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INTRODUCTION

The German poet Rainer Maria Rilke credited Auguste Rodin with 'rescuing sculpture from the degradation of the superficial, cheap and comfortable metier of 19th Century Salon work' (1)

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine exactly how Rodin revised late 19th Century Sculpture and to determine what legacy he bequeathed to successive generations of emerging artists.

The essay progresses to contrast the lack of innovative sculpture available with the wealth of painting material around this period. Rodin is compared to Impressionist Painters in this regard.

The thesis then proceeds to look at the spatial developments which began to emerge in Sculpture with a brief introduction to Alexander Archipenko. This artist, although working from within the essentially conservative constraints of bronze medium and with the female figure as subject totally revolutionised the accepted notion of the function of space. This leads into the introduction of 'spirituality' as an active concern in 20th Century work of art and highlights the battle of the dominance of line and form as composition elements in painting and sculpture.

Finally, in the concluding section, I endeavour to mention the Russian Avant-Garde and their relationship with Western Europe. I hope to elaborate on Archipenko and his innovative works.

AUGUSTE RODIN

Contrary to the rapid strides taken in the field of painting, late 19th Century Sculpture was dragging its heels in a quagmire of academic tradition. In France it took an artist like Rodin to introduce a few basic changes into the discipline. Rodin began by deploring the academic approach which treated figurative groups as if they were bas-reliefs, only to be viewed from a single vantage point. He discussed this lack of utilisation of space by his academic forefathers and put forward his own views for the full realisation of the object in space.

Drawing on a comparison between Sculpture and Painting to condemn the inaccuries of academic tradition he states;
'...the academic sculptor treats a piece of sculpture like a picture; it has a wrong side and a right side' (1)

In stating the obvious, Rodin was actually destroying the misconception that sculpture had to be viewed only from one angle. This was an academic fixation which declared that only what was to be seen in front was important thus rendering all background as accessory, not an integral part of the overall structure.
Also, by bringing sculpture down to a more human level and asking the viewer to engage freely and experience the tactile qualities of the surface, Rodin was toppling adacemic sculpture from its lofty pedestal of superiority from which it had presided over the common masses for centuries.

R.M Rilke who was an avid admirer of Rodin acted as secretary to the artist for some time, he wrote about Rodin's achievements in Sculpture;

> There is above all the indescribably beautiful bronze portrait bust of the painter Jean-Paul-Laurens, which is perhaps the most beautiful thing in the Luxembourg Museum. The bust is penetrated by such deep feeling, there is tender modelling of the surface, it is so fine in carriage so intense in expression, so moved and so awake that it seems as if nature has taken this work out of the Sculptor's hands to claim it as one of her most beautiful possessions. The gleam and sparkle of metal that breaks like fire through the smoke black patina coating acts much to make perfect the unique beauty of this work (2)

Rodin wanted to introduce "vitalism" in his work. He was interested in this aspect of 'persistent movement' in sculpture, saying; 'different parts of a sculpture, represented at successive moments in time, give an illusion of actual motion.' He was preoccupied with capturing an inner likeness, which he felt radiated out into the exterior composition. He used maquettes and models for his larger works. He sketched from life-models moving freely about his studio, when seeing a pose or expression that he wanted, Rodin had the model freeze-frame it for him to draw. With this method he collected many differemt life sketches, each one capturing a fleeting glance or an inner mood in a physical yet static study.

He perceives a figurative piece as having four facets. Beginning initially by centering the main mass [clay] and proceeding to model the profiles seen from a three-quaterly angle. He then rotates his life-model and clay in turn modifying and refining his work by constantly comparing the two. Rodin then goes in turn to each of the remaining three sides using the same proceedure until all four angles are complete, finishing off by relating and refining the four outlines against each other. He says that 'since the human body has an infinite number of outlines, I do as many as I can or consider expedient'. (3)

Rodin pushed the concept of sculpture as matter, plastic mass, animated from within and radiating outwards. A good friend of his, Camille Mauclair published in 1905, some of Rodin's theories. Mauclair states that 'the study of movement has led him [Rodin] to give unlooked for qualities to the general outline and to produce works which may be viewed on all sides and which continually show a fresh and balanced aspect that explains the other aspects'.

Rilke describes Rodins work as the ' first fruit of a lifelong struggle to make sculpture structured not by anatomy or some imposed expressive purpose, but by the willed coherence of perception alone ' (4). This emphasis on man's ability to perceive the aesthetic value of a work of art was a recurring and developing theory in art appreciation at this time. Earlier in the 19th century, Lessing, [writing in a preparatory note for The Laocoon], states 'The ability to form in the mind an aesthetic object is a gift granted to man only, setting us apart from all other creatures.It is an ability that elevates man beyond the stage of immediate perception, above a close and immediate dependance on nature. Animal eyes are harder to deceive than human eyes; they see nothing but what they see; we on the other hand, are seduced by the imagination so that we believe we see even what we don't see ' (5)

Rodin tries to get at the essence of his figures in to the interior of his forms beyond the surface tactile material of his medium. Again Mauclair describes how Rodin preferred to work: 'by the profiles, in depth not by surfaces, always thinking of the few geometrical forms from which all nature proceeds, and to make perceptible in the case of an object studied, that is my criterion .....I go so far as to say that cubic truth is the the mistress of forms'. Rodin reinforced this conception with advice given him in his youth, from the sculptor Constant; 'when you do future sculptural work never perceive forms in the plane, but always in depth ...always consider a surface as the extremity of the volume, as if it were a smaller or larger point turned your direction ...'. (7) Rodin took this advice and applied this principle to the working of his figures; 'Instead of visualizing the different parts of the body as more or less plane surfaces, I imagined them to be a projection of internal volumes.... thus the truth of my figures; instead of being superficial, seem to grow from inside out, just as life itself'.

[Reinforcing once again the concept of sculpture as matter, plastic mass, animated from within and radiating outwards].

Rodin, unlike some late 19th & 20th century artists, was not a good writer he left no major literary works or Manifestos. We have to rely to a large degree on second-hand information or personal insights gleaned from friends and admirers who had noted and recorded these for posterity.
Nevertheless his artistic impact was felt if not always positively, by a younger generation of emerging artists working in western Europe at the turn of the 20th century. Among these was Constantin Brancusi [Rumanian 1876-1957]. Brancusi settled in Paris in 1904, and at the time was ambivalent towards Rodin who was well established and accepted as master of his profession by then.

William Tucker in his book Early Modern Sculpture devotes a full chapter to Brancusi's relationship with Rodin. Brancusi shared a similar background to Rodin, he had an isolated childhood and a lack of formal education. These factors helped him to become self-reliant. It was his strong willed character coupled with his ability to grasp the essential qualities of Rodin's work that helped him to develop as a sculptor. He studied at the Academy in Bucharest, from 1898-1902. There he was exposed to wood as a material in sculpture, combined with imported western style realism. This is in contrast to Rodin who had left the now decadent tradition of western sculpture behind.

Tucker mentions that although elements of Medardo Rosso's subject matter of woman & children; the effect of pathos; and the absorption of the features into the surface of the head, can be traced in Brancusi's work. it is Brancusi's sure and robust feeling for volume [that] set's his sculpture apart from Rosso's fragile shells with their singled privileged view. Brancusi's academic training enabled him to to combine 'patient, economic and detailed rendering of objective fact' with the 'bare and forthright tradition of woodwork' which he had already experienced in his native Romania.

Brancusi when he came to Paris, worked from the model at the Beaux-Arts, where he made several small heads and busts, including some portrait commissions. In 1906 he exhibited at the "Salon d'Automne" it was there that Rodin saw his work. R. Wittkower in his book 'Sculpture, process and principles' relates that Rodin tried to attract Brancusi to his studio, but Brancusi refused saying that; 'One cannot grow in the shadow of great trees' (8) Some conflict remains as to whether Brancusi actually accepted Rodin's offer, Tucker mentions that Brancusi 'possibly worked for a time in the master's studio, until he was released by the commission for The Prayer from Romania'. (9)

The sculpture work produced by Brancusi during his first 3 years, are modest enough but these early years were an opportunity for him to test himself against Rodin's standards. Brancusi is best recognised by his sculptural contributions to the realization of light. He was committed to direct carving claiming it as the 'true road to sculpture' he stuck by his convictions and in doing so, established himself as a pillar in the heroic age of sculpture.Yet a direct link between his 'post imitation of nature work- The Kiss 1908 and The Bird 1912 — with the procedures of Rodin, can be sensed.In his 'Kiss', there is no inteference with the cubic mass of the stone and yet the theme is unmistakably stated. Archaic carving proceedure is clearly evident in this work. Similarly the work ethic behind his Bird , draws on close associations with Rodin's abrasive process , and highly-polished surface finish which helps to create an uninterrupted, continuous, circular movement for the viewer's eye. Brancusi is, like Rodin, shape-concious, not wishing to create works that disturb their spatial environment but rather exalting integration of occupied space with fluidity of form.

Brancusi was not the first artist to adapt wood as a new medium. Gauguin and Derain had already turned to direct carving in wood and stone but the medium needed the trained discipline of a sculptor like Brancusi to exploit the full potential of the material. Wood offered the greatest variety of alternatives, and end-forms for Brancusi. He appreciated the extensive possibilities of the square and round column, and the direction of the grain. The suggestion of articulated forms inherent in the branching of the natural timber also stimulated Brancusi. Carving offered Brancusi the means to the definitive and unique final form for each sculpture. His first stone carvings were done in 1907 [the Prayer & Kiss] and 1913 saw his first wood-carving.

Brancusi's objective was similar but in direct contrast to Rodin accepted principles. He sought to isolate carving, as the fundamental determinant of sculpture, much in the same way that Rodin had elevated modelling to the same position some years previous. Brancusi's Prayer and Kiss both executed in 1907, are cornerstones in modern sculpture. The Kiss aside from being a model for Brancusi's later treatment of stone, is a symbolic sculpture, which marks the sculptor's departure from tradition. Yet in spite of it's conceptual completeness and it's apparent simplicity and predictibility, 'The Kiss' reveals, to a greater extent than The Prayer a naturalistic and affecionate concern for human detail. The two figures seem to be held together by a compressing force, rather than being just two halves of a block of stone. There is 'presence' rather than realism in this work. The Prayer is Brancusi's solution to the problem of containing the figure within a tight geometric structure. Prior to this work Brancusi was concerned with extending the total figure in clay. He struggled with this concept during his years at the Beaux-Arts. It was after Brancusi resolved this compositional problem, that he, was fully able to explore the 'material qualities of medium' free from the confinements of the complete human figure. At this stage Brancusi while acknowledging Rodin's discovery of 'material as the fundamental determinant' went his own distinct way.

