fantastical portal-like arrangement, which float above the forum stage, perhaps represents a transformation of his symbolic aircraft wings into their organic animated form, representing mass media within the organic theme, serving the advocator in 'the world theatre in the guise of a garden of urban events'.

"The forum is a staging of communications events in a theatre of artificial landscapes". (Hatton, 1992, p.74).

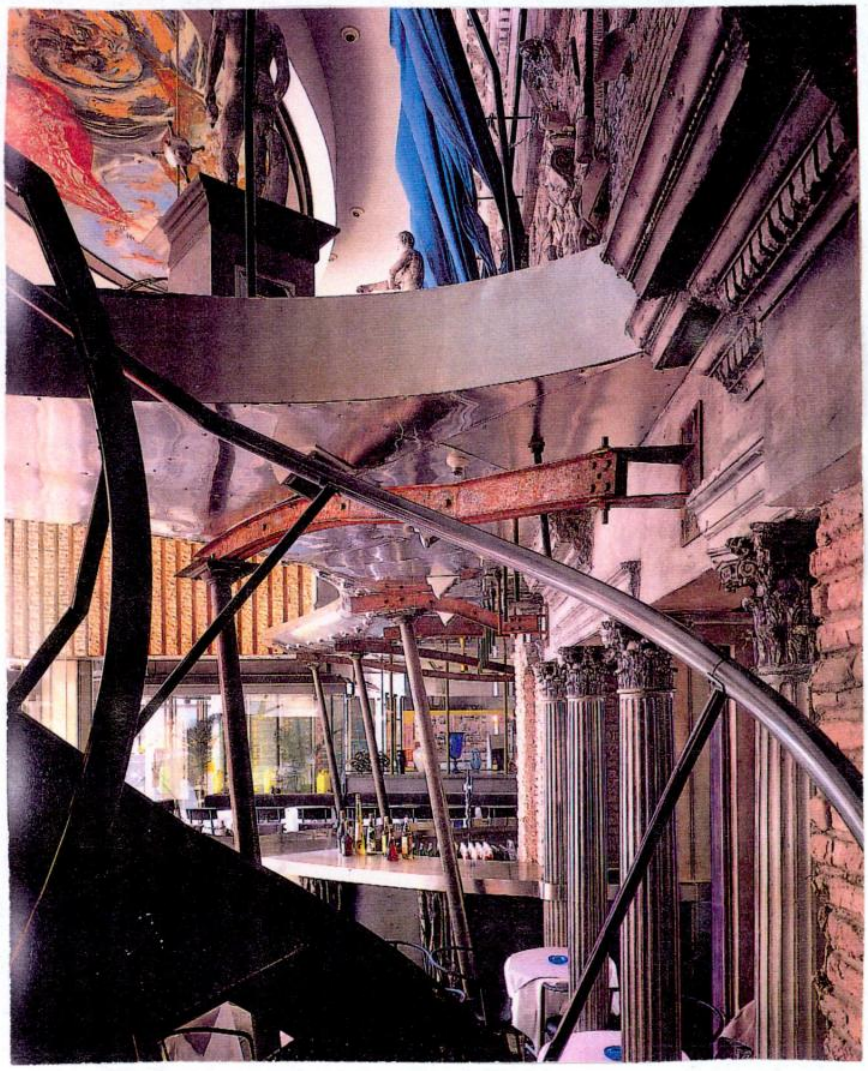
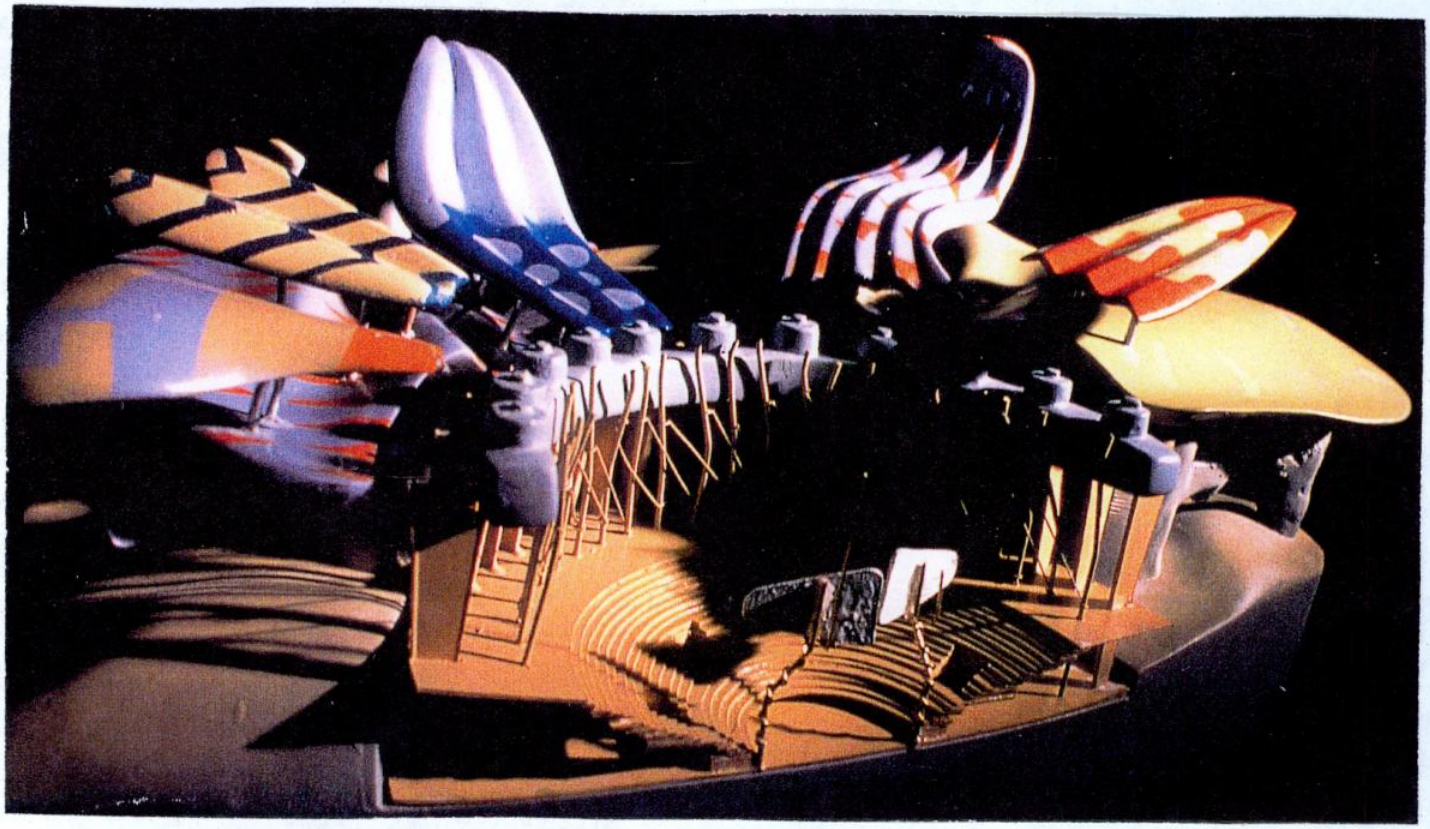


Fig. 3 - Caffe Bongo.

Fig. 4 - "The Wall".



