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A THEORY OF THE ARTWORLD AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ART EDUCATION

by

Suzanne M. Harding

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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1981

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VITA

The author, Suzanne M. Harding, is the daughter of D.A. and Mildred (Dietz) Harding. She was born on May 27, 1945 in Indianapolis, Indiana. She presently resides in Chicago, Illinois.

Her elementary education was obtained in Indianapolis and she received her secondary education at Ladywood High School in Indianapolis where she was graduated in May, 1963.

She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Art in May, 1967 from the College of Mount St. Joseph on-the-Ohio, Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1968, she spent one year in study at Marian College in Indianapolis in education courses for teacher certification. She received a Master of Science from the Institute of Design, Illinois Institute of Technology in Visual Education in December, 1975. She entered Loyola University of Chicago to begin doctoral studies in June, 1976. Her work at Loyola has been concentrated in the areas of philosophy of education, documentary research and reading theory.

She taught sixth grade at St. Andrew School in Indianapolis during the 1967-68 school year. She then taught art and English at Marywood High School, Evanston, Illinois. From 1970 until 1974 she was chairperson of the Art Department at Immaculata High School. She has been Art Director for Media Services, Loyola University since 1976.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
VITA	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	v
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE RENAISSANCE: BIRTH OF THE ARTWORLD	8
Introduction	8
Technological/Internal Discoveries	10
Art Theory	20
Individualism in the Visual Arts	31
Summary	47
III. SEVENTEENTH TO TWENTIETH CENTURIES: MATURATION OF THE ARTWORLD	54
Introduction	54
The Mannerists	54
Art Theory and Philosophical Thought	61
Formalization of the Institution	71
Summary	81
IV. AESTHETIC THEORY AND THE ARTWORLD	88
Introduction	88
Origins of Aesthetic Theory	89
The Modern Artworld	99
Summary	115
V. A THEORY OF THE ARTWORLD	120
Introduction	120
An Institutional Analysis	120
The Artworld Revisited	142
VI. PHOTOGRAPHY: A CASE STUDY	175
Introduction	175
A Case Study	176
VII. IMPLICATIONS OF A THEORY OF THE ARTWORLD	204
Introduction	204
Art Education	204
Visual Education	212
BIBLIOGRAPHY	217

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1.	Detail, jamb figures, Royal Portal, Chartres Cathedral, early twelfth century	15
2.	*St. Mark*, Donatello, 1411-13	15
3.	*David*, Donatello, 1430-32	15
4.	Sketchbook, Villard de Honnecourt, thirteenth century	18
5.	*The Last Supper*, Leonardo da Vinci, 1495-98	58
6.	*The Last Supper*, Tintoretto, 1592-94	58
7.	*The Calling of St. Matthew*, Caravaggio, 1597-98	67
8.	*The Stone Breakers*, Gustave Courbet, 1849	101
9.	Detail, *Portrait of Mme. Pissarro Sewing Near a Window*, Camille Pissarro, 1878-79	101
10.	*Guitar and Flowers*, Juan Gris, 1912	103
11.	*Man's Head*, Pablo Picasso, 1907	103
12.	Mask, Itumba region, Africa	103
13.	*Still Life*, Pablo Picasso, 1914	106
14.	*Painted Bronze*, Jasper Johns, 1960	114
15.	*Spiral Jetty*, Robert Smithson, 1970	114
16.	Detail, *The Two Ways of Life*, O. G. Rejlander, 1857	178
17.	*Fading Away*, H. P. Robinson, 1858	178
18.	Thomas Carlyle, Julia Margaret Cameron, 1867	179
19.	Family Picking Nutmeats at Home, Lewis Hines, 1911	185