Henry Moore remarked that
'since the Gothic, European sculpture has become overgrown with moss, weeds-all sorts of excrescences which completely conceal shape.... it has been Brancusi's mission to get rid of this overgrowth, and to make us once more shape-concious' (10)

Another aspect of Rodin's work was wholeheartedly embraced by Brancusi. This covered the fragmentary approach previously adapted by Rodin. Brancusi's _Bird_ is a fragmentary piece, minus feet and a head. This re-discovery of the "Part" as a complete piece in-itself, rather than an unfinished test-piece or sketch for a proposed end product is justifiably credited to Rodin. Many new successive artists use this concept within their work. More recent sculptors using the "torso" in their work have moved away from the clean, "completed", fragment exemplified in Rodins work. Todays fragment is deliberately left jagged or unfinished, it constantly refers to it's missing elements. These scarred, open-wounded and damaged torsos are employed to remind us of the fragility and anguish of the human condition. They contrast vividly with the heroic attributes of classical ruined statues. which inspired Renaissance artists to emulate their beauty and expressiveness.

'The direct result of working with an absence of elements, is that artists are forced to work entirely through humanity's common elements, and so render a necessarily anonymous body expressive in itself. There can be no escape into anecdote so therefore the form has to be altogether precise inorder for it to render a generalized meaning', so writes Robert Goldwater in his book _What is Modern Sculpture ._ He talks about Rodin's _Walking man_ , as a fragmentary piece. This was a study for his _St. John the Baptist_ which he modelled early in his career in 1877-78.

Rodin did not consider it as a finished piece; it was a concentrated analysis of skeletal and muscular structure and interaction, a preperation piece for a finished figure. It was cast in bronze and exhibited many years later in 1907, at this time it was not readily accepted for itself. Today we see this piece as a finished work, in context with other 20th century torsos. Matisse followed Rodins example, his _Slave_ is directly descended from Rodin's _Walking Man_. R. Wittkower quotes Matisse's attitude to selective amputation; 'The smaller the bit of sculpture, the more the essentials of form must exist'.(12)

Maillol also practices deliberate amputation in his work. This is demonstrated in his _ile de France_. This piece was made nearly 30 years after Rodin's _Walking Man_, and it was used as a symbol of the region around Paris, a modern city-state. This idea of personifcation, in Robert Goldwater's words; 'is in the classical mode, as the emphasis upon restrained mass, smooth surface, and even the flow of the silhouette'. The sensuous appeal of Maillol's torso, contains a traditional concept of "beauty" whereas Rodins piece is concerned with articulation of structure.

Both works convey a sense of energy, Maillol's does this through the coherence of the whole form, while Rodin's exudes energy through the interlocking joints. Maillol imbues his piece with a feeling of lightness as well as movement, in contrast to Rodin whose figure is solidly rooted and striding purposefully forward.

As it has been already mentioned the idea of fragmentation in sculpture has it's origins in the Renaissance. Michelangelo who was Rodins greatest influence, also practiced this fragmentation. But it has to be remembered that Rodin differed from Michelangelo in this respect; Rodin was creating partial figures as finished works in contrast to Michelangelo whose fragmentary figures were unfinished. Even Henry Moore [a born carver] failed to recognise Rodin's correct relationship with Michelangelo. Moore was quoted in a printed conversation of a fine Art Catalogue [For the recent Rodin Art's Council Exhibition], as saying that 'Rodin is the one artist since Michelangelo, who understood Michelangelo best'.(13)

While it is undisputed that Michelangelo was Rodins greatest influence, there remains a conflict of opinion surrounding Rodins artistic interpretation of Michelangelo's work ethos. The German sculptor and critic Hildebrand while admiring Rodin greately in his own right, best discussed Rodins lack of understanding of Michelangelo. Hildebrand also admired Michelangelo and he understood implicitly what the work was about, yet despite his perceptiveness, he failed to instil into his own figurative work, even a fraction of the greatness of Michelangelo. Ironically it is Rodin's very misconception of Michelangelo's thinking that causes him to create his own brand of romanticism and originality that was to become his trademark.

Hildebrand suggested that if we were presented with fragments of Rodins work, like ancient classical ruined statues, then we would have to accept them as on-a-par with the Greek or Michelangelo Renaissance remnants.(14) But Rodins monumental works [such as Victor Hugo] for Hildebrand hold no concept of unity. He reckons that this is because of the 'low level of any architectural [structural] feeling and of a general artistic refinement'. William Tucker talks about Rodins '.ack of a defination and determined structure for the newly-won independance of modelling volume'. He mentions that with the collapse of academic opposition to Rodin in the 1880's this lack of definition in his work was "largely overlooked", even though Rodin himself clearly sought out 'monumental commissions as a means of limiting and expressing centrifugal tendancies'.(15)

Hildebrand puts this missing element down to one thing, he argues that Rodin was trying to transpose all his skill and dexterity of clay-handling in to an unfamiliar medium. [stone/marble]. Adolfo Wildt in his book The Art of Marble written in 1922, mentions that an artist who transposes his work from it's original creative medium to a harder material with which he is unfamiliar, runs the risk of damaging the original conception through the lack of sensitivity of mechanical reproduction[pointing technique]. Similarly if a another person other than the artist carries out the transposition, then the work obviously looses some of it's initial characteristics. Wilt writes, 'due to the very hardness of the new material being used, all previous relationships of light and shade will be changed and implicitly also the spatial effect of the work as well as the specific aura of spirituality that every statue creates around it'. (16)

It is widely known that Rodin didn't work hands-on with stone-carving. This fact is borne out by several friends of his and also by many apprentices of Rodins who physically finished the work under the supervision of the master.[Charles Despieu 1874-1946 & Rodins assistant of 14 years Antoine Bourdelle]. In the light of this realisation , it is understandable that Rodin didn't have the experience or enjoy the same rapport with the medium of stone as the great Michelangelo, who knew the versatility and limits of his craft.

Rodin, not understanding the character of the unfinished areas in Michelangelo's work: imitated these areas purely for visual effect. Hildebrand ended his discussion of Rodin's missappropriation of Michelangelo's effects with the statement that, 'Rodin did quite naively what all sculptors of his time did, but his fraud was more courageous than that of the others.'(17 Had Rodin correctly acquired the process of direct carving he would realised that these "unfinished areas" were an integral part of the work process.

This aspect of employing certain techniques or styles for purely visual effect was taken up by both Kandinsky in his Point of a line to a Plane , and Archipenko in his writings on The Concave and The Void . Kandinsky was referring to those abstract painters who lacked sincerity in their work. He likened their pretence to schematic, mediocre and condemed patterns, ill executed and so far from being art as the 'Organ-grinder is from musicianship'. (18)

Archipenko says,'It should be pointed out that the materiality of the non-existent is indeed the most vital concept; but it is also a dangerously subtle element in art. Without a clear comprehension of it and without correct technical execution it is easy to fall into absurdity. For instance drilling senseless cavities if they are not symbolic or associative, cannot serve as substitutes and become absurd. The piercing of a hole in a kidney-like shape is very far from the symbolisation of absent reality. The amorphous part of the canvas or the amorphous unspeaking masses are symbols of creative impotence rather than a creative power, indeed a mannerism or a toying with empty accidental happenings, or buffoonery, will never lift a work towards a spiritual quality'(19)

Hildebrand's book _The Problem of Form_ was one of the principal literary works to takle late 19th century theories of form and space. This book published in 1893 was widely acclaimed by critics, historians and artists alike. The success of this book surpassed even that of Clive Bell's book _Art_ [pub. 1928]. Hildebrande, provided in his book guidelines for artists to develop and work within a new ethos [this modern form of self-analysis and introspective sensibility which would enable them to redefine and refine the act of creating art].

In this book Hildebrand offers the reader a choice between two types of vision. These he classifies as "far vision"- this is the language of art, when the viewer considers the work of art in it's entirety, and "near vision"- where individual aspects of the piece come under scrutiny and slowly we build up a mental and visual concept of what the piece actually is, as distinct from what it porports to be, under the general observation of "far vision". Hildebrande qualifies his two visual-concepts by adding an extra element to the above theories. The additives were proposed to be "actual form" and "perceptual form" respectively. "Actual form" was deemed to mean, the form of an object independent of it's changing appearence. While the "perceptual form" is the one that depends on many changeable aspects such as colour, light, environment and changing view points. For Hildebrand the artist's task lay in the field of "perceptual form".

Another important aspect of Sculpture discussed at length in Hildebrand's treatise explores the concept of space. Examining the limits of a work within its spatial dimensions. He deals with the visual expression that space can lend itself to a sculpture. Concluding that an object strategically placed/sited so as to be perceived clearly by the viewer had to be situated in a few specific and seperate planes. By supporting this theory Hildebrande strongly contradicted Rodin over this point. We remember Rodin imploring the sculptor not to perceive forms in the flat 2 dimensional linear system.

Hildebrande argued that it was a necessary procedure for an artist to breakdown his 3 dimensional worldly surroundings into a sequence of layers. These layers were to be of equal thickness and to serve as an ordering force helping the artist to transpose his linear imagery and mental workings into a physical and fully 3 dimensional medium. He applied this theoretical approach to the actual working process of sculpture contesting fiercely thet sculpture emerged firstly from drawing, developing into relief-contour-carving. In this progression sculpture originated from planar images, bringing us on to the fact that 2 dimensional spatial theories were infinately more developed than their 3D. sculptural counterparts and only in the early 20th century with the opening up of form was sculpture treated as a seperate entity rather than merely an extension of 2 dimensional practice.

Hildebrande reinforced Michelangelo's "wash basin" technique [working from the highest point on the nearest plane, finishing it before receeding back layer by layer.] He reckoned that in order to help the sculptor's eye to get a fairly even representation of the overall form and perspective within a piece in progress, the back of the block was to be left intact for as long as possible. If this accepted normal proceedure was departed from, and the freeing of the figure layer by layer was not adhered to then chaos and confusion resulted. Hildebrande emphasised the battle of carving versus modelling as a key contributor in the disunity of Rodin's work. He felt the lack of conceptual unity within Rodin's work arose through the working proceedure[modelling as a means to an end for a finished piece].