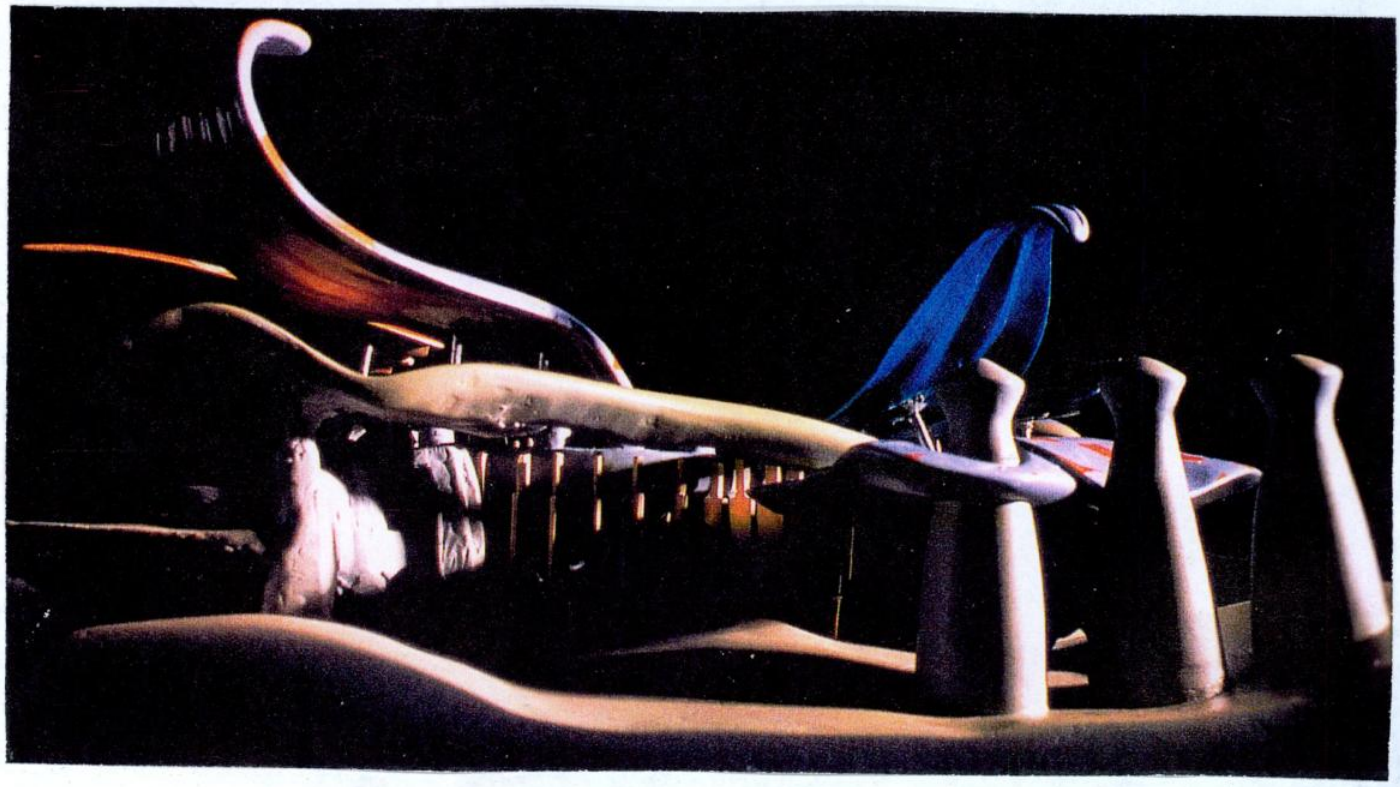


Fig. 5 - Model of Tokyo Forum.

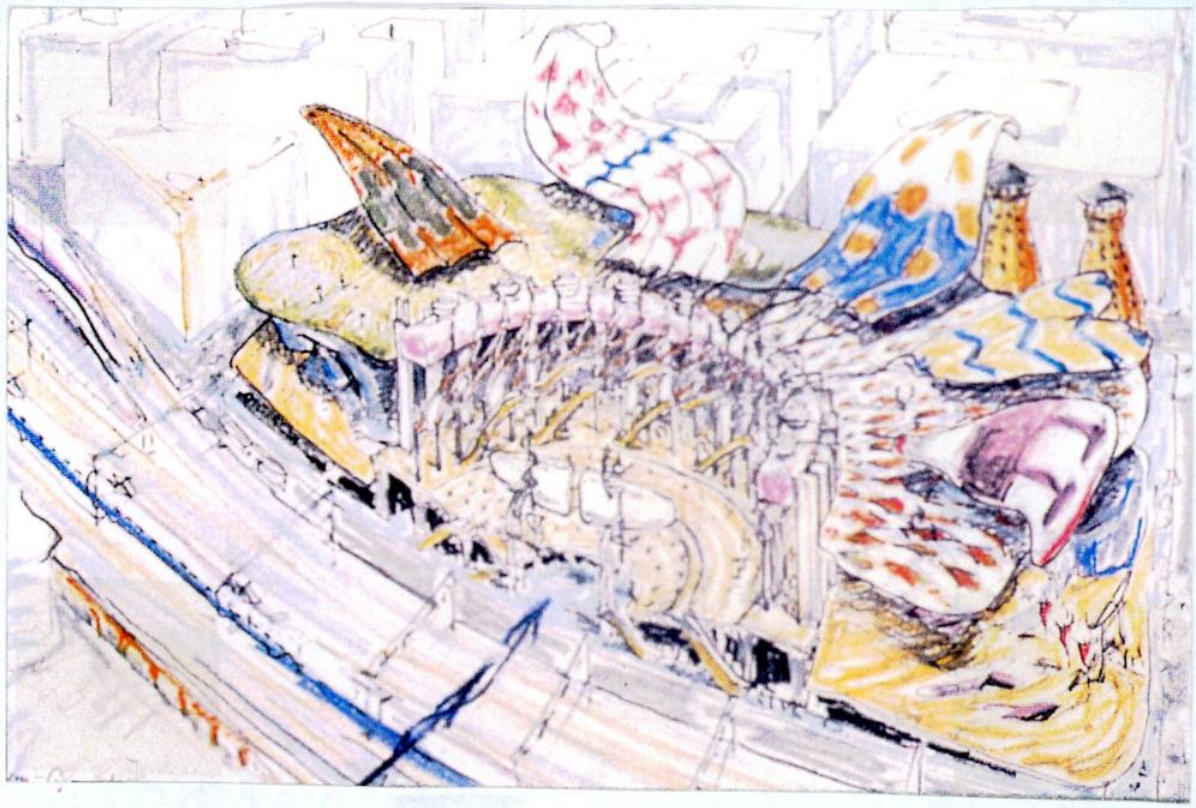


Fig. 6 - Drawings of Tokyo Forum.

The theatre element is recurrent within Coates' work (the theatre was also, relevantly, the most influential artform within the Baroque age). His excessive and extravagant visually metaphoric nature is used to produce a distinct character by theatricalising the experience within the buildings.

Everything is a stage set in which Coates insists on making us both actors and spectators.

In the Knightsbridge branch of Jigsaw (Fig. 7a) we as 'actors' arrive into a shop where we are flanked by potential costumes, which line the side walls like Cullisses in a stage set. Alongside the rear wall, changing bays are set in the form of theatre boxes, while upstairs, potential 'actors' emerge from their cubicles onto the 'stage' and rehearse their role within their chosen costume.