20. *The Heritage of Motherhood*, Gertrude Kasebier, ca. 1905 185

21. Snapshot, anonymous photographer, n.d. 186

22. Studio portrait, Farley Studio, n.d. 186

23. Aerial view of mud flats, St. Brieuc, France, U.S. Air Force, 1944 192

24. *Artichoke, halved*, Edward Weston, 1930 192

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this manuscript are (1) to examine the system of the visual arts in light of its historical development; (2) to propose an aesthetic theory which is appropriate to such development; and (3) to describe the implications of such a theory for art education. We now call such diverse objects as prehistoric cave paintings, Maori war clubs, Cretan pottery, Greek *kouros* figures, medieval illuminated manuscripts, paintings of the Italian Renaissance, Amish quilts, abstract paintings of the twentieth century, enlarged comicbook figures, photographs of space and "earthworks" works of art. When we consider the real diversity of such objects, it becomes apparent that for an aesthetic theory to deal successfully with such a heterogeneous group of objects it must be an open-textured one; it must allow for all of these objects yet must not be so inclusive as to allow *any* object to be viewed as a work of art. Such a theory is that of the Artworld, that is, a theory of art as a social practice. It is the contention of this manuscript that the Artworld originated in the Renaissance period of Western history and gradually evolved into the practice of the visual arts with which we are now familiar. It is also the contention of this manuscript that the practice of art as it now exists is based on the autonomy of the work of art, that is, that the work of art is created primarily to be viewed and appreciated.

Chapters II through IV will examine the historical development of the Artworld. Chapter II will consider the birth of the Artworld in the Renaissance and the various currents which met at this time to originate the concept of the Artworld. The period of the Renaissance saw the initial changes of the medieval art product to the art object, of the craftsman to artist, and the shift in audience from the general population to a smaller group of educated laymen, or connoisseurs. These initial changes were intensified during the Mannerist and Baroque periods by a self-conscious attitude toward the creation of art, by the concept of artistic genius and by the introduction of art theory which addressed the aims and nature of the creative act. These developments will be examined in Chapter III. Chapter IV will examine developments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which were witness to the formalization of the Artworld. These developments include published criticism, museums and galleries, and the installation of critics and curators as important arbiters of taste in the Artworld. This period also saw the emergence of art history and aesthetics as specific systems of study. All of these gradual steps leading to a formal practice also reflect the emergence of the work of art as autonomous. They also lead to what I have termed the "museum context," that is, the subordination of utilitarian contexts of objects brought into the Artworld to the demands of aesthetic interest.

Chapter V will examine the institutional theory of art of George Dickie. In his institutional analysis he describes the artworld as a loose coalition of artists, presenters and audience who are governed by the primary and secondary conventions of the artworld. However, in

an attempt to keep the theory open-ended, he has permitted his art-world to be so open-ended that no institutional analysis is possible. By applying John Rawls' definition of an institution to the basic concept of the artworld, we may define membership, office holders, procedures and the conventions which define the work of art. The primary convention is the agreement of artist and audience that they are engaged in a formal activity, and that activity is the creation and viewing of the autonomous work of art. The secondary conventions include the handling of the plastic elements, the history and theory surrounding the artwork. Membership is acquired by acknowledgment of the primary convention and some knowledge of the secondary conventions. Office holders obtain offices by publicly demonstrating their expert knowledge of the conventions. Artworks are defined as such in a public manner by the office holders in their presentation of the works to the members of the Artworld or by the artist in a private sense by the act of creation. Chapter VI is an institutional analysis of photography and is based on the premise that if the theory of the Artworld which I will advance is indeed a good analytical tool, then the confusions which seem to exist about photography will be explicated.

In light of the elitist nature of the Artworld, its insertion into a mass educational system would seem to produce a basic dichotomy. Chapter VII will examine this basic dichotomy, that of the exlusive nature of the Artworld and the democratization of the art experience within the mass education system, and the implications this dichotomy has for art education. One implication is the substantial increase in the teaching of the secondary conventions of the Artworld to students

as potential members of the Artworld. Another implication is the teaching of a visual education based not solely on the conventions of the Artworld but rather on conventions more readily accessible to students of mass education, that is, those worlds of the "mass arts."

Before beginning this study, I would like to comment upon several points which are germane to the following text. The first concerns the view that the Artworld originated in the Renaissance. At this point in time, we are accustomed to viewing the visual, musical, theatrical and literary works of past cultures as works of art. This attitude is so ingrained that we do not consider the utilitarian contexts in which these objects were created. Indeed, information about these contexts has often been lost in the centuries or has been clouded by current perspectives. In an article describing the genesis and development of the modern system of the arts, Paul Oskar Kristeller has noted:

> If the absence of a scheme of the fine arts before the eighteenth century and its fluctuations in that century have escaped the attention of most historians, this merely proves how thoroughly and irresistibly plausible the scheme has become to modern thinkers and writers.[1]

I would extend these comments not only to the system of the arts but to the autonomous nature of the work of art. In other words, I perceive a gradual "awakening" on the part of both artist and audience since the Renaissance to the creation of a work which was bereft of a utilitarian context, which was created to be viewed and appreciated. I have described this as a "gradual awakening" because I think it was an evolution in the way the work of art was perceived; this evolution was begun in the Renaissance and was completed by the nineteenth century. We are

cognizant to an extent of this change in the perception of the artwork, but I think that it must be fully understood to understand in turn the nature of the Artworld and the conventions which have accrued since this change. As Kristeller has noted, a modern attitude may be so pervasive that we do not notice its presence in an analysis of the past. In examining the Artworld, I think we must be fully cognizant of the changes begun in the Renaissance.