The ensuing battle for supremacy that took place between modelling and carving was to carry through into the 20th century. Hildebrand listed the various positive and negative attributes of these two crafts, pointing out that the technique of modelling required an armature and the building up of the clay around it.

Stone carving on the other hand unlike, modelling, had a definite centre of gravity which was inherent in the block. He stated that it was unethical if not physically impossible to advance to an artistic order or spatial conception that is not inherent in the natural object. He appreciated modelling as a means to life-study but did not see it as a proper option in the unified conception of form in a work of art.

As a result of the subsequent debates surrounding the value of one method of working over the other, artists began either to reject or accept one or other of these sculptural disciplines. In an 1918 essay Eric Gill (20) outlined the schism that appeared in the field of sculpture. He assumes the word "sculpture" was thename given to the craft and art by which things are cut out of a solid material, whether in relief or in the round. He refused to apply the word to the art and craft of modelling, explaining that objects modelled in clay were generally unsuitable for carving in stone. He summarised his essay with a mathematical equation which defined modelling as a process of addition and carving as a process of subtraction.[This rather simplified definition of sculpture was quite widely accepted by sculptors up into the first quarter of the 20th century].

The genuine enthusiasm of the 20th century sculptors for the works of so called primitive or early civilizations with their, simple cubic forms was not merely a reaction against the over-strained classical ideology, nor was the new great form [such as the Work of Henry Moore], merely a reaction against Rodin's impressionism. This new approach had its roots firmly imbedded in the European Tradition: it came about when genuine carvers re-interpreted the doctrines of the arch-modeller Rodin himself. What links the later career's of artists such as Moore and Arp with Rodin, is their mutual concern for 'a proper sense of sculptural values'. These virtues: sensibility to mass and volume, concern for articulation of planes and contours and unity of conception, were revived by Rodin. Carving was seen as the salvation of early 20th century sculpture - Modigliani painter and sculptor declared that 'The only way to save sculpture is to start carving again'. (21)

Juxtaposed against the lengthy career and artistic legacy of Auguste Rodin is the former painter turned sculptor Maillol[1861-1944], whom I have briefly mentioned already in connection with the practice of "fragmentation". He too was a modeller but in contrast to Rodin[he is widely recognised as the most important French antidote to Rodin], his static, monumental, massive female figures created in the spirit of classical antiquity are well known. He began, self-taught, to sculpt in the early 1890's and went his own way undaunted. Maillol argued that, unlike Rodin, he was not after character, but after beauty, and he had his own criteria of beauty.

In contrasting his working method with that of Rodin, Maillol did not start as Rodin did from a pose of a moving model. He first clearly articulated his ideas in his head. He was exclusively interested in the structure, the equilibrium of the human, primarily the female body and not, like Rodin, in the movement and fluidity of form. He is an interesting case point in so far as the conceptual side of his work comes close to Hildebrands ideals, and his actual work principles within his art were those of a carver rather than a modeller.

Alexander Archipenko may be described as a hybrid species of sculptor. He seems in some ways to be a cross between Maillol and Rodin, embodying fleeting aspects of their respected legacies, yet going far beyond these traditional constraints exploring existing art processes and inventing new ways of seeing sculpture. He came to Paris in 1908 from his native Kiev. On arrival in Paris he was faced with the famous and influential work of Rodin. Archipenko found that the presence exerted by Rodin was actually more repressive than supportive to young emerging sculptors. He said that he had arrived in Paris when Rodin was a la mode; he hated the old master saying that the works reminded him of 'chewed bread spit on a base' (22). Archipenko's own work at the time was entirely unhampered by realisticconventions and yet he too like Brancusi, in the second and third decades, created works with an infinite number of equally valid views - which show unexpectedly the deep-rooted affinity between himself and Rodin.

Soon after his arrival in Paris, Archipenko began making sculptures of transparent materials, incorporating concavities and "holes". He gave these matters extensive consideration and concluded that the customary roles of the solid and the void must be inverted: 'Traditionally there was a belief that sculpture begins where material touches space, thus space was understood as a kind of frame around the mass .... I concluded that sculpture may begin when space is encircled by the material'. (23)

During Archipenko's early years, he exhibited his mixed media constructions amid much controversy. One supporter, who later resigned from his reviewing job in defence of his positive criticism of Archipenko's work in 1913 was Guillaume Apollinaire. He welcomed this refreshing outlook and prediction of what was to come in sculpture. He says 'The art of the young Russian, Archipenko, who works in Paris, presses towards a new thing as yet unseen....Aside from a couple of very agitated and confusing figures, sculpture has hitherto been only a melody. The works of Archipenko are harmony-it's first chords' . (24) Apollinaire perceived that both Neo-Classicism and Impressionism, the two prevailing sculptural modes, were being suddenly undermined by this artist who was presenting revolutionary and unprecedented alternatives.

Despite many shifts in style throughout Archipenko's long and productive artistic career, two dominant major trends persist within the work:1. The concious and deliberate abandonment of a naturalistic aesthetic, even in the extreme forms to which it was stretched by Rodin. Clear authoritative form predominates in Archipenkos work and remains a constant characteristic throughout his career.
2. Archipenko's devotion to the human figure, particulary the female figures, he rarely departs from this theme.

Alexander Archipenko was born in kiev in 1887 He was a front man in avant-garde European pre-w.w.1 sculpture. He was one of the only artists working around the immediate pre-war period that could be classed as modern along with Brancusi and Duchamp Villon who did not supercede Archipenko in either novelty or imagination. Boccioni, on the other hand, created a more original style rather than exploring content. It was only after the emergence of such artists as Naum Gabo , Laurens, Arp Gonzalez and Vantongerloo that we are able to discern other original trends and Archipenko begins to concede his position of power that he had held for so long among the avant-garde.

Archipenko was renowned both for his revolutionary techniques and his unusual creations of form. His works range from pre-dominately cubist reliefs, wooden or teracotta statuettes, hollowed out, perforated, reduced to a few lines but extremely sensual, to his later works which combine the use of mixed materials both opaque and transparent, for his reliefs. But by far the most unique and valuable discovery was that of the alternative or simultaneous use of concave and convex forms. He applied this process with great skill and achieved amazing effects with it. He personified around 1910 or so, in the words of Guy Harbasque, 'Revolutionary audacity and rupture with traditional values.' (25)

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

(1) TUCKER, William 1974, p.9

CHAPTER 1

(1) WITTKOWER, Ruldolph 1979, p.242

(2) " " " p.239

(3) TUCKER, William 1974, p.9

(4) " " " p.10

(5) BARASCH, Moshe 1989, p.155

(6) TUCKER, William 1989, p.43

(7) WITTKOWER, Ruldolph 1979, p.240

(8) " " " p.253

(9) TUCKER, William 1989, p. 42

(10) WITTKOWER, Ruldolph 1979, p.253

(11) " " " p.253

(12) GOLDWATER, Robert 1969, p.14

(13) WITTKOWER, R. 1979, p.245

(14) " " p.244

(15) TUCKER, William 1989 p.42

(16) WITTKOWER, R. 1979 p.252

(17) " " p.245

(18) KANDINSKY, Wassily (point of a line to plane)

(19) KARSHAN, Donald H. 1969, p.21

(20) WITTKOWER, 1979 p. 249

(21) READ, Herbert 1985, p.18

(22) WITTKOWER, 1979, p.252

(23) KARSHAN, Donald H. 1969 p.2

(24) " " 1979 p.15

(25) " " 1969 p.15

Archipenko was no stranger to disrupting the Establishment, from an early age he questioned his tutors authority. In 1905 he was expelled from a native Russian art-school because he critised his teachers for 'being too old fashioned and academic'. (1) Then again in 1908 at the age of twenty after coming to Paris, he gained entry in to the Ecoles Des Beaux Arts, but after just two weeks he left the same institution, claiming that it's academic system was too confining and tedious. During this time he studied art independently free from teaching academies and their "respected" instructors. He said himself that 'My real school was the Louvre and I attended it daily'.(2)

In Paris he discovered that sculpture was virtually at a standstill compared to painting of the same period. There appeared to be only a few limited and constricting options open to young emerging sculptors. The Neo-classical style was an on going development in French art. But unlike 20th century sculpture, avant-garde painting had a past, in the form of Delacroix,Courbet, Corot, Rousseau and the Barbizon School. And in some cases these pioneering fore-fathers were available to offer practical advice and moral support to the younger artists, who embraced this 'new departure in painting'.

In contrast to this state of painting in France, 20th century sculpture had nothing to grow from compared to the wealth of painted material available at this time. While Preault, Daumier and Gericault did indeed create some sculpture, it was not taken seriously in it's time. In a datical sense these sculptural works are now retrospectively accepted as the forerunners of modernism. 19th century sculpture was unprepared to support or sustain any serious aesthetic purpose. Major issues concerning the dominance of line, colour or subject-matter, did not greatly impinge on fine art sculpture. Extreme Romanticism in sculpture was simply ignored with the continued exclusion of Preault from the Salon.

In the 19th century, particularly in France, there is a distinct lack of theory and criticism of sculpture. Early in the century, German philosopers such as Hegel relate sculpture to the art of Greek culture. During the mid-19th century the French architect and theoretican Viollet-le-Duc treated sculpture as a subsidary of architecture. Yet even towards the end of the 19th century, no concrete or indept analysis of sculpture practices or process are presented. In recent years Baudelaire has been credited with producing a _romantic theory of sculpture_.(3) Although sculpture was not a major topic of consideration for Baudelaire he mentions it on several occasions in his writings, and his view remains constant regarding it's purpose.

Baudelaire when discussing the 'arts' generally preferred to interlink their attributes rather than establish a hierarchy among them. However with regard to sculpture he feels that it is a lower art form, inferior to other arts particularly painting. His review title for the 1846 Salon enphasises this distate. This title reads _Why sculpture is tiresome_ (4). The reasons that Baudelaire gives for his low opinion of mid-19th century sculpture are analysed in _Unity and Diversity of the Visual Arts_. A short synopsis of these reasons is worth a mention here. Bearing in mind that Baudelaire's ideal work of art has to be an 'intentional product of man'.