On entering Jigsaw, a large golden column stretches from side to side framing an extravagant amount of space, covering the window of two floors, in which what you can see from the street is the front of a stage, which invites you in to lose yourself in the enacting of another role.

Access to the 2nd floor is reached by a central, wide, oval, spiral staircase (in the 17th century, the taste for monumental staircases came from the theatre). Neo-Baroque drapery can be found around framed areas; edges of the stage of changing rooms and in entrance windows. Lighting comes from an overhead intricate source of tailed metal spirals, which project dispersed lights, reflecting a golden, opulent coloured light source.

In the foreground of Fig. 7b, positioned mannequins surrounded by a semi-circle wall, extend the idea of rehearsal as they tend to put across the idea that they are involved in the role-playing of a theatrical occasion.

Also relevant to Baroque theatricality is the similarity between the dress and posture of early 17th century thespians and the pose, ruffled collar and puffed sleeves of the twin mannequins on the left hand side of Fig. 7b). Scattered around the shop, mannequins exchange roles with blue glass variants, half torso, half vase and the theme of body and vessels appears also in a ceiling frieze.

The theatre element is *recurrent within Coates' work* (the theatre *is* also, relevantly, the most influential artform within the Baroque age). The accessible and extravagant visually metaphoric nature is used to produce a distinct character by theatrically aligning the experience within the build up.

Everything is a stage set in which Coates insists on making its both actors and spectators.

In the Knightsbridge branch of Ilgenn (fig. 7a) *we go 'backstage' into a room where we are flanked by potential costumes, which line the side walls like Cellisses in a stage set. Alongside the rear wall, changing bays are set in the form of theatre boxes, while upstairs, potential 'actors' emerge from their cubicles onto the 'stage' and rehearse their role within their chosen costume.*

On entering Ilgenn, a large golden column stretches from sub to side leaving an extravagant amount of space, covering the window of two floors, in which what you can see from the street is the front of a stage, which invites you to lose yourself in the enacting of another role.

Access to the 2nd floor is reached by a central, wide, oval, spiral staircase in the 17th century, the basis for monumental staircases come from the theatre. Non-Baroque drapery can be found around framed areas, edges of the stage or changing rooms and in entrance windows. Lighting comes from an overhead indirate source of tailed metal spirals, which project dispersed lights, reflecting a golden equilibrium polarised light source.

In the background of fig. 7b, positioned mannequins surrounded by a commercial wall, extend the idea of rehearsal as they tend to put across the idea that they are involved in the role playing of a theatrical occasion.

Also relevant to Baroque theatricality is the similarity between the dress and gesture of early 17th century theaters and the poses, radial collar and pulled sleeves of the twin mannequins on the left hand side of fig. 7b. Scattered around the shop, mannequins exchange roles with blue glass variants, half torso, half vase and the theme of body and vessels appears also in a cutting lines.

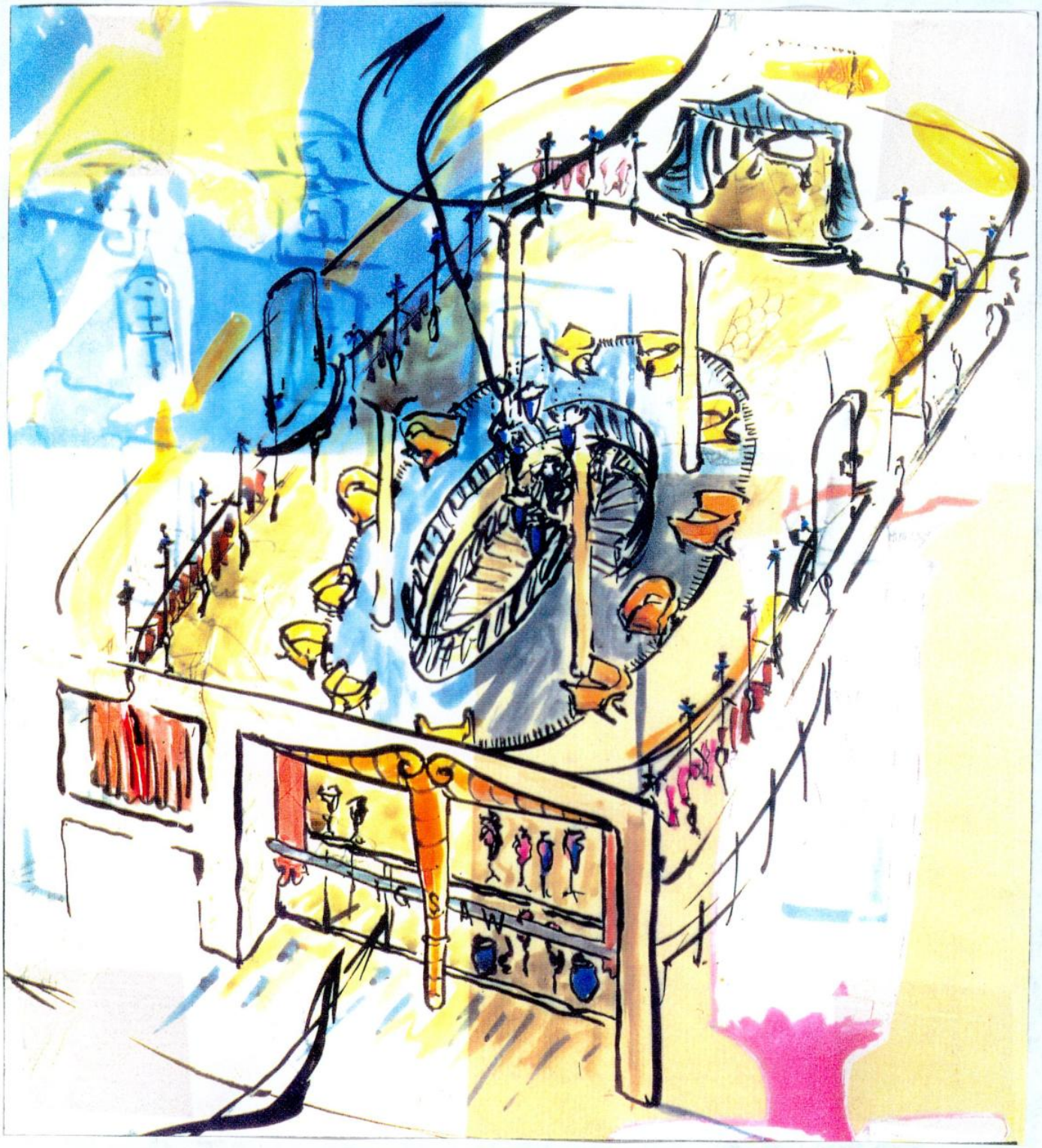


Fig. 7(a) - Drawn Impression of Jigsaw.