In connection with this change in the perception of the artwork, I will use the terms "art product" and "crafts" to describe artworks made before the Renaissance, particularly those made in the medieval times. I will do this to delineate their utilitarian nature and their quotidian place in life. I in no way intend these terms to connote a negative or derogatory meaning. I am in no way suggesting that they lack qualities which can be appreciated, nor that a sense of these qualities was absent from their making. Rather, I am suggesting that the sense of design of their makers was bound to the utilitarian context of the object, whether that context was one of use, religion or magic.

It should also be noted that in using the term "Artworld" I am referring to a social practice. In suggesting that there are perimeters to the Artworld, I am referring only to actions which are perceivable as either belonging to the practice or to some other practice. The "ground" of the Artworld exists in the activities and relationships of human beings involved in the arts; it does not reside in the repositories of the artwork. Thus, the term "institution" is used only in a broad sociological meaning, that is, a pattern of behavior by a

group of people which is organized and is understood by the participants.

I would also like to note the description of the Artworld in terms of birth and maturation. If we think of a newborn child, we do not expect the child to exhibit all of the traits of an adult nor to exhibit even the traits of a more mature child. The newborn, while holding these traits in potentiality, is expected to be immature, is expected to be an as yet unformed possibility. In the same way, the Artworld of the Renaissance cannot be expected to exhibit all of the traits of a fully matured Artworld. However, just as we examine the newborn infant for future developments and characteristics, so we should search for the patterns in the newborn Artworld which may come to fruition at a time in the future. In the same way, we must examine the centuries following the Renaissance as a maturation period for the Artworld. As the child grows, he becomes less egocentric, more aware of the social conventions that surround his behavior and, at the same time, more self-aware. For the Artworld, the centuries following the Renaissance provided such a period of growth and development, a period of self-discovery and formalization of behavior.

Finally, I would like to note that I will limit my comments to the visual arts, simply because this is my area of expertise. I believe the theory of the Artworld which I will describe is certainly applicable to the theatre or to music and probably to the study of literature. Each of the arts has evolved into a definable practice and during this process has become a formalized entity. Each has followed some sequence of growth which has witnessed the accumulation of

conventions that govern the practice. However, the evolution of these arts will not be addressed in this manuscript, nor will their current status be discussed except in passing reference to their intersection with the visual arts.

Notes:

[1] Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (II)," *The Journal of the History of Ideas* 13 (January 1952): 45.

CHAPTER II

THE RENAISSANCE: BIRTH OF THE ARTWORLD

Introduction

The modern Artworld, composed of artists and audience, performances and museums, works of art intended to be aesthetically appreciated and theories which discuss art, is a phenomenon familiar to most people today. However, this familiar Artworld has not always existed in its current form. Medieval Europe knew little of artists and nothing of museums; the Polynesian carver certainly did not believe he was making a "work of art." How then did the modern Artworld come about? It is my intention in this chapter to demonstrate that a set of circumstances came together during the Renaissance to give birth to the Artworld, and that the informal nature of the Artworld gradually matured or evolved into a more formal institution.

This chapter deals with the Renaissance and with the various elements that combined to see the art object emerge from the medieval art product, the artist separate from the craftsman, and a gap widen between the art establishment and the general public. The elements that are explored within this chapter are the technological changes which affected the practice of art, discoveries internal to the arts, the role of a theoretical approach to art, the changing status of the artist, the involvement of laymen in a critical position and the establishment of academies. However, before we begin, it is perhaps best to examine a few terms that will be used in the following pages.