Baudelaire believed that sculptural problems are intrinsically interwoven within the material itself. Basically Baudelaire is worried that the physical qualities of sculpture, can detract from the artist's intentional ideas. Because of the 3 dimensional solid quality the free-standing piece can effect the viewers senses, urging them to draw on associations rather than inspiration. On this point Baudelaire mentions the difference between painting and sculpture. He says that because primitive people are used to handling material objects, a piece of sculpture, which is such an object, doesn't cause them any problems, whereas because painting is more abstract, it's spirituality disturbs the primitive mind.

The other two disadvantages of sculpture according to Baudelaire are linked with the ambiguity of the medium. These are 'tricks of light' and 'multiplicity of viewpoints'. Baudelaire fears that these effects because they are beyond the artist's control undermine the meaning of a piece. These external environmental influences play on the surface of sculpture, creating 'illusions and 'accidents' of form. likewise with the viewer being able to choose their own viewpoint, the image that they receive might not be what the sculptor had in mind. Ironically enough it is these very 'disadvantages' that Baudelaire highlights that become central issues in modern sculpture. Avant-garde artist's deliberately seek out and manipulate these 'accidents and illusions' of form. They introduce transparent and reflective materials which are used physically and psychologically to represent spatial concepts.

Clive Bell wrote in his book _Art_, on _Aesthetics and Post-Impressionism_, in this chapter he brings up an interesting point. He says; 'Primitives produce art because they must; they have no other motive than a passionate desire to express their sense of form. Untempted, or incompetent, to create illusions, to the creation of form they devote themselves entirely'. He then proceeds to trace the disintegration of pure form saying 'Presently, however, the artist is joined by a patron and a public, and soon their grows up a demand for "speaking likeness". While the gross herd clamours for likeness, the choicer spirits begin to effect an admiration for cleverness and skill'. And so he sets the scene for us on the state of 19th century (5) sculpture.

'Sculpture had become an art in which the taste and ambition of the public parton became the determining factor, and virtuosity and craftsmanship the criterion of artistic achievement. The academic sculpture of the 19th century, with it's apalling lack of feeling, intelligence or sensitivity was as much the prisoner of conditions established earlier as Impressionism was the final and convulsive gesture of liberation, which had expanded and enriched itself as it's companion had degenerated'. (6) The main point of comparison between Rodin and the Impressionists is in the affirmation of surfaces, and of the perceptible physicality of the medium. This single common preoccupation has a special significence moreover it represents the point at which illusioned space in sculpture and it's counterpart in painting co-incided, as both arts travelled in opposite directions.

Rodin embraced certain aspects of Impressionism that were based on subjective reality, he was not interested in the scientific side. He thought of light as an element of form in which form was revealed to touch rather than sight. With Impressionist painters such as Cezanne and Monet, they were concerned with rendering light through medium. Cezanne was occupied with structure in painting, he used transparent layers with planes of colour to give structural unity suffused with light and air. Monet in comparison was more concerned with creating atmospheric lighting effects.(7)

By comparing Rodin's success with that of the Impressionists, it must be noted that the inherent nature of Sculpture did not lend itself to the immediacy of impact and directness of realisation achieved by Impressionist painting.
This factor was influenced by a number of pre-conditions, among these, the desire of Impressionist painters to be objective, to experience directly in the open air, the sensations of dealing with nature and all its extremes. They had abandoned studio reworking and concentrated on speed without correction, this gave the work a flexibility and presence that broke the traditional mould. In contrast, this directness of medium was not required of sculpture. It was during this period in art-history that the 2 faculties of painting and sculpture seemed to be furthest apart. The richness of depth and vitality achieved with the apparent minimal amount of effort in painting stood out in stark contrast to the rigidity of sculpture which appeared to be fighting an internal battle within the medium itself.

Off-set against the rapid strides in pictorial/perspective developments in 19th century oil painting, sculpture of the same period was severely lacking in imaginative and innovative ideas. Spatial theories and the "proper" rendering of these 'age-old concepts' and inherited classical, notions became the order of the day. Jack Burnham in Beyond Modern Sculpture , talks about the theories, he relates that these ancient ideals were handed down to sculptors from the Greek-Physicists. One such principle which was particularly dominant was the ideology that the object[artwork] dominates it's surrounding invisible space.

Aristotle's theory of "place" suggests that space could be defined by the dimensions of an object- therefore space only existed inside the object, being contained by the outer constraints of a object. [Space = internal/interior area of an object extending as far as the outer boundaries of the medium.(8) Rodin practiced an aspect of the above theory when he pushed the concept of sculpture as matter, plastic mass, animated from within and radiating outwards. But Rodin doesn't stop at the outer constraints of his medium, he prefers to 'get at the essence of his figures into the interior of his forms beyond the surface tactile material of his medium'. This Vitalistic ideal was eagerly adapted by successive artist's after Rodin.

Jack Burnham qualifies this definition for us, he quotes Aristotle's in doing so. He says; 'to the Vitalist, life at it's core is metaphysically instigated, it consist's of an "entelechy", to use Aristotle's word'.(9) This describes an aspect of life that could not be explained by physical means. Rodin subscribed to this line of thought, Burnham quotes him as saying; 'when a good sculptor models a torso, he not only represents the muscles, but the life... which animates them-more than the life, the force that fashioned them...'. (10) Rodin was one of the first modern sculptors to openly express this ideal.

Even today, another traditional definition describes space as existing only in the immediate area of an object. This definition excludes the possibility of interchangeable spatial interaction between a work and it's environment.

Alexander Archipenko deserves credit for the first schematic rethinking of the function of space in sculpture. He worked in the traditional medium of bronze and for the greater part of his career, with the human figure as his subject, Yet from within these two essentially conservative/traditional constraints, Archipenko revolutionised the accepted notion of the "function" of space. [Guy Habasque 1961] wrote; 'For a man of the 19th century a bit of empty space had no reality; for a man of the 20th century on the other hand, space is a concrete living thing, endowed with positive qualities just as matter itself'. (11)

"Central space" was inconceivable within a sculpture, no more than a decade previous to the arrival of Archipenko. Archipenko helped to change the sculptural awareness of space from something taken totally for granted to a prime concern among emerging sculptors. In 1912 he created Walking Woman , this was the first modern sculpture formed with abstract concaves to create implied volume and abstracted voids[openings through mass].

The formal use of irrational concaves and voids[negative form], to imply by their anatomical locations the rational convex or solid areas of the figure represented, there-by intensifying awareness and symbolization of these elements by their very absence.

According to Archipenko, sculpture had been thought of as shape embedded in space. Moreover shape proper began at the outer limits of an object-very much as the Greek Physicists, had thought of it. This was common-sense perception. Archipenko's contribution was to reverse this relationship surrounding, as it were, space with sculpture. All other 20th century exploitation of space and "Open sculpture" stem from this discovery.

Today there is now a recognised additional element in the field of sculpture theory, this recognises an area of 'transition/betweeness in space'. Now space is not just taken to mean the "inner" area of an object, or the area of 'cubic feet that an object occupies' but it also encompasses an extra dimension of "passing-transience", through the object-the object relates to the area where it is situated. It has a life of it's own and is not just there to preside over its space but to engage with the viewer on a spiritual and aesthetic level. Archipenko did this in his work in two ways. 1. by Complete penetration of his sculptures Woman combing her hair 1915 . 2. By hollowed-out negative surfaces in his sculptures as in his Concaves .

According to Jack Burnham (12)some of Archipenko's works are masterpieces in both forms. He describes these pieces as forerunners to Babara Hepworth's works created in 1931. She too created "holes" in her sculpture, but unlike Archipenko she wasn't trying to create a negative silohuette but rather trying to allow access inside her carvings. This opening up of a work of sculpture, exploring the internal spaces was pioneered by Archipenko some 15 years prior to Hepworth's work.
In the second-half of the 20th century this aspect had become a fact of life for sculptors. Gaston Bachelards in his 1958 essay on The Dialectics of Outside and Inside wrote of 'Interior immensity' and 'Spatial dizziness that can result even from small spaces that lend themselves to sudden accessibility'. (13) Again it was Archipenko who opened up this door for the appreciation of the 'aesthetic value of the void'.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 2

(1) KARSHAN, Donald H. 1969, p.110

(2) " " " p.110

(3) BARASCH, Moshe 1989, p.213

(4) " " " p.214

(5) BELL, Clive 1928, p.48

(6) TUCKER, William 1974, p.19

(7) BORNSTEIN, Eli (Mag) NO. 27/28 1987/88 p.54

(8) BURNHAM, Jack 1989 p.149

(9) " " 1987. p.56

(10) " " 1989, p.55

(11) KARSHAN, Donald H. 1969 p.17

(12) BURNHAM, Jack 1987, p.150

(13) BACHELARD, Gaston 1959, p.221

19th century non-Euclidean geometry first attempted to question the priority of 3 dimensional planes; it went on to formulate the concept of spaces and objects with both greater and lesser dimensions. The invention of mathematics capable of handling continuums of more than 3 dimensions made 20th century physics a possibility. And its four or five continuums have constantly appealed to sculptors sense of plastic involvement in dealing with spatial fantasy, and it was only in the 20th century that the ability to create a work which embodied these radical spatial developments was possible (1)

Space as an active concern of the sculptor grew out of Post-Impressionist and Cubist realisation that pictorial space could be recorded at will; that is,local distortions and depth compression could effect a painting, just as it would colour. Wassily Kandinsky in Point of a line to Plane around 1904/5 discovered the importance of form and tonal values over subject matter-he was looking at one of his own paintings, not recognising it's subject,and was struck not only by it's increased beauty but also by the superfluity, of the object in painting, in order to feel it's spell. It took him a full two years to crystallize this miraculous discovery. Nevertheless, he still used objective inspiration in his paintings of this period, but only as a structural element, while the organization of form and colour values, used for the sake of composition, already dominated these abstractions.

The 20th century heralded many new concepts, developing and expanding the relationship between art and space. As previously mentioned Kandinsky contributed both literary theories and visual examples furthering the role of depth and space in art. Archipenko, like kandinsky, was a man of his time, rejecting the outworn classicism that survived into the 20th century. He himself actively introduced spatial volumes into sculptural compositions, even this fundamental element of his sculpture-his use of space-is associated with the spiritual realm.