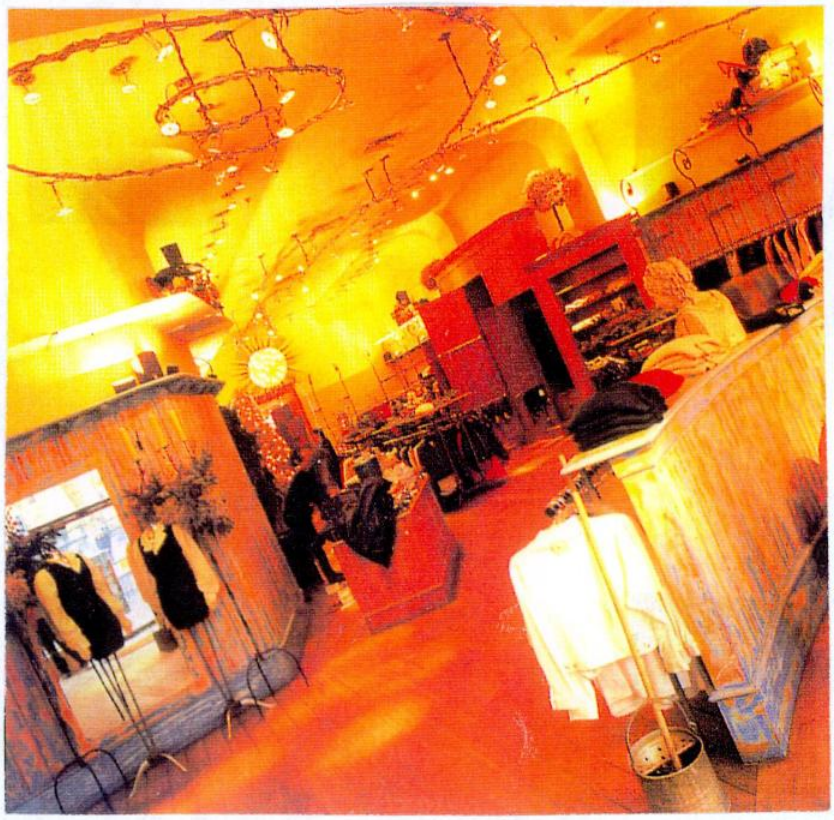


Fig. 7(b) - Interior View of Shop.

Fig. 7(c) - Interior Drawn Impression.

The recurrent theme of the body as 'self' and 'other' as 'actual' and 'virtual' suggests a similarity to the Baroque characteristic of theatricality, where artforms transforms audiences into another dimension into the role-playing of an actor's world.

Within Jigsaw, his narrative architectural feedback is the theatrical representation of 'other' and 'virtual' reacting with the actual vitality of buying and selling bodily clothing.

> **"Floating between high and low culture, one step removed from events by a giddy foppish sensibility. (Crysler, 1989, p.34)**

Coates brings a theatricality into the modern everyday living by integrating old references with contemporary cultural images, creating a new and thoroughly exciting sensation, transcending the ordinary person into an uplifting atmosphere created by expressive surroundings within the building's space.

> **"Camp introduced a new standard: artifice as ideal theatricality. Could there be a better description of NATO?" (Crysler, 1989. P.34).**

In the 17th century architecture was the result of experimentation and clever manipulation created by architects who knew exactly the aesthetic and expressive needs of their present society*[3]. Their use of variations in surface qualities, elaborate ornamentation within an impressive amount of space and rejection of simple regular forms, seems to echo the characteristics of Nigel Coates architecture.

As Baroque is a highly visual expressive artform and with 'camp' as a major component to the aesthetic value of its spirit, it is true to say that NATO, by its more imaginative solution and priority of visual sensation, has proved itself under the heading of Neo-Baroque in this post-modern climate.

[3] *"Space, it implied, is the existential condensation of events, life and action and within the radius of our interactions and transactions. Space is not defined by rational containment and division, it is enacted and transformed by deed and narrative, tools and props". (Hatton, 1986, p.102).*
This idea of NATO architect suggests a connection with Bernini's theory in the 17th century of treating 'space as an environment' rather than a framework.

The recurrent theme of the body as 'self' and 'other' as 'actual' and 'virtual' suggests a similarity to the Baroque characteristic of the mutually autonomous participatory audiences into another dimension into the role-playing of an actor/avatar.

Within figures, his narrative architectural feedback is the theatrical representation of 'other' and 'virtual' reacting with the actual vitality of living and acting body clothing.

"Dancing between high and low culture, one step removed from crafts by a giddy topical sensibility" (Crysler, 1989, p.74)

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"Camp introduced a new standard artifice as ideal theatricality. Could there be a better description of NATOP?" (Crysler, 1989, P34).

In his, NATOP contemporary architecture was the result of expert imitation and clever manipulation created by architects who knew exactly the instincts and expectations of their present society. "Camp" has use of artificial insincere qualities, elaborate ornamentation within an impressive amount of space and rejection of simple regular forms, seems to echo the characteristics of Nagel's conservatifacture.

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"Camp is a mode, a sensibility, a quality of culture, a way of seeing and of making things, a way of feeling, of judgement, of taste, of sensibility, of intelligence, of passion, of culture. Camp is a quality of culture, and of perception. (Sontag, p. 102)
Sontag's Notes on Camp suggests a close link with Gaudi's theory of the Architecture of Feeling, particularly in the use of the sensuous.

CHAPTER 5

BAROQUE IN PETER GREENAWAY "THE COOK, THE THIEF, HIS WIFE & HER LOVER"

Peter Greenaway knew at the age of 12 that he wanted to be a painter and, when beginning his artistic career, his ambition was to focus on landscapes. With a contemporary interpretation of traditional ideas of landscape painting, he united an extreme modernism with a deep attraction to tradition.

He began then by using a camera instead of a brush, gathering images of the english landscape into his first major canvas - "The Draughtsman's Contract".

His films and documentary works continued to spread out over two decades beginning with "The Draughtsman's Contract" (1982), "A Zero and Two Noughts" (1986), "The Belly of an Architect" (1987), "Drowning by No's" (1988), "The Cook, the Thief, his Wife and her Lover" (1989), "Prospero's Book" (1991) and, most recently, "The Baby of Macon". (Walsh, 1993, p.18).

In all his cinematic works he combined citations within a contemporary manner, crossing over the phenomenon of painting into films of up to 2-3 hours long. Canvases in which he strives to achieve a response similar to one a viewer gives a painting in a gallery.

"I am a painter working in cinema .....
I feel that painting is the supreme visual image - making process".
(Steinmetz, 1995. p.98)

Greenaway can be seen as an artist in a neo-Baroque, post-modern climate as he is a constant experimenter and visual interpreter.

> **"What makes it different to work with Peter is that he is always toying with all the images in the films". (Murphy, 1993, p.25).**

His production of films combine techniques from various phenomenons:- photography, painting, theatre, video, etc, creating works which reverse and develop traits of other genres, mixing up many categories together as his knowledge allows him.

> **"His compulsion to put absolutely everything into his films and exhibitions - all the arts, all science, all four elements, astrology, medicine, magic, religion, class, evolution, animals, insects, music from Bach to Eno, painting from Dörer to Kitaj". (Walsh, 1993, p.21).**

Baroque characteristics re-appear constantly within Greenaway's work, with direct references from 17th century phenomenons appearing in the visual aspect of his films and the actual writing of the story lines. Mannerist and Jacobean traits are equally present in his films by the super-imposing of meanings, verbal conceits, visual plays and chilling sardonic humour.

The importance of the visual element in his films and exhibitions is shown in how he leads the spectators through labyrinths of visual information. He uses his visual images, not primarily to entertain, but to alert, provoke and penetrate.