First, the term "Renaissance" must be clarified. For the purpose of our discussion, I would like to include what is commonly called the Proto-Renaissance within the general category of the Renaissance so that the time-frame is inclusive of the fourteenth through the early sixteenth centuries. Paul Oskar Kristeller has remarked on the ambiguity involved in the term "Renaissance" and has concluded:

> I . . . prefer to define the Renaissance as that historical period which understood itself as a Renaissance or rebirth of letters and of learning, whether the reality conformed to this claim or not. Yet I think it is still safer to avoid even this questionable commitment, and to identify the Renaissance with the historical period that extends roughly from 1300 to 1600 A.D. and that has been conventionally designated by that name.[1]

Although Kristeller ends the Renaissance at 1600, I would rather hold to the feeling of Kristeller's definition and end the Renaissance period with the emergence of the Mannerists at roughly 1520. In using the time-frame from 1300 to the second decade of the sixteenth century, I believe that the changes in the making and viewing of art seem less startling and more understandable as an evolutionary process which was part of the complex growth of Western culture during this period.

Second, in order to delineate the work produced by the medieval craftsman and the Renaissance artist, I use the terms "art product" and "art object." Both refer to the work of art, but the change in terms is used to denote the attitudinal changes within the maker and viewer of art in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance. "Art product" is the work of a craftsman, "art object" is the work of an artist. Whether we are looking at a page from the *Book of Kells*, Simone Martini's *Annunciation* or Durer's *The Four Apostles*, we are viewing a work of art and an aesthetic object; we do so as persons of the twen-

tieth century who are familiar with the fully matured Artworld. Yet the illuminator, Martini and Durer would have looked at the products of their labor quite differently; it is this difference that the terms "art product" and "art object" refer to. Both are different from "aesthetic object" which is not used until there is a full system of aesthetic theory.[2]

Third, I use the term "utilitarian" in the widest sense possible. By "utilitarian" I mean the use to which an object is put and I am not restricting the use to a purely physical sense. For example, we can see the immediate purpose of a window -- to provide light and keep the elements out. Windows are used much the way a spoon or a spade is used. However, the stained glass windows of the medieval cathedral also provided decoration for the church, education in the Church's rich pageantry for the illiterate and inspiration for prayer. Thus the windows served purposes which went beyond a narrow usage of utilitarian. It is this wider sense that I would like to employ, so that I am not restricting an object's use to a purely physical sense.

With these distinctions in mind, let us turn to the Renaissance and the birth of the Artworld.

Technological/Internal Discoveries

The Renaissance was a time when Western Europe seemed to take on a new and exciting character. Within the space of two hundred years towns had replaced the feudal manor as the hub of activity; trade and the fervor of exploration had supplanted the medieval meditative spirit; and a rising middle class, combined with an increasing cen-

tralized royal authority, had overcome the feudal system itself. Greater availability of classical manuscripts, the shift from Scholasticism to a broader approach to philosophy and science, and the influence of Italian humanism combined to broaden intellectual horizons as the physical horizons had been expanded. Art was no less susceptible to this changing tempo than any other facet of life; in fact, the changes were perhaps nowhere else so tangible. The Renaissance marked a turning point in the history of art and it marked the beginning of the modern Artworld; it was a time of breaking away from medieval traditions and forming a new way of making art and looking at art. During this period painting was freed from the walls (fresco painting) and the manuscript page, sculpture from architectural detail, and the artist from the status of craftsman. The medieval *ars* began the transition to *Beaux Arts* and in the process created the aesthetic object, an object whose purpose was to be appreciated in a special manner. The result of the ascendency of the aesthetic object was to create a chasm between the "Fine Arts" and the "utilitarian crafts," between the artist and the craftsman. The practice and appreciation of the Fine Arts then became a special practice -- the Artworld. The Artworld existed outside the normal activities of day-to-day life, and its boundaries were delineated by a set of conventions that divided initiates from non-initiates, practitioners from non-practitioners, and art objects from non-art objects. As with any other institution, these conventions began informally and gradually became formal in nature. However, it is in the period of the Renaissance that these informal conventions became apparent and laid the foundations for a more formal approach.

Technological advancements, cultural change and the emergence of the individual from the society all contributed not only to the "rebirth" of the classical period but also to the birth of the modern Artworld.