Archipenko's art trancends purely formal considerations, although the sculptor was deeply sensitive to the properties of colour, line, shape and texture. Late in his life he spoke about the spiritual basis of his work.

Archipenko wrote 'First of all it should be stated that in spite of the diversity in the character of my works, no intellectual or dogmatic rules lie at the foundation of my art. Fundamentally it is spiritual, and evolved from the universal creative law perceived through experiences. This law compells me to explore the unknown and to invent a way to fix it in new forms. I believe that the whole evolution of art and inventions is based exclusively on the material fixation of the unknown, as a consequence of our attainment of causes in the metaphysical realm'. (2)

Kandinsky too wrote <u>On the Spiritual in art</u>, this was a theoretical book which is essential to the understanding of his painting. In it is the idea that forms have a sense or content proper to them. This is a more German characteristic than, French conception of art. Every form is considered to be the outward manifestation of it's content; it must manifest in the most expressive manner,'the innermost content of form'. (3)

Kandinsky's book enables us to trace his progression towards abstraction. He enhanced his valuable artistic research with many written notes on the the spiritual aspect of a work, by putting forward what has often been described as a 4th dimension. This idea of an extra 3rd & 4th dimensions in a work of art were newcomers in the field of art-theory. Painting which was essentially a flat 2 dimensional medium which over the years evolved it's illusionary 3-dimensional depth of field by experimentation with traditional geometry and linear perspective, began to develop additional dimensions.

Cézanne borrowed from the Impressionists, the idea of representing an object through manipulation of it's various chromatic aspects, light and shade, and he restored the object to its concrete presence. He gives the object immediate volume and density, by analysing and loading the local tone, and then transforming this through the colour of the incidence of "light" and "atmosphere". He wrote on this aspect, 'When the colour is given it's richness, the form gets it's fullness....'.(4) The contrasts and relationships of tones-that is the secret of "modelling". By practising this principle Cézanne was able to merge together in a painting, colour, volume, unity of light and shade.

Coupled with this notion Cézanne suggests the use of 'definition of planes', by means of their ridges and by using complementeries of the light tone. Cézanne left this legacy to the Cubists, who accepted his technique and reduced the law of contrast to the 'accentuation of ridges', which highlighted the interplay between the planes of dislocated objects[accentuation of the ridges was more a sign of depth than an expression of it]. There appeared a split in the Cubist camp at this time, with some artist favouring the expression of the "3rd dimension" through colour, and others adapting the disjointed'broken vision of volumes' approach.[analytical Cubism]. With this art each part of the dissected object is brought firmly on to the picture surface, and there 'they are all juxtaposed and the surface is turbulent with the huddle of ridges that suggest a recession into space'. Charles Bouleau provides a comprehensive study of Cézanne and his contemporaries in his book The Painters secret geometry (5) a study of composition in art.

Those other artists who honed in on the luminary principles of Cézanne's pioneering efforts, studied the 'delimitation of objects when the points of contact are tenuous, delicate' this quote from Cézanne describes the very slight, gradual transitions or interruptions of the contours of a volume which barely stand out in low-relief against the field, whatever the light. Artists such as La Fresnaye in Conquest of Air & Similarly Delaunay in his Homage a Bleriot draws his inspiration from Cézanne's phrase 'The edge of objects escape towards a centre situated at our horizon'. (6)

As early as 1906 Delaunay used this as a starting point for research into the alterations produced by light in the contour of objects. He also noticed that certain tones seemed to advance or receed in acordance with what lies next to them and with their importance or intensity. But it was in vain that he denied the reality of contour. He could not stop his chromatic circles from organising themselves upon diameters and chords and from suggesting lines as well as depth.

In the early 20th century, the Italian Futurists added to the newly formed 3rd dimension a 4th concept. This they claimed represented "duration" in a work, to be expressed in the form of movement. [This had it's roots in Italian Baroque with it's hidden geometric dynamism and was also connected with ideas on 'the universality of art']. It was this "dynamic aspect" that attracted these Futurists, they saw this as the ultimate symbol of modern life, representing, the hectic, frenzied urban mechanisation and the subsequent rupture and fragmentation of society in this dawning of a new age.

They took the object that had preoccupied the Cubists studies, shattering it's vital components in an effort to reflect their constantly changing world. Linear composition still forms the basis for much of this Futurist work, with radiating 'beams/rays of light', strong commanding diagonals and slanting lines which emphasise the shifting forms.(7)

'We are going to put the spectator at the centre of the picture'. said Carrà. The spectator would no longer move around the object, but the whole world, life, would move around him. In this desire the painter's rapid notations would become a juxtapositioning of successive visual images during the development of a collective movement. In the work of Kandinsky the 4th dimensional extra element was proposed as a spiritual dimension in a work of art. This spiritual notion was not purely a theoretical reasoning but was taken to mean a physical and aesthetic presence which had not been previously acknowledeged as a integral element in the very essence of a work of art.

Kandinsky wrote that; 'The work of art mirrors itself upon the surface of our consciousnes. However it's image extends beyond to vanish from the surface without a trace when the sensation has subsided. A transparent, but definite glass like partition, abolishing direct contact, from within, seems to exist here as well. Here too exists the possibility of entering arts message, to participate actively, and to experience it's pulsating life with all one's senses' .(8)

Kandinsky is recognised as the pioneer in non objective painting. In 1920 he came back to Berlin, after a trip to his native Russia. On his return he exhibited his first open-spaced canvasses, in which one sees his turning from lyrical organizations of effervesent colour expressions to a more dramatic clarification of definite form and space precision. With infinite care he studied the dimension of open-space in contrast to colour value and extension of form, as well as line direction and the intensity of the point.

After 1923 he had perfected his colour theories with skill and virtual scientific precision. As his last paintings demonstrate the intensity and power of his concentration, the channelling of all his energy into refining the precision of balance within the given space of the painting, as the innermost essence of it's rhythmic tension.

Kandinsky like so many of the great painters of his day became dissatisfied with his mode of representation. He felt compelled to express his inner life in a cosmic organisation. He was the first painter to proclaim the notion of the artist as being a small organism caught up in the internal workings of a much greater force, but free to draw inspiration from further afield than earthly circumstantial surroundings. He held firmly on to his beliefs despite powerful opposition and adverse criticism.

He broke away from the limited restrictions of the established "objective" tradition, with it's moral and social preachings. Kandinsky discovered that a non-objective painting's rhythmic life, with expressive creative invention, can profoundly assail the senses of the viewer and was acessible to more people than just the well-informed or the art critic. This type of painting stepped outside the boundaries of historical and critical analysis, it's vibrancy directly appealed to people's senses and powers of association rather than the lifeless, imatitive qualities that characterised representationalism.

Kandinsky wrote about the figurative aspect in a work of art. He says; 'Today the artist cannot progress exclusively with purely abstract forms, as these forms are not sufficently precise. Limiting oneself to the unprecise, it deprives one of possibilities, excluding the purely human and therefore, weakening the power of expression'. (9)

There are two phases in Kandinsky's progression towards abstraction. The first one covers the decade from 1910-1020. His paintings at this stage contained a central nucleus with fragmentary off shoots, which sharply cut across the canvas from left to right. In the later period from 1921-22 forms become more rigid elements; circles, squares and triangles. But this was only a transitional phase which was to be replaced in 1925 by much calmer, static works, which demonstrate Kandinsky's desire for balance and harmony at this time.

Throughout his career Kandinsky was always fully conscious of the importance of composition within his paintings. All elements had specific meanings, which he had carefully worked out in advance. Two prepatory sketches from the first period [1913] demonstrate that Kandinsky's impulses were restrained to render precise construction. Later as a self-directed reaction against his own work, he chose sharp, cutting, sword-like forms; and at other times the circle, which had become the field of a microscope, enclosed the agitated movement of his creatures within narrow bounds. 'Composition is two-fold', (10) he tells us, composition of the whole, and composition of the various parts subordinated to the whole.

The total composition is a form: the objects, whether real or abstract, will bend to that form, 'they will be that form'. At the same time the isolated elements are modified by combining them with one another, or simply by their orientation. 'This is called movement. For example, a triangle directed upwards has a quieter, more steadfast, stable appeal than the same triangle set obliquely on it's side'.

It is clear from this that to Kandinsky, the displacement of the lines was essential. In the second phase of his work it was the only means he had retained of recreating life. The composition uses the perpendiculars and diagonals for support. He uses these lines to juxtapose and counterbalance the elements. The formal structures become part of the overall composition.

Modernism, the Art of the first half of the 20th century, with roots stretching back as far as Baudelaire. It rejects - the "reflective" emphasis of Realism and Naturalism, and the Natural-Mystical, Utopian emphasis of Romanticism.
Modernism engages in formal experimentation, the "form" of the work becoming as/or more important than it's "content".
In the late 20th century the emphasis has shifted again from "Form" to "Content". No longer is form or physicality of the medium the main issue. The exploration & subsequent expansion of the defination of "Form" both in painting and sculpture materialised in the work of the avant-garde artists working in the early 20th century. Little by little content/subject matter faded into insignificence eventually being rendered obsolete; in the art of the late 80's there is a marked return to figuration both in painting and sculpture .

In the mid-eighties frank stella delivered the charles norton Lectures at Harvard. These have recently been published under the title Working Space. In these, Stella recognised that abstract painting was the future of 20th century European art. But despite this acknowledgement Stella feels that abstract painting because of it's abandoning of the figure in painting. is undergoing a crisis. He compares the dilemma of abstract painting to the state of European painting at the end of the 16th century.

For Stella 'the aim of art to create space-space that is not compromised by decoration or illustration, space in which the subjects of a painting live'. (11) This opening up of space, by creating a 'theatre in the round', a stage that extends into the audience that we can walk around and so view the action from all sides was credited to the 17th century painter Caravaggio. Stella suggests that we, as viewers 'should see our selves on a pedestal if we want to be true viewers of painting, because elevated on a pedestal we will surely be reminded of the space all around us, next to us and above us-in addition, of course, to the space in front of us which we have so often taken as being the only space available to us as viewers'.

This account of Caravaggio allows Stella to determine if we can 'find a mode of pictorial expression that will do for abstraction what Caravaggio's pictorialism did for 16th century Naturalism and it's magnificent successors?'. In order to highlight the problems facing 20th century abstraction, Stella uses Picasso as a reference point. Picasso it is said abandoned Cubism, because it was in danger of making everything flat. This was supposed to have already happened with the pioneering abstraction of Kandinsky and Malevich. Picasso's fear was that Kandinsky's pure painting would turn into pure paint.