> **"I do believe that cinema should be provocative and I do think it should push form and content and examine sensitive areas".**
>
> **(Tran, 1993, p.25)**

In 1989 with the release of "The Cook, the Thief, his Wife and her Lover", he pushed sensitive areas and created many extreme reactions. In London it broke all box office records in the theatre, running for 18-20 weeks (Tran, 1991, p.22), while at the press preview in America, several members of the audience walked out in protest against the opening scene (Walsh, 1993, p.18).

Greenaway can be seen as an artist in a neo-Baroque, post-modern culture as he is a constant experimenter and visual interpreter.

> **"What makes it difficult to work with Peter is that he is always toying with all the images in the films". (Murphy, 1993, p.25).**

The production of films combine techniques from various philosophies - photography, painting, theatre, video, etc. creating works which review and develop many other genres, mixing up many categories by their sheer knowledge, albeit bias.

> **"His compulsion to put absolutely everything into his films and exhibitions - all the arts, all science, all four elements, astrology, medicine, magic, religion, class, evolution, animals, insects, music from Bach to Eno, painting from Lorrain to Klimt". (Walsh, 1993, p.27).**

Bias is an obsession which appears constantly within Greenaway's work, with direct references from 17th century phenomenons appearing in the visual aspect of his films and the actual writing of the story lines. Shakespeare and Jacobean texts are equally present in his films by the super-imposing of meanings, verbal conceits, visual plays and chilling sardonic humour.

The importance of the visual element in his films and exhibitions is shown in how he leads the spectators through labyrinths of visual information. He uses his visual images, not ordinarily to entertain, but to alert, provoke and persuade.

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This response in America was due because of the difference of aesthetic appreciation between the audience and Greenaway who was a creative artist trying to promote a drama which would be more suitable for an audience drawn by the visual and explicit excess of the theatre.

> **"But I think society very often considers that intellectual, complicated, sophisticated ideas about drama are legitimate in theatre, but somehow not legitimate in cinema, which I find very strange".**
>
> **(Tran, 1991, p.25)**

One of the reasons Greenaway wrote 'The Cook' was his anger at the Thatcherite condition. This provoked him to create the character, Albert speaker, to embody it. 'The Cook', however, rather than being a political film, is more to do with aesthetic whereby creating strong images using various techniques, recognised in painting and theatre, Greenaway found he could reflect the narrative through an emphasised visual sensation, while toying with the real and the theatrical.

The idea of the technical aspect of the theatre is quite dominant within "The Cook". The film opens with two ushers openings curtains onto a view of a car park. The camera moves, taking a long shot, looking down on the violent actions of the film, which happens at the centre of the frame. With the actors being flanked by two vans. With left and right hand side edges of frame voided in black, we are given the impression that we are looking onto a stage.

> **"I artificially accentuate the frame, indicating a specific subjectivity - either a Baroque frame or a technological frame". (McBride, 1992, p.54)**

In this quote, Greenaway explains how he uses the camera in his other film - "Prospero's Book". It suggests how he uses the camera as a way of viewing situations and heightening theatrical atmospheres.

'The Cook' is set within areas (kitchen, dining-room, the city, etc) of large backdrops of wide space, familiar to the grandness of an actual theatre stage set. The camera's long takes view a background and foreground, recording the movements of the characters as they pass from one setting to another.

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One of the reasons Greenaway wrote "The Cook" was his anger at the Thatcherite condition. This provoked him to create the character, Albert who also is mindless. "The Cook", however, rather than being a political film, is more to do with aesthetic violence creating strong images using various techniques, recognised in painting and theatre. Greenaway found he could reflect the narrative through an emphasised visual sensation, while loving with the real and the theatrical.

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"I artificially accentuate the frame, indicating a specific subjectivity - either a Baroque frame or a technological frame". (McGinn, 1992, p.34)

In this quote, Greenaway explains how he uses the camera in his other film - "Drowning Blonde". It suggests how he uses the camera as a way of showing situations and heightening theatrical atmospheres.

The "cook" is set within areas (kitchen, dining-room, the city, etc) of large backdrops of wide space, familiar to the grandness of an actual theatre stage set. The camera's long takes view a background and foreground, recording the movements of the characters as they pass from one setting to another.

A scene where Michael and Georgie creep by people who conveniently do not see them echoes a convention used in the theatre because of the limited space on the stage. Other theatrical conventions include the off-scene device, where behind windows of settings, actor's silhouettes and gestures are enlarged with the sound of their voices.

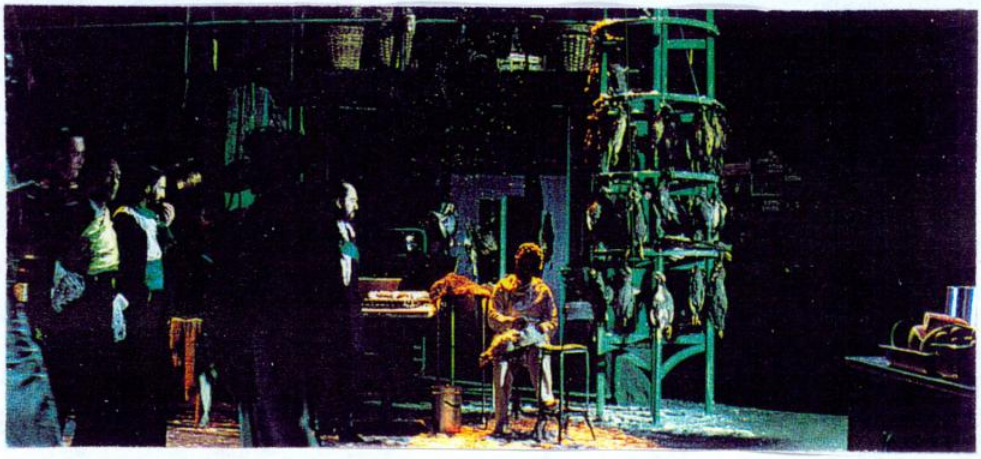
As the main cast move from room to room the colours of their clothing correspond to the changing colours of the room. Each room is allocated a metaphorical colour - (Fig. 1a & 1b) green for the kitchen representing the 18th century's savagery and poverty, (Fig. 2) red for the dining room with its opulent fabrics, elaborate table settings, porcelain and drapery of the 19th century and the modern industrial wealth of the 20th century is reflected on the clinical, futuristic whiteness of the lavatory.

> **"Colour gives strength to the image you are going to make", "we always want to make the images stronger than real life. I think cinema is larger than life". (Murphy, 1993, p.25).**

The Dutch production design team, Jan Roelfs and Bern Van Os are responsible with Greenaway for the building of each scene set, which are created daily with additional effects integrated from various phenomenons, making the film look more visually theatrical than realistic.

As colours change with each period room, so costumes are interweaving with the cast between periods of 17th century to the 20th century - from frock coats, high heeled boots and frilled cuffs of the 17th century to the simply structured A Line dress of the 20th century.

John Paul Gaultier, known for his 20th century designer sensibility, designed many extravagant and over-the-top costumes for the film. The most striking costume is worn by Georgina in the last scene, where she presents Albert with her lover's cooked corpse. She wears a long black veil which is supported by a servant girl, who seems to be able to forecast and navigate the rhythm of Helen's movement, giving us the impression that every movement has been rehearsed by the actual characters themselves.



Figs. 1(a) & 1(b) - Kitchen Scenes of Film.

Fig. 2 - Dining-Room Scene of Film

Greenaway, by structuring his films with the editing of music, enhances the visual impact by linking the music's rhythm with that of the actions of the actors. Before a script is written, musician Michael Nyman and himself, "discuss structured in terms of musical perceptions". (McBride, 1992, p.57).