Through all of the changes during the Renaissance ran the thread of technological advances. These ranged from innovations in mining, manufacturing, and agriculture to development of precision instruments, chart and map making, and the building of ships and roads. The last of these was extremely important as better communication from various points of the continent contributed much to the dissemination of ideas. The process of paper making also made its appearance in Europe at this time. The first European paper factory was founded at Padua in 1340, and by 1450 paper was in common use throughout all Europe. A related invention -- and probably the most important invention of the period -- was that of moveable type, making the printing of multiple copies feasible. In 1423 Coster of Harlem made the first engraved single page, and by 1456 Gutenberg and Faust had printed the Bible. As the new roads had made communications easier and quicker, so paper making and moveable type made the dissemination of ideas much quicker. Both paper making and engraving also added to the dissemination of artistic styles by making one artist or group of artists aware of what other artists were doing. This was because engravings could be made in multiple copies, were relatively cheap in materials, time and labor, and easily portable -- especially when contrasted with frescoes or architectural sculpture. In addition, the low price of paper enabled the artist to do more in the way of preliminary sketches and studies from nature which were saved for future reference, often in

notebook form. Another aspect of the changing technology was the shift from fresco to tempera to oil as a medium and wall to wood panel to canvas as a painting surface. Jan van Eyck is credited with the first successful use of oils -- although oils had been used for a period of time with tempera or on a tempera ground -- and Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, ca. 1480, is done on canvas. As in most cases, the technology would have been irrelevant had not the desire for change been present. To the North, Gothic architecture left little room or possibility for fresco murals and the very style of book illuminators led them to change from the page to the panel. Helen Gardner points to this change in Northern painters:

> Toward the end of the fourteenth century, illuminations began to take on the character of independent paintings, expanding upon the page until they occupied it completely. By about 1400, these new forces generated in miniatures seem to demand larger surfaces, and the shift was made to panel painting.[3]

In the South, this change from wall to panel was not as rapid nor direct because of both the different architecture which had plenty of room for mural painting and the predominance of patronage over free trade; nevertheless, it did occur. I believe the important point here is that the technological advances combined with the growing needs of the painter to help remove painting from the close association with architecture and decoration that it had during the Middle Ages and provided it with a "space" and place of its own. The painting became an entity in itself, a special area delineated by its frame.

If we examine the sculptured figures of the Gothic and Renaissance we can see the same tendency toward the creation of a self-contained space which becomes the art object. The jamb figures of the

Royal Portal of Chartres Cathedral, ca. 1145-1170, can be viewed primarily as an integral part of the building facade (see figure 1). They do not "reach beyond" the building because they are such an integral part of the building itself. This is not to say that they do not hold aesthetic interest for us today, for they surely do; rather, when they were created they were made as part of the building and were not viewed as a separate entity in themselves. In contrast, we can view Donatello's *St. Mark* which was created for the Or San Michele in Florence in the early part of the fifteenth century (figure 2). Not only does the classical influence show in the distributed weight, the flowing drapery, or the less stylized features, but also in the fact that the statue is more indicative of a figure for a niche in the building than an integral part of the architectural features. An even more conclusive figure can be seen in Donatello's *David*, the first free-standing nude figure since Roman times (figure 3). Gardner describes this figure in the following way:

> The nude as such had been proscribed in the Christian Middle Ages both as indecent and idolatrous, and was shown only rarely, and then only in biblical or moralizing context, like the Adam and Eve story or descriptions of sinners in hell. Donatello reinvented the classical type, even though in this case we have neither god nor athlete but the young David, slayer of Goliath, biblical ancestor and antitype of Christ, and symbol of the Florentine love of liberty. . . Although the body has an almost Praxitelean radiance and a sensuous quality unknown to medieval figures, David is involved in a complex psychological drama unknown to antique sculpture. The glance of this youthful, still adolescent hero is not directed primarily toward the severed head of Goliath but toward his own graceful, sinuous body, as though, in consequence of his heroic deed, he were becoming conscious for the first time of its beauty, its vitality, and its strength. This self-awareness, this discovery of the self, is, as we have stressed, a dominant theme in Renaissance art.[4]

Figure 1: Detail, jamb figures, Royal Portal, Chartres, early twelfth century.

Figure 2: *St. Mark*, Donatello, Donatello, 1411-13.

Figure 3: *David*, Donatello, 1430-32.

The above described "self-awareness" was shown not only in the e-merging individualism of the Renaissance but in the increasing "self-awareness" of the space in which the work of art was set.