Stella is very much aware of some sort of connection/interaction between the space he values and the human figure. For him it is the human figure that is largely responsible for creating this space. He writes 'The glory of the human figure is precisely its spatial versatility, and nothing confirms the glory and value of the figure more clearly than Picasso's post-Cubist paintings. Yet abstraction has dared to get along without the human figure. Today it struggles, at least partly, because it has failed to come up with a viable substitute for human figuration, for the spatial vitality and versatility provided by the human figure. It was not so much the loss of the human figure itself as it was the loss of what the figure did to the space around it that has been hard to replace'. (11)

Picasso wrote about figuration with reference to Guernica', 'There is no such thing as figurative and non figurative art. All things appear to us in the form of figures. Even in metaphysics the ideas are expressed in figures, so you see how absurd it would be painting without imagery of figures. A human being, an object, a circle are figures; they act on us more or less intensely. Some are nearer to our sensations and produce emotions that touch our affective faculties; others address themselves more particularly to the intellect. (12)
One must accept them all, for my mind has as much need of emotion as my senses have'.

The alternative space offered to us by what was traditionally non-figurative work such as still-lifes was decipered by Braque. He said 'With a still life, we have to do with a tactile, even manual space, which may contrast with the space in a landscape- visual space. The still life makes the sense of touch take part in the conception of the picture. It ceases to be a still-life as soon as it is out of arm's length. In tactile space you measure the distance that seperates you from the object, while in visual space you measure the distance that seperates things from each other', (13)

Some painters reacted against the irrational and introspective self-indulgent offerings of 'surrealism and abstract expressionism.' They firmly believed initial impulses had to be disciplined if they were to turn into works of art. Kandinsky, as we have seen realised that only geometry could render the dynamism that posessed him, accessible to all. Both Braque and Picasso, after abandoning analytical Cubism concentrated on using "plane vision" in their work. Painters even today realise the value of geometric principles. They recognise that the isolation of each of the components in painting serve to contain and confine themselves within the picture plane making the play of forms occur in the 2 dimensions of the canvas.

This aspect of "plane vision" materialised in the work of Picasso and Braque in 1912/13 when they broke away from Cézanne's advice to treat nature by means of the cylinder and the cone. Charles Bouleau talks about this 'period of synthesis, a period richer in suggestion, when these artist's provoked the reflex of cognition by presenting only characteristic parts of the object reduced to the plane', (14)

In some of their collages they did away with the support of concrete elements, such as the table on which the objects were arranged, and presented them as though pinned to the wall, with no depth. About 1927 Fernand Léger returned to this idea, though with more insistence on plastic realism. But with him it was not a systematic method:
composition massed towards the centre but put no weight on the base, Les Belles Cyclistes contrast with heavy weighty groups like les loisirs . When Leger came to project these suspended masses upon a wall, they tended to destroy the stability of the monument.

The Spanish painter Juan Gris, detected an antinomy between all interpretations of the 3rd dimension and linear geometry: he preferred to do away completely with the awkward concept of depth. He says;'I insist on flat forms, for to consider these forms in a spatial world would be more a sculptors business. I will go so far as to say that the only possible painterly technique is a kind of flat, colored architecture'. (15)
This sets the painter free to employ all his powers in the research after pure form.
Painting has well and truly become an experiment: it is necessary to seperate the elements, to transfer them from one place to another but always keeping in mind the obsessive search for purity-at one time pure colour now pure form.

Of this desire for pure form Gris again writes, 'Geometrical figures and forms subjected to a vertical axis have more gravity than those whose axis is not vertical or definite....We can see that all this can even form the basis of pictorial architecture. It would be the painters mathematics, and only this mathematics can serve to establish the composition of a picture. Only from this architecture can there arise the subject-that is to say, an arrangement of the elements of reality caused by that composition'. (16) This concept is contrasted with the classical method, instead the subject arises from the architecture and the idea is derived from the lines that set it in motion.[mathematics here specifically means 'the painters mathematics'. Gris always uses the word "architecture", not "geometry", in doing so he implys that 'All architecture is a construction, but not every construction is architecture...'.

CHAPTER 3

(1) BURNHAM, Jack 1987 p.148,149

(2) ARCHIPENKO, Alexander 1960, p.18

(3) KANDINSKY, Wassily, 1946, p.47

(4) BOULEAU, Charles 1963, p.225

(5) " " " P.226

(6) " " " p.227

(7) " " " p.227

(8) KANDINSKY, Wassily, 1946, p.48

(9) " " " p.53

(10) BOULEAU, 1963, p.237

(11) TILGHMAN (mag. 1988 p. 224)
(12) " " " p. 225
(13) " " " p. 242
(14) " " " p. 242
(15) " " " p. 243
(16) " " " p.243

In the early 20th century there was a Russian Renaissance, which was inspired and encouraged by artistic contact with western Europe. Particularly from the years 1908-1915, there appeared to be a dominance of Russian source material over western ideas. This rebirth of Russian culture presented Europe with both an old and new view of Russian art. Russian native art work was revived, their tradition Icon was adapted by Russian artists as a symbol of a new future

Costakis (1) dates the birth of the Russian avant-garde around 1910, when the newly established Knave of Diamonds held their group exhibition in Moscow. Kandinsky and Maelivich were among it's members. This Knave of Diamonds group was led by Mikhail Larionov who along with Nataliia Goncharova was developing their theory of "Rayonnism" This word is derived from the French translation of "luchizm", meaning a beam or ray of light. The theory of "Rayonnism" had a scientific origin. It was described in the first soviet article published on 'Rontagen and his x-ray phenenomon', edited by A. Loffe as: 'The dramatic representation of the struggle between the plastic emanations radiating from all things around us.'

Larinov introduced this element in to his work around 1911, although his Rayonnist Manifesto (2) was not published until 1913. He began to challenge pictorial conventions, eventually his work became less concerned with meanings beyond the painting itself - the observer is left with a new awareness of material values of the work. It should be noted here, that while Laronov and Garonchova were displaying aspects of Rontagen's "Rayonnist theory", it was Naum Gabo who contributed, in J.E. Bowlt's words; 'a calculated aesthetic,study of x-ray photography.... and a serious and intelligent application of x-ray to art.' Laronov's earlier experiments still contained a recognisable figurative content, but by 1911 his work, due to the systematic reduction of figurative and objective references, emphasised the visual surface qualities of his paintings.

It was Kandinsky who paved the way for this new development in painting. He was very influential in Russia at this time. In 1910 he was working on his book The Spiritual in Art and he also had links with Germany and Western Europe, through his contributions to The Blue Rider. Kandinsky in his artwork had reduced the dependancy of his paintings on subject matter-forcing to the canvas surface other qualities; exploring the medium and effect of line, color and rhythm on the viewer. Kandinsky helped to establish a new language that embraced the growing 20th century desire for "purity of source" in art. Artists were urged to reject the traditional concerns; the choices of line and form and the practice of copying as a means of learning were rendered obsolete. A new sensibility was to be acquired, which had to acompany the emerging science of form and color. This language was essential to artists trying to create work amidst the rapidly developing technological and mechanical age. In pre WW 1 years this scientific analysis of color and exploration of the formal properties of painting was seen as a central requirement for artists, if they wanted to raise the level of their artwork to the existing literary standard. Kandinsky likened this phase to; 'the epoch of a new sensibility.'

Larinov disbanded the Knave of Diamonds because he felt they were becoming too dependant on western contacts. He established a new group calling itself Target and invited Goncharova to exhibit in this group. Ironically enough this 'Target' group despite their highly individualistic beginnings did an about turn in pre-war years drifting back to their national roots with its strong eastern tradition. This background of Icon painting despite localised variations of place or time essentially embodied a tradition of sacred imagery, rooted in Eastern, Byzantine painting which remained virtually unchanged for centuries.(4)

Nataliia Goncharova was a key member of the avant-garde and yet her later work reverts back to traditional Icon painting as a source of inspiration. She exhibited her religious paintings in Moscow in 1912. These paintings were very influential on fellow members of the Target group and they had great impact on western artists. Her paintings spoke eloquently of the strivings and aspirations of her own group at the time. One member of her circle [V.Parkin] who being visibly moved after encountering Goncharova's 'religious paintings', wrote of this experience; 'All these works are of great artistic significence-not to mention the beauty of their color, expressiveness, monumentality painterly excellence, all these qualities which are strongly to the credit of decorative art; the most important factor in these religious compositions, is their amazing spiritual animation.'

Many of the Russian artists who went to Paris in the early 20th century, brought with them aspects of Icon Painting. Tatlin and Malevich are two artists in particular whose work can not be assessed purely in terms of western painting traditions. They have to be considered in the context of their Icon heritage as well as the amalgamation of western influences. Icon painting was one of Russia's most ancient artistic traditions.
Tatlin expressed an interest in Icon painting around 1911 after being introduced to Goncharova's work. Tatlin's assimilation of Icon painting concerns, is stressed more than once by the Russian art critic Nikolai Punin. Whilst measuring the influence of Russian Iconography on Tatlin's work, he suggested that this source of inspiration was 'more powerful than the impact of Cezanne or even Picasso.' (5)

Tatlin had access to the major works of Picasso. These large earth colored canvases of 1908 with their heavily modelled curving elements and anonymous nudes were on display from the Shchukin's collection. Malevich too would have seen Picasso's work. The mask-line stylization of the figure heads in Picasso's painting is reflected and adapted by Malevich. The heads in both Malevich's Woman with buckets and a child and Picasso's Three women have each an irregular almond shape, similarly the eye sockets echo this shape. Malevich adds pupils to the eyes and distinguishes the eyebrow-ridge from the eyelid, yet despite these additions the anonymity of the figure and extension of the plane of the forehead along the line of the nose is fundamentally the same as Picasso work.

Tatlin's Fishmonger is engaged in a similar reduction of individual traits down to a systematic indication of structure. His heads are also constructed on the "oval shape" format, with eyes and mouth reduced to lozenge shaped curves. He too leads the ridge of the eyebrow directly along the line of the nose. Tatlin does not attempt to instil the sculptural solidity of Picasso's style in to his work but uses the curving, rhythmic repetition of lines to build up volume. Cubist inspiration could be claimed as a source for this oval format layout. But because of Tatlin's Russian background and his interest in traditional painting techniques, his work must also be considered within these constraints.