Greenaway's concern is to find musical structures and ideas which widen the cinematic vocabulary and it is within Baroque music that he finds a favourable organisation of variations and repetitive cycles.

With the singing of the young impoverished 'choir' boy in the foreground of the kitchen, we are given the impression of that in an opera, where the singing becomes the main focal point and enhancer of the present atmosphere.

"The Cook" is a homage to great artists, from Mantegna to Velasquez, Manet to Zurbaran, Chardin to Soutine, out first and foremost to great 17th century Dutch painters of still life.

> **"Each frame is an old master painting; curtained portals and flanking attendants make pomp of entrances and exits: the thundering of opening and closing doors echoes lingeringly down the long corridor of the films aesthetic distance". (Sliverthorn, 1990, p.22).**

Each scene can be conceived as it is a painting. In the dining room, for example, the group of men dressed in red sashes (Fig. 2a & 2b), black coats and white cuffed shirts, sit round an elegantly displayed table in an elaborate setting, resembling that of a group portraiture done by Northern Baroque artists such as Franz Hals or Rembrandt. The men's boorish behaviour and excessive eating and drinking pattern, signifies the same type of merry-making ritual which existed as forms of entertainment in the 17th century social climate.

Carravaggio seems to be echoed through the film, within the composition of frames and also the techniques of lighting. His compositional techniques are relevant in Greenaway's opening scenes, where the camera zooms into the actual gestural movement of the brutal actions of 'the thief and his gang'. Another example of this is in the kitchen where the camera zooms into the detail of the chef's plucking actions.

Greenaway's concern is to find musical structures and ideas which widen the cinematic vocabulary, and it is within Baroque music that he finds a favourable organisation of variations and repetitive cycles.

With the singing of the young impoverished choir boy in the foreground of the painting, we are given the impression of that in an opera where the singing becomes the main focal point and enhancer of the present dramatic story.

'The Cook' is a homage to great artists from Mantegna to Velazquez, Manet to Rembrandt, Chardin to Soutine, out first and foremost to great 17th century Dutch painters of still life.

'Each frame is an old master painting: cluttered portals and flanking attendants make pomp of entrances and exits; the thundering of opening and closing doors echoes lingeringly down the long corridor of the films aesthetic distance". (Silverthorn, 1990, p.22).

Cinematography can be conceived as if it is a painting. In the dining room, for example, the group of men dressed in red satins (Fig. 2a & 2b), black coats and white cotton shirts, sit round an elegantly displayed table in an elaborate setting, resembling that of a group portraiture done by Northern Baroque artists such as Frans Hals or Rembrandt. The men's boorish behaviour and excessive eating and drinking pattern, signifies the same type of merry-making mood which colored as forms of entertainment in the 17th century social climate.

Chiaroscuro seems to be colored through the film, within the composition of frames and also the techniques of lighting. The compositional techniques are relevant in Greenaway's opening scenes, where the camera zooms into the actual gestural movements of the brutal actions of the thief and his gang. Another example of this is in the kitchen where the camera zooms into the detail of the chef's plucking actions.

Figs. 2(a) & 2(b) - Views of Table Scene.

Fig. 3 - Banquet of the Offices of St. George Civic Guard Company. 1616. Canvas 69 x 127.5". Haarlem Franz Hals Museum.

The colouring and effects of lighting also seem to be identical to those in Carravaggio influenced paintings. The focusing of strong light onto the naked bodies of the lovers when they talk for the first time, gives them more volume and form, lifting them from the darkness of the contrasting background.

> **"All these delightful things about painting which concern surface are highly legitimate looks and should not be debarked. The delight of a Rembrandt painting is often in its surface. I try to get those things into cinema - much to the great irritation of some people".**
>
> **(McBride, 1992, p.54)**

Greenaway, primarily as a painter who innovatively regurgitates qualities of painting into the cinema, tends to use the effect of visual sensations rather than letting narrative dictate the structure of his films.

> **"I'd like to imagine that the 20th century has freed image-making from narrative text, but I still have serious doubts about it".**
>
> **(McBride, 1992, p.52)**

He prefers to use systems of images which he suggests are more universal rather than narrative structures which last for a certain length of time, creating ideas based on personal opinions rather than reasons.

> **"I distrust narrative and I have a very facile ability to write stories".**
>
> **(McBride, 1992, p.52)**

He feels that the network which exists in painting, where everything is homaged, quoted or reprised, is not by many people, accepting in the cinema.

> **"Cinema is about a hundred years old, which is roughly the same duration as the golden age of Dutch painting, or of Florence Fresco painting - so maybe we have come to the end of a particular cycle, and a new cycle in cinema is emerging". (McBride, 1992, p.52).**

In the quote above, however, he still suggests that cinema is still a young and developing artform, in which image-making can become more innovative and expressive, by the help of a wider graphic ability.

The colouring and effects of lighting also seem to be identical to those in Caravaggio influenced paintings. The focusing of strong light onto the naked bodies of the lovers when they talk for the first time gives them more volume and soon, lifting them from the darkness of the contrasting background.

"All these delightful things about painting which concern surface are highly legitimate tools and should not be debarked. The delight of a Rembrandt painting is often in its surface. I try to get those things into cinema - much to the great irritation of some people".

(McBride, 1992, p.51)

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In the quote above, however he still suggests that cinema is still a young and developing medium, in which image-making can become more innovative and expressive, by the help of a wider graphic ability.

"I sometimes feel that we're almost at the beginning of a new revolution in visual literacy". (McBride, 1992, p.52).

Within 'The World of Peter Greenaway', Leon Steinmetz asks the question of 'The Cook'. "Is it just a burlesque, classic, low art?". He replies, "Yes and no. Yes in its content and no in its imagery, because visually this work is one of the most refined and sophisticated examples of high art".

Greenaway's work 'The Cook' is certainly not an average cinematic piece of work. The narrative is only weaker than the visual content, because of the emphasis on and quality of the imagery as the prime communicator.

17th century Baroque was a new rhetoric form of art, which aimed at arousing astonishment, at creating strongly emotional effects, at imposing them instantaneously even abruptly at their audience. Greenaway has succeeded to achieve this through many characteristics related to the Baroque phenomenon within the present culture. By taking both old and contemporary references, developing one medium into another and by emphasizing the use of theatrical devices, he produces cinematic work which represents in contemporary culture, the importance of visual sensation, immediately and theatrically within a Neo-Baroque climate.

CHAPTER 6

ANGUS MCBEAN AND BAROQUE INFLUENCES

"In photography he creates dignity, beauty and magic".

(Woodhouse, 1982, p.x)

Lord Snowdon was a great admirer of Angus McBean and for what McBean gave to the theatre as a photographer.

From the 30's to the 50's McBean photographed just about every major west-end theatre production, however, he is better known for his photographic documenting of famous theatre and film stars of that era, in which he innovatively produced a vast amount of Baroque 'surrealistic style' portraits.

It was in this fantastical style that has endeared him to a younger generation, in which in the early 80's, with the launch of his two books, marked the revival and the popularity of his work. The widespread significance of his work within contemporary culture, is reflected in the last quarter of the 20th century. Where the romantic and fantastic photographic image is commonly found in the advertising of consumer products.