While this visual framing may seem a relatively minor point, I think it is very important because it released painting and sculpture from their dependence upon the architecture in which they were embedded. As long as painting and sculpture were closely associated with other objects, they also shared the context, and to some extent, the meaning, of the other object. Thus, the altar panels in a church were very much locked into the context of a church and the meaning of religious ritual. A framed painting, however, began to lose the close contextual association and could be viewed as something in itself. This is not to say that the painting was, at the moment of its first framing, seen as an aesthetic object. That was another and more complex step. It is merely argued here that the changes in the technology of the arts affected, to a degree, the way that the arts were presented. In a like way, the way they were presented affected the way that they were perceived.

Other currents which seemed to meet in the Renaissance and change the course of the arts were "internal discoveries" within the arts. The most important of these was the use of linear perspective, generally credited to Brunelleschi (1377-1446). This new "optical world" affected painting in two ways: it provided a theoretical basis for painting and it turned the painter's vision to the study of nature. Perspective used a great deal of geometry and was thought to be mathematical in nature; and as such was thought to possess a theoretical precision and accuracy that previously painting had lacked. Particu-

larly within the new "picture space," that is, the framed or delineated space, perspective brought the suggestion of a window open upon reality, that is, a selected and arranged moment from life. Gardner states:

> This discovery was of enormous importance, making for what has been called the rationalization of sight, the bringing of our random and infinitely various visual sensations under a simple rule that is expressible mathematically. . . There is little doubt that perspective, with its new mathematical authority and certitude, conferred a kind of esthetic legitimacy from the fact that it made the picture *measurable* and exact.[5]

By "measurable," I think Gardner is indicating the artist's feeling of an increased ability to replicate at will what was seen and also the ability to "check" the work he had done in a somewhat scientific manner. The Renaissance artist believed that the mathematical foundation of perspective gave the artist criteria by which he could correct mistakes -- and perceive that he had made the mistakes. We will return to the role of theory in the development of the Fine Arts at a later point; suffice it to say at this point that perspective provided the link between painting and theory.

Perspective also gave the artist the tools to approach nature in an objective and investigative manner. This is not to say that the medieval art maker did not draw from nature; rather, he approached nature in a less analytic manner. For example, Villard de Honnecourt writing in the thirteenth century notes: "You should know that this lion was also drawn from life."[6] However, this note appears at the end of a description of medieval lion taming which suggested that a lion could be manipulated by beating two dogs within the lion's sight. Both the description and the sketch (figure 4) demonstrate a credulous attitude

Figure 4: Sketch Book, Villard de Honnecourt, 13th century.

that lacks the scientific objectivity of the Renaissance artist. Perhaps the key to the difference between the medieval and Renaissance artist's attitude toward the natural world lies in the word "analytic." The medieval art maker used his perceptions of the world in a general sense and as an expression of his faith; his attention was given to an internal as well as an external world. His perceptions were not obtained through systematic study, investigations or experimentation. In contrast, the Renaissance artist isolated and dissected the particulars of the world around him to better understand the world and to put his work on a firm theoretical foundation; he based these investigations on scientific objectivity and experimentation as they existed at the time. So we might say that "analytic" carried connotations of scien-

tific objectivity and a theoretical nature to the Renaissance artist that would not have interested the medieval art maker because fidelity to images of this world was not his main concern. Also, perhaps because of the weight of medieval tradition which was transmitted through the guild system and its stable and slow-changing nature, the medieval art maker learned his craft from the master rather than from an independent study of nature. Cennino Cennini, writing in *The Craftsman's Handbook*, represents a mid-point between medieval and Renaissance thought. He commends copying from a master but also practicing from nature. For instance, he says: "Having first practiced drawing for a while as I have taught you . . . take pains and pleasure in constantly copying the best things which you can find done by the hand of great masters."[7] In a later section he adds:

> Mind you, the most perfect steersman that you can have, and the best helm, lie in the triumphal gateway of copying from nature . . . . and always rely on this with a stout heart, especially as you begin to gain some judgment in draftsmanship.[8]

Despite the mixed metaphor, the message is clear: learn the basics first from copying the best masters; then, as the eye becomes better trained, work from nature. Leon Battista Alberti gives a more characteristically Renaissance view:

> . . . there is no more appropriate and sure way than to follow nature, recalling in what way nature . . . has composed the surfaces well in beautiful bodies. To imitate her in this, it is necessary to take great thought and pains about it constantly.[9]

This trend toward an analytic study of nature reached a culmination in the work of Leonardo da Vinci, who was as much scientist as artist. While he does not forbid studying masters, he gives this warning: "The painter will produce pictures of little merit if he takes

the works of others as his standard: but if he will apply himself to learn from the objects of nature he will produce good results."[10] Thus da Vinci believed nature to be the best master. This attitude is quite different from the medieval practice of guild training. The use of perspective was instrumental in this change. Perspective aided in the quest for an analytic way of studying nature in that it gave the artist tools for checking his accuracy as well as a formal way for observing nature.