Tatlin was part of the Larionova, Goncharova and Malevich circle. His allegiance with them was undertaken to pursue his exploration in to traditional painting techniques. The flatness of his picture space, and the lyrical organisation of it's components are most definitely Eastern rather than Western characteristics, as part of Tatlin's earliest painting experiences had been with church art - this involved painting Icons and copying wall-paintings and frescos. These would have exposed him to spatial perspective in Icons, which in Russia was not an ongoing concern unlike Europe where the long standing tradition of depicting space according to systems of perspective, had first evolved during the Renaissance. This Renaissance tradition appeared 'as a later manifestation of Western and Westernised taste' according to John Milner in Tatlin and the Russian Avant-Garde.

Malevich's style of Suprematist painting can be examined within the context of the new artistic sensibility established by Kandinsky. For Malevich, art and literature were to act as ice-breakers to clear a path for a higher intellectual sensibility, his writings of 1915-16 demonstrate his heightened excitement at being a prominent figure in creating this new language in Art. He too had been introduced to Icon Painting by Goncharova around 1911. Malevich's paintings of this period point firmly back to Icon works, which display visual quality and more importantly in the words of W.S. Simmons on the meaning of Malevich's White on White; 'a security of belief and firmness of purpose' (6)

Malevich replaced the figurative content traditionally seen in Icon painting with his now famous Suprematist Square. He himself called his square the 'face of the new Art.' Punin the Art Critic described Malevich's square as 'actual form characteristic of human initiative'. In Malevich's writings, his ideas on the role of the Icon as an object and his understanding of it's painting technique are similar to those of Punin. Malevich writes; 'the Icon can no longer be the same meaning, goal and means that it was formerly: it has already passed into the museums where it can be preserved under new meaning, not of a religious conception but of art. But as we go deeper into the new creative meaning, it loses even that significance and nothing can be invested in it, for it will be the souless mannequin of a past spiritual and utilitarian life.'

Malevich was offering an alternative to the superiority of nature. His Black Square exhibited in 1915 was described as an "Icon" in itself. In a review of this 0.10 Exhibition Aleksandr Benois wrote; 'undoubtedly this is really that "Icon" which the futurists posit in place of madonnas and "shameless" venuses. This is really supremacy over the forms of nature... ' (7) Malevich responded to this statement refering to his own square thus; 'I have the only frameless Icon of my time (like a pocket) and it's difficult to fight. But the happiness in being unlike you gives the strength to go further and further into the void of the wilderness for there lies transfiguration.'(8)

Malevich aspired to reach a higher stage of evolution. He desired transfiguration 'in (to) the zero of form...' In an essay on future art (published in 1910) the author Belyi said that the artist has to 'become his own artistic form for only this form of creation still promises us salvation.'(9)
Again this whole notion has it's origins in Icon painting. The dominant theme that constantly runs through traditional Russian literature relates to us that the primary concern of the Icon painter is to become transformed. This is necessary to enable the artist to present in his work a transfigured being and a transfigured universe.

Western Renaissance ideas had little or no effect on the Icon painting tradition which had preserved its own intrinsic characteristics. Pictorial structures, ultimately Byzantine in origin, were preserved in Russia for hundreds of years after the were disregarded in Italy, and subsequently in Northern and Western Europe. As a result, saints and figures of Russian Icon paintings were detached, and austere as compared with their approachable and credible counterparts in the West.
For Tatlin, as for Malevich and Goncharova, the Icon provided a living and Russian alternative to Western traditions. Their search for a Russian identity could find in the Icon spatial systems that were not imported. Furthermore, many Icons were pictorially superb, their painters' control complete and their emphasis upon material crucial. Tatlin appreciated the alternatives offered by his native painters and at the same time he combined European devices with these.

Icons were for centuries the focus of Russian Orthodox devotion, playing a central role as holy-images of worship. This revival of interest in the art and imagery of ancient Icon painting helped to establish Icons as a valuable and integral element in the historical documentation of Russia. This new found interest generated by western supportors and collectors, helped to elevate Icon painting to a fine art status both at home and on the continent. Paris was given its first glimpse of a sample of these Russian paintings in the 1906 Salon d'Automne which was organised by Serge Diaghilev [at the time a famous ballet impressario].
But it was only in 1910 in the lead up to the 1913 'Romanov exhibition' that repainting and extensive cleaning of old Russian Icon's began to unearth the true brilliance of these works, both in an aesthetic and spiritual sense.

Many Russian artists were fascinated with transparency, although Gabo seems to have been the only major artist then who actually studied x-ray effects and experimented with them consistently. Naturally, other artists such as Malevich, Rodchenko and Tatlin were aware of this new photographic development, but they seem not to have regarded it as a principal source of inspiration.

Although transparency was one of Gabo's major concerns, his constructions often contain opaque elements, internal schemes and occasionally colors. These often appears to suggest contrasts between 'epidermic outline and a skeletal arrangement.' (10) These additional aspects in Gabo's work can be accounted for in the light of the recently invented x-ray machine. This machine was a source of inspiration for many young artists at this time. In 1910 Gabo's father sent him to study medicine at the University of Munich where he studied up to 1914. During his student years he studied under Heinrich Wolffin, met Kandinsky and encountered the inventor of the x-ray machine, Wilhelm Conrad Rontagen who had received the Nobel prize in 1901 for his invention, created in 1895.

By the time Gabo returned to Russia in 1917, x-ray photography was well advanced there. Gabo's work at this time with it's discected figurative elements were certainly inspired by the recently developed technological advances. Rontagen's plates showed internal structures that scientists had delineated through anatomical mapping and that artists knew from academic textbooks. These scientific experiments had a two-fold effect. For the rationally minded here was proof of 'natural, indefeasible connections between outer and inner' while those irrational observers, understood that 'these photographs were also proof of the existence of a "more real" reality behind the facade of physical objects.'

Gabo presented the 'complex of inner articulations' (11) as the finished work of art, whereas the academy regarded it merely as the basic structure upon which to build the outer physical illusion, this was the very facade that Gabo and his colleagues set out to dismantle in their work. Gabo became interested in glass as a multi-purpose material, he appreciated creative effects of glass, both as a transparent yet rigid structural element. He was exposed to new glass building constructions being developed in Russia during the early 20's. Tatlin's Monument to the 3rd International of 1919-20 was one such building that incorporated glass into it's building materials. But the use of glass had another function for constructivist artists. Because glass had the ability to remove social divisions, and connect the inside and outside, it served a democratic purpose. Constructivist architects picked up on this idea, and by using glass to expose a building's function, they were 'undermining the notion of bourgeois privacy and individual space' (12)in favour of more public interaction.

Gabo did not adapt this principle regarding transparency and it's function in society. He did not employ it as an element for questioning the social set-up, or as device for 'reconfirming the concreteness of reality', as did other artists such as Alexander Vesin in his 1924 project for the Pravda building in Leningrad. Gabo was interested in 'summoning the condition of infinity' he affirms the Symbolist objective which invites the viewer not just to look at the work but to go beyond. In the words of J.E. Bowlt: 'to look through, and to understand that space is the only constant beyond our noumenal perception.'

Gabo's work embodies the ideal that "the only valid component of reality is depth[transparency], and that any imposition such as a line or a colour is a mere provisional sign, a metaphor for the vast beyond of outer space." Bearing these principals in mind when dealing with Gabo's work, we have to accept that his pieces link us directly with depth, instead of deflecting us with allusions to the phenomenal world, as figurative painting does. We can see through the work of art, both literally and physically by trancending beyond superficial facades, via the transparent constructive elements. Gabo's consistent work ethos is based on the deceptiveness of external surfaces and the impermanence and 'instability of outward appearences',

In Russia however during the 1920's the prevailing political and social climate did not encourage theories or discoveries relating to 'transparency', in the arts. These were the times of Stalin, who presented facades of superficial truths, of deceptive appearences. Artists were only encouraged to delve beyond the surface, if what the discovered reiterated and reinforced, the actepted norm. Bowlt mentions after this point, a prediction by the author Evgenii Zamiatin, who in his Utopian novel We [1920] (13) described this type of creative censorship. In his novel a glass dome hermetically protects the perfect Socialist state from the primitive natural order outside.

Gabo like Kandinsky and many of the Russian avant-garde artists moved to the west. There he continued to apply concepts from physics, zoology and structural engineering, fully understanding and exploiting these new materials. Bowlt admires Gabo's use of aesthetic configurations as counterparts to scientific fact, yet all during this work he refused to resign or confine himself to reason. Gabo once said to Herbert Read, 'the only thing I mentain is that the artists cannot go on forever painting his view from their window and pretending that this all there is in the world, unseen, unfelt and unexperienced which have to be conveyed and we have the right to do this.' Gabo made windows of glass and perspex, with these instruments he removed division, enabling us to see continuous depth. He created works of art, according to Read virtually "without material," which results in a unique sensation, described by J.E. Bowlt as 'the experience of the presence of absence.' (14)

This notion of a 'presence of absence' was also explored by another Russian Artist viz. Alexander Archipenko. his innovative work was met with diverse critical acclaim. Along with his 'Sculpto-Paintings', another feature of Archipenko's work noted by the American Press was the Hole (15) and in 1921 (Feb 6th) the 'New York Herald' reporter Henry Mc Bride wrote, 'Instead of doing the thing, Archipenko does the absence of it. Don't you believe it?. Go see the show.'

In an extract from Alexander Archipenko - a centennial exhibition organised by Washington D.Cs National Gallery, some critics felt that Archipenko along with two other Russians 'Chagall and Kandinsky', 'shared the key position in the history of revolutionary art' Also on p. 53 According to the discerning and thoughtful artist observer operating in the American 20's. Oskar Schlemmer Archipenko was indeed someone to watch.
Schlemmer mentioned Archipenko 3 times in his published diaries. In 1915 he regarded Archipenko, Lehmbruck, and the Cubist painters as the 'idealists of form'.
In 1919 his entry reads 'The drawbacks of our times: mediocrity, conformation; expressionism, paucity of original talent. Kandinsky. Marc, Chagall, Klee, Archipenko and Picasso are the few original talents.'
Finally in 1925 Schlemmer wrote; 'I arrived at abstraction, Picasso, Archipenko and others. The essential elements: "Simple Forms."