His inventiveness and experimentation with the camera, and the combining of elements from different mediums, provided his work with a unique and exciting appearance, releasing photography from previous restraints, suggesting the relevance to Baroque, in which artforms are challenged with the use of variations, combinations and complex plans, creating innovative and impressive new compositions.

CHAPTER 6

A N G U S M c B I A N

A N D

B A R O q u e I N V I T A T I O N S

"In photography, he creates dignity, beauty and magic".

(Woodhouse, 1982, p.7)

Lord snowdon was a great admirer of Angus McBean and for a time Vogue gave to the theatre as a photographer.

From the 30's to the 50's McBean photographed just about every major West-end theatre production, however, he is better known for his photographic documenting of famous theatre and film stars of that era, in which he more always produced a vast amount of bizarre 'surrealistic style' portraits.

It was in the antidotical sy le that has endeared him to a younger generation, in which in the early 60's, with the launch of his two books, marked the revival and the popularity of his work. The widespread significance of his work within contemporary culture, is reflected in the last quarter of the 20th century. It here the romantic and fantastic photographic image is commonly found in the advertising of consumer products.

His inventiveness and experimentation with the camera, and the combining of elements from different mediums, provided his work with a unique and exciting appearance releasing photography from previous restraints, suggesting the relevance to Baroque, in which artforms are challenged with the use of variations, combinations and complex plans, creating innovative and impressive new compositions.

McBean's work, which crosses outside the boundaries of photography into different phenomena, suggests how Baroque remains to be seen, within this century and most significantly in the present cultural climate as characteristics of an aesthetic want within our society.

At the age of 21, Angus McBean moved up to London from Wales with his family, after the early death of his father. He took a job in the antiques department in Liberty's and devoted his spare time to photography, mask-making and theatre-going. He was always a great fan of the theatre and as a youngster had helped with theatre props and costumes within amateur dramatics.

Eventually he gave up his job and became recognised as a maker of theatrical props. His work there consisted of scenery making and mask-making for both fashionable interiors and theatre performances and he began to hold small exhibitions.

His first photographic commission, in 1936 at the age of 32, was offered by Ivor Novello who was so impressed by the romantic photographs McBean took in order to make the masks, that he commissioned him to take a set of production photographs as well.

McBean proved himself, making a new career in photography which was greatly helped by the stage and studio performances which Vivienne Leigh allowed him to portray through the love affair she had with his camera.

With a foundation of an innate talent for taking photographs, McBean's interest in creating surreal images within photography was aroused after taking note of the paintings by the surrealist William Acton.

> **"I then got the ideas that I could make surreal photographs. I mean by that, that I could put things together, things which did not belong together." (Gross, 1989, p.8).**

His first use of surrealism in his photography was used for a magazine, "The Sketch", in which he placed a star actress Beatrix Lehman among a false stage set created out of taffeta. The image proved successful in that McBean was asked to produce an image of an actress per week for the magazine.

With the growing popularity of his photography and the success of his innovative images, he inherited the names of "the Darkroom Dali", and "Dali of the Valleys".

"It has been said that I invented surrealism in photography and that I had a great influence on young people's work". (Gross, 1989, p.8).

The most famous of his surreal productions was one of Audrey Hepburn (Fig. 1), who was used for a beauty product advertisement. This introduced the fantastical element of surrealism to advertising.

At the time he was photographing at Cambridge theatre and chose her from a chorus line, because of her looks. He found that her wide-set eyes avoided direct contact with the camera, making us more aware of her presence.

"She typified his preference for the ingenue or the gamine."
(Light, 1994, p.29)

McBean very rarely like to use female figures in full length, he preferred the sexually innocent look.

"Surrealism allowed him to cut off breasts and hips while punning on the idea of the statuesque." (Light, 1994, p.29).

He placed Hepburn's torso peering out of a pile of sand, surrounding her with scattered miniature columns. This surreal landscape, like the setting of a stage, emphasised that its creation inhabited another world, transforming the spectator into a visually excessive scenario which relates to the Baroque compress which steals imagery from reality and enters it back into the artificial.

With Nigel Coates, his buildings were his theatres to McBean, his camera was his theatre. He commanded his subjects to act for the camera for which he would provide them with sets in which to perform. This is where his line of photography crossed into his love of theatre.

With the growing popularity of his photography and the success of his innovative images, he inherited the names of 'the Darkroom Dali', and 'Dali of the Valley'.

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Fig. 1 - Audrey Hepburn (1951).

His surreal portraits were worked out days in advance of the subject's arrival. Sets were built with the combination of unorthodox materials, such as wood, plaster, paint, cotton-wool and sand. Backdrops were painted by an artist friend L. Roy Hobdell, an underrated romantic painter.

He developed his tricks with montage and multiple-exposure, manipulating the negatives and prints, creating unusual compositions of combined references.

McBean paid great attention to the effects of lighting and it was through his use of high contrasts and a variety of depth in half-tones, that created the impressive dramaticness to the features of his subjects. These ideas may be reverted back to 17th century Baroque painting where the same techniques of lighting were used to create realism and effective immediacy.

Fig 2. of Vivienne Leigh is one of McBean's most liked pieces. The light and the hat framing her profile, the exaggerated whiteness and mattness of her skin and the flawlessness of her features, suggests the theatricality of the actor's face, suggesting it as a mask. As well as relying on lighting, he relied on his instinctive understanding of the human head and its sculptural possibilities gained from his work as a modeller. He used lighting to create different illusions and manipulations of features and by this combining of knowledge from various fields, McBean created a more sophisticated and effective imagery.

Fig 3. shows an example of how he combined these aspects, creating an image as if the actress is emerging from clay. His use of strong contrasts of lighting show certain Baroque painting quality of strong dramatic darkness of blacks and a mannerist command of shadows.

"You take all the real lines and leave in artificial ones."

(Woodhouse, 19485, p.6)

McBean was a super salesman. He sold icons. These images were not only for personal friendships or relationships of subjects, but were to be "sold" in the general public. McBean made his stars immortal.

The surreal portraits were worked out days in advance of the subject's arrival. Sets were built with the combination of unorthodox materials, such as wood, plastic paint, cotton-wool and sand. Backdrops were painted by an artist friend I. Roy Holdcroft, an underrated romantic painter.

He developed his tricks with montage and multiple-exposure, manipulating the negatives and prints, creating unusual compositions of combined reference.

Aldean paid great attention to the effects of lighting and it was through his use of high contrasts and a variety of depth in half-tones, that created the impressive dramatic tones to the features of his subjects. These ideas may be traced back to 17th century Baroque paintings where the same techniques of lighting were used to create realism and effective immediacy.

Fig 2 of Vivienne Leigh is one of Aldean's most lilted pieces. The light and the bat framing her profile, the exaggerated whiteness and matteness of her skin and the flaw lessness of her features, suggests the theatricality of the actor's face, suggesting it as a mask. As well as relying on lighting, he relied on his instinctive understanding of the human head and its sculptural possibilities gained from his work as a modeller. He used lighting to create different illusions and manipulations of features and by this combining of knowledge from various fields, Aldean created a more sophisticated and effective imagery.

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Aldean was a super salesman. He sold icons. These images were not only for personal friendships or relationships of subjects, but were to be "sold" to the general public. Aldean made his stars immortal.

Fig. 2 - Vivienne Leigh (1938).

Fig. 3 - Image of Rene Ray (1938).

His camera was a box of make-believe where he considered the act of taking pictures to be achieved with theatrical flourish and glamour.

> **"For running through his work is what Jack Babuscio in Richard Dyer's Gays and film has called a "gay sensibility", with its four features of camp: irony, theatricality, humour, aestheticism."**
>
> **(Light, 1994, p.30)**

His photography is purely a visually emphasised work of art, it is a "camp" sensation, it is part of the Baroque phenomenon. As he has insisted; his inventiveness with the camera is its capacity for trickery and fun and his love of visual puns.

His photography is the essence of fantasy and without fantasy, there would exist no Baroque artforms. Baroque through all its exploration, exaggeration and visual emphasis, is the delight in the grandeur of artistic excessiveness.

CONCLUSION

Greenaway, McBean and Coates all belong to different categories of art but all hold the basic characteristics relevant within the Neo-Baroque climate. Each play within the boundaries of both high and low culture, where they can be seen as global artists. The global artist finds himself in a similar situation to the artist of the Baroque:

> **"He is caught in the conflict on one hand trying to respond to the masses while on the other hand maintaining his appeal to the institutions of power and money and he has to negotiate permanently between the two spheres". (Klaus Ottman, 1987, p.91).**

The above three artists can be seen in this light because of how they transport art into the sphere of consumption, for example: Coates bring a theatrical, imaginative form of architecture into average, everyday functional buildings, the idea of McBean's fantastical and romantic imagery has been used in advertising to help sell products and the production of Greenaway's highly sophisticated visual works in mainstream cinema.

Baroque is a purely rhetoric form of art, where the camp prevailment of appearance and manner over truth exists, referring to the hypnotic importance of visual sensation in present culture, where everything likewise in the theatre is accentuated purely for effect.

The theatre has remained to exist as the most influential artform within Baroque and is relevant in Greenaway's film devices, in the layout and theoretical architecture of Coates and McBean's dramatic imagery which capture the fantasy of theatre and film.

In the 17th century, Baroque artists combined artforms, taking their influence from the theatre, where there was a similar incorporating of various forms of art.

Within all three artists mentioned, each have experimented between the boundaries of artforms; Greenaway diverted from painting into film using theatrical devices; McBean used a theme which was initially used in painting and in photography using sculptural and theatrical knowledge; and Coates with the creation of NATO, innovatively turned the idea of architectural drawings into the visual communicability of that within a gallery context.

In the present climate of post modernism there are no set rules. Everything goes and by the combining element, evident in this, complexity evolves within the new structure created. (In the 17th century complex plans were created by the combining and variations of artforms).

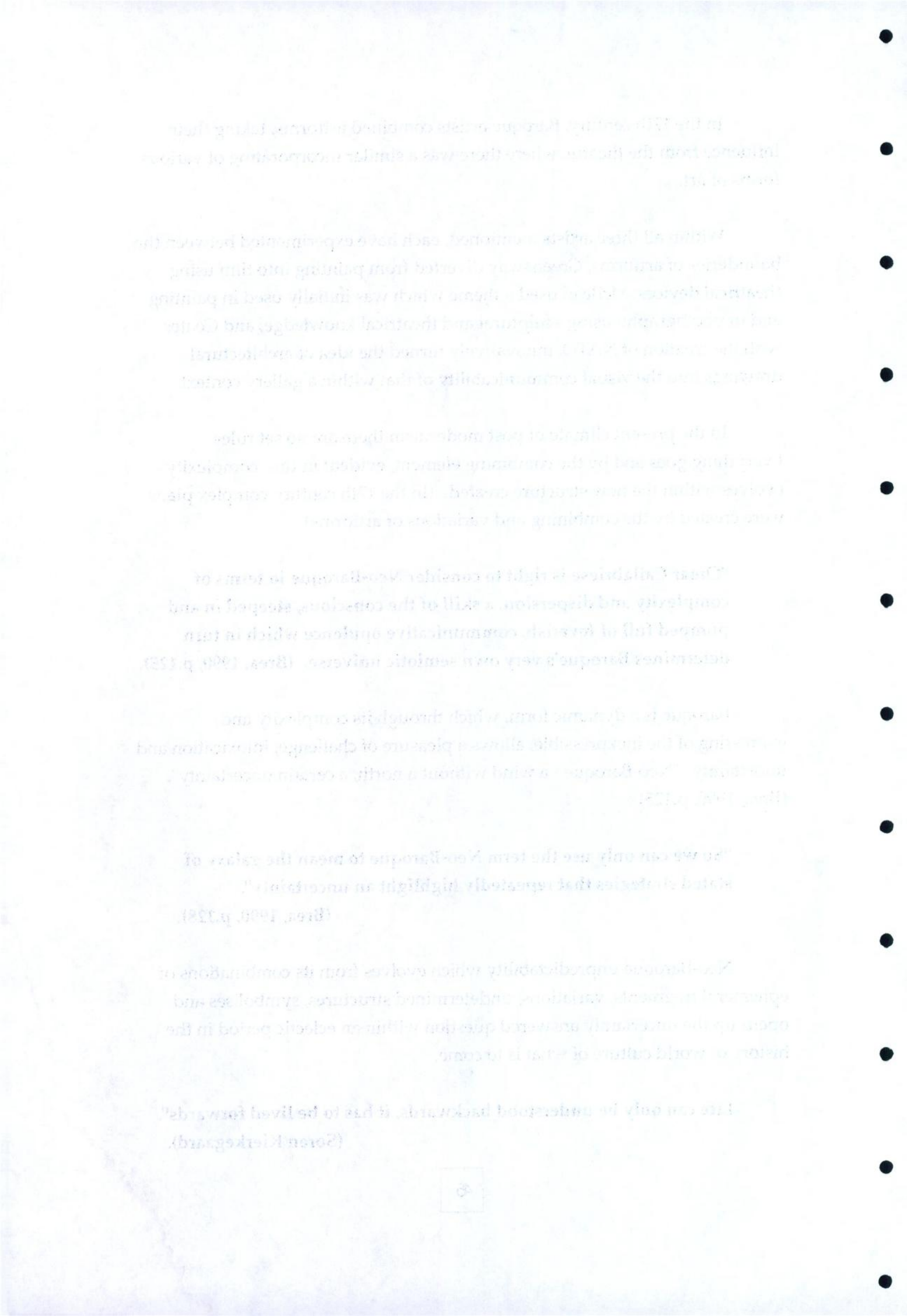
> **"Omar Cailabriese is right to consider Neo-Baroque in terms of complexity and dispersion, a skill of the conscious, steeped in and pumped full of feverish, communicative opulence which in turn determines Baroque's very own semiotic universe. (Brea, 1990, p.125).**

Baroque is a dynamic form, which through its complexity and expressing of the inexpressible, allows a pleasure of challenge, intoxication and uncertainty. "Neo-Baroque - a wind without a north, a certain uncertainty". (Brea, 1990, p.125).

> **"So we can only use the term Neo-Baroque to mean the galaxy of stated strategies that repeatedly highlight an uncertainty".**
>
> **(Brea, 1990, p.128).**

Neo-Baroque unpredictability which evolves from its combinations of ephemeral fragments, variations, undetermined structures, symbolises and opens up the uncertainly answered question within an eclectic period in the history of world culture of what is to come.

> **Life can only be understood backwards, it has to be lived forwards".**
>
> **(Søren Kierkegaard).**



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