Archipenko only received his first one man exhibition in Paris posthumously in 1969. Yet his early work almost certainly influenced both Russian avant garde artists and european painters and sculptors. Archipenko belonged to a slightly earlier transfer from Russia to Paris. He was in his early twenties when he exhibited at the Salon des Independants and at the Salon d'Atoumne. His most innovative period is often confined to 1910-1913 even though he continued working and experimenting throughout a long and varied artistic career up until he died in 1964.

In these early Paris years Archipenko virtually single-handedly established an entirely new language for 20th century sculpture. His name has been linked both with painters and sculptors alike. But unlike any other artist of his day, Archipenko created well over 200 different sculptures during the time of his arrival in 1908 and his departure for Berlin in 1921. Even in the short span from 1910-15 he produced at least 60 diverse works. His comtempories such as Picasso, Brancusi, Boccioni or Duchamp-Villion hardly exceeded creating 20 works apiece.

Archipenko's bold innovations were not adapted, at the time, by the Parisian sculptors who all remained attached to sculpture "in the mass." It was clearly later that Liptchitz and Gonzalez, each through his own personality were to apply the principles so clearly enunciated by Archipenko, when he himself had already abandoned them.

In Berlin Archipenko's participation in the Herbstalon of 1913 caused a sensation. In the essays that were later to appear in the same city, certain works of his were to be considered as cornerstones of the new sculpture-more specifically these were The Pierre Carousel[1913] and The Gondolier [1914]. The latter was analysed in depth in one of the 1st editions of De Stijl in 1918 by Georges Vantongerloo. In 1921 another more active description of The Gondolier was again furnished in an edition of De Stijl, this time by the poet, Ivan Goll. He wrote that; 'The masterpiece of that time was The Gondolier, an impressive vertical barely supported on a diagonal. In the whole-work one senses a floating equilibrium that vibrates in every part of the image like the presence of imaginery lagoons, the mystery of primal forces. one arm only, and nothing but a leg, complementary to the single oar - and over it all a deep peace, the peace of one who knows that he will strike shore.' (15)

Coupled with his vast range of 3-dimensional sculpture, Archipenko also appreciated 2-dimentional prints and drawings. From 1915 onwards he introduced a new concept into sculpture, these he called "Sculpto-paintings" this name refers to reliefs generally made of plaster which were carved or painted.
In an extract from Archipenko: Fifty Creative Years 1908-1958, written by the artist himself he wrote of the value of colour on form and of the importance of mixed and assembled medias in future 20th century sculpture; 'Sculpto-painting is not only a renaissance of the vanished tendency to unite form and color; it is rather a new medium of art, due to a specific conjunction and amalgamation of materials, forms and colours. Aesthetically and technically, sculpto-paintings are entirely different from the coloured reliefs a la Della Robbia or the Egyptian and Assyrian. The novelty does not lie in the fact that sculpto-paintings are reliefs, but in the fact that stylistically, conceptionally and aesthetically they are new, as a result of entirely new materials and techniques.' (16)

This return to the use of colour in sculpture was engineered by Archipenko, but he desired not purely to imitate or emulate the past with its ancient cultures, but to draw on these traditions to reinterpret aspects of these age-old artistic practices and to recreate a new language in sculpture. He also opted for a return to "Polychrome" in sculptural work. This ancient Greek practice of "Many-coloured sculpture" had been abandoned during the Renaissance, simultaneously the possibilities of transparency and reflection in sculpture were virtually ignored after the demise of the classical world. These long forgotten aspects of sculpture were also revived by Archipenko during his career.

During the Renaissance, the casting aside of polychrome practice encouraged sculptors to explore the actual surface qualities of their medium. They began to unearth the potential of the surface qualities which had previously been hidden under a coat of paint. Andrew Stonyer in his article on Transparency and reflection in Sculpture and Architecture writes; 'commencing with Donatello and, subsequently Michelangelo, then to the present century, both form and surface have been rendered increasingly light-sensitive.' (17)

Stonyer mentions a curious and innovative project undertaken by Bernini during the Renaissance. Bernini in his project, used a figurative, spiritual theme and utilised both reflective and transparent elements for his piece. He created a work entitled The ecstasy of St. Theresa, it comprises a marble sculpture lit from above through "hidden mirrors" of colored glass. These windows are arranged so that color and quality of light change with the daily passage of the sun. The effect of the colored light focussed from the windows above is further emphasised by the smooth delicate finish of the sculpture. This energizes the drama of the spectacle, since it enables infinite combinations of reflected light to flicker and dance about the body of the Saint.(18)

After the Renaissance, innovation in sculpture was not encouraged. Ironically enough it was Archipenko's role model Leonardo DaVinci whose assumption that sculpture was inferior to painting because of it's dependance on daylight, had a negative impact on sculpture. In the early 20th century, there was extensive research into the workings of the human mind. The physical and psychological effects of light on humans was one area, that spilled over in to the arts. Dr. Thomas R.C. Sison has written; 'Light does not merely lend illumination to human existence but exerts a powerful physical force, affecting many compounds within the body, some metabolic processes, the life and generation of cells-even the rhythms of life. Light is ubiquitous, it can be manipulated, and it is not entirely benign.' (19)

But central to Archipenko's revival of colour, with it's respected associates reflection and transparency, was the notion that all these devices, mixed assemblages, sculpto-painting and polychrome were there to serve in the spiritual uplifting of the viewer. He did not want these elements to detract from the seriousness of a work, he wrote of this both in his article on "Sculpto-painting" and in his "Polychrome manifesto" 'Sculpto-painting, is more effective and diverse in character than the usual painting or un-colored sculpture. The unification of colour and form does not interfere with spiritualization; on the contrary, it facilitates the expression of the abstract in this medium. There is here no naturalistic coloration such as blue-eyed, black-eyebrowed, red-lipped mannequins. It is an entirely different technico-aesthetic problem which sculpto-painting resolves while engaged in dealing with the abstract, spiritual or symbolic'(20)

Modern polychromy for Archipenko has an energy which combined with matter. He wrote that "in this modern era matter alone is acknowledged not to be a totality; natural creative energy with its complex transformations is considered to be the prime cause of evolution. It is, therefore, evident that the reciprocal infusions of colors-forms in polychromy are comparable to the concept of transformative energy. Such energy constitutes the life of polychrome art. It is the art of interfusing which is the lost secret, hidden in ancient polychromy which is far richer than comtemporary non-colored sculpture."

Polychromy also had a lyrical aspect to it which enriched and envoked in the viewer multiple reactions. This harmonious effect was described by Archipenko as a symphony of variations which were made up of form-color elements interacting with symbolic, esthetic, spiritual, creative and emotional contents. For him 'new polychromy' consisted of a new aesthetic and technique which unified form with color. He reckoned that their reciprocal overlapping and interfusion, he dominance of one over another, their harmony or contrast and their rhythms are all adjustable according to the symbolic or stylistic problems. (21)

This new language of optical perception, picked up on new way of transmitting creative messages. The emphasis on the creative potential of combining color with form help to lead receptive audiences further up the path towards understanding a work. Polychrome acts as a catalyst in this process, providing a vehicle for the artist to imbue his work with subtleties and spiritual reactions.

Archipenko felt that the value of polychromy was not just confined to 3-dimentional sculpture but that it lent itself equally to reliefs, mixed media constructions reliefs and sculpto-paintings. He wrote of its adaptability 'for the expression of relativity and for symbolical intrepretations which are indirect representations of the object.'

Archipenko says that artists by rejecting polychrome are depriving themselves and their work of the spiritual and esthetic value intrinsic in the unity of color with forms. He questions the deterioration of polychrome, asking if its decline is the result of irrational theory which teaches that pure-form is realised in mono-colored matter only, when in a day to day reality we live surrounded by colored forms.

'Polychrome sculpture, like nature, produces an infinite variety of effects and has more potential and vitality than flat painting or mono-colored sculpture, since the reality of forms produces natural light and shadow in which the patterns of colors automatically change their nuances.'

In Constructivist Art at the beginning of the 20th Century, Light Space and Transparency were three of the most vital aesthetic requirements. Because the nature of this area is a vast and constantly changing realm, this essay is simply an attempt to trace the emergence of these essential and inseperable elements during this century. Because they have now become an integral part of all modern sculpture, further investigative work on this topic is vital if we are to properly understand and appreciate the full impact and significance of these early 20th century Pioneers in their respective crafts.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 4

(1) ARTS COUNCIL. - George Costakis Collection in conjunction with Rosc '88

(2) MILNER, John 1983 p. 18

(3) BOWLT, John Mag. Structurist (Canada) No. 27,28 1987,1988 p. 20

(4) BETZ, Margaret extract from the Icon and Russian Modernism p.40

(5) MILNER, John, 1983 p. 22

(6) BETZ, Margaret, as above p. 42

(7) ditto p. 43,

(8) ditto p. 43

(9) ditto p. 43

(10) BOWLT, as above p. 19

(11) GEARY, David - Structurist 1987,1988 p.23

(12) BOWLT, John " p.7

(13) " p.22

(14) " " p.22

(15) Ext. from Alexander Archipenko Centenary Catalogue org. by Washington D.Cs National Gallery p. 53

(16) KARSHAN, Donald 1974 p.32

(17) STONYER, Andrew Structurists 1987,1988 p.82

(18) ditto p.82

(19) BIRREN, Faber - Colour and Human Response p. 59

(20) KARSHAN, Donald H. 1985 p. 22

(21) " " p.22

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(15) ARTS COUNCIL; George Costakis Collection in conjunction with Rosc '88 (Ireland 1988)

(16) WASHINGTON D.C.s National Gallery
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(1) STRUCTURIST (CANADA) No. 27,28 1987,88

4 extracts from the above magazine:

(a) GEARY, David 'Transparency in Art' p.23-26

(b) STONYER, Andrew 'Transparency and Reflection in Sculpture and Architecture' p.80-94

(c) BOWLT, John E. 'The Presence of Absence: The Aesthetic of Transparency in Russian Modernism' p.15-22

(d) BORNESTEIN, Eli 'Aspects of Transparency and Reflection p.53-59

(2) TILGHMAN, B.R. 'Picture Space and Moral Space' in British Journal of Aesthetics, Volume 28 No. 4 Autumn 1988