Art Theory

The transition from craftsman to artist, from craft to art, was in great part due to the increasing role of theory within the visual arts, to the disintegration of the guilds and their traditions, and to the emergence of the idea of the individual. Theory, as a foundation for art, provided a way of including the arts within the liberal arts, thus gaining the artist a status separate and distinct from craftsman; it also allowed the individual artist to be recognized as a man of a particular talent and genius. The medieval concept of the craftsman was that he manipulated materials or practiced the "mechanical arts." With the inclusion of the visual arts within an intellectual sphere, the status of the artist was elevated, and so was his product. H. W. Janson has noted:

> The liberal arts were defined by a tradition going back to Plato, and comprised the intellectual disciplines necessary for a gentleman's education . . .; the fine arts were excluded because they were "handiwork," lacking a theoretical basis. Thus, when the artist gained admission to this select group, the nature of his work had to be redefined: he was acknowledged as a man of ideas, rather than a mere manipulator of materials; and the work of art

> came to be viewed more and more as the visible record of his creative mind. This meant that art need not -- indeed, should not -- be judged by fixed standards of craftsmanship; soon everything that bore the imprint of a great master -- drawings, sketches, fragments, unfinished pieces -- was eagerly collected, regardless of its incompleteness.[11]

The ancient distinction between thought and manual labor which relegated the visual arts and their practitioners to a lesser status began to be challenged at the beginning of the fifteenth century, first by the addition of a theoretical basis and later by being compared with another artistic endeavor, poetry. Cennini, writing in the spirit of the Middle Ages, made one of the first tentative moves toward the inclusion of the visual arts within a theoretical context. He wrote:

> Man afterward [after the fall] pursued many useful occupations, differing from each other; and some were, and are, more theoretical than others; they could not all be alike, since theory is the most worthy. Close to that, man pursued some related to the one which calls for a basis of that, coupled with skill of hand: and this is an occupation known as painting, which calls for imagination, and skill of hand, in order to discover things not seen, hiding themselves under the shadow of natural objects, and to fix them with the hand, presenting to plain sight what does not actually exist. And it justly deserves to be enthroned next to theory, and to be crowned with poetry.[12]

The "theory" that Cennini refers to is the world of ideas, and he includes painting within this world not on the basis of its rationality but on almost a mystical basis. It is interesting to note that Cennini emphasizes the use of the imagination in painting. This is certainly not the scientific theory introduced later in the Renaissance, nor is it a sense of inventiveness based on the reality of nature; rather, it is almost a pre-scientific attitude, one in which it is claimed that the artist can unlock the mysteries of nature with his perceptive abilities. Thus, in a sense, the artist is allowed to participate, albeit

minimally, in the world of ideas. As such, theory is a first step in separating the craftsman, who merely manufactures, from the artist, who uses knowledge and imagination to create; however, for Cennini, this separation has not yet taken place.

The next step is provided by Alberti who begins the delineation between arts that are necessary and useful and those which go beyond utilitarian concerns. He wrote:

> Our Ancestors have left us many and various Arts tending to the Pleasure and Conveniency of Life, acquired with the greatest industry and diligence: Which Arts, tho' they all pretend, with a kind of emulation, to have in view the great end of being serviceable to mankind; yet we know that each of them in particular has something in it that seems to promise a distinct and separate Fruit: some Arts we follow for necessity, some we approve for their usefulness, and some we esteem because they lead us to the knowledge of things that are delightful.[13]

With this statement we find the first hint of the separation of crafts and arts -- some of the products that the artist manufactures are necessary and utilitarian in nature, some go beyond merely utilitarian concerns and are valuable for another reason. Alberti not only gives the suggestion of the separation of crafts and arts, but also gives the cornerstone of later art theory -- the concept of beauty as an end of art. His definition of beauty was a departure from the medieval concept because he used the concept in a sense that was divorced from the way it had been used by medieval philosophers like Thomas Aquinas: Alberti applied the concept of beauty to the visual arts. I think that Kristeller's explanation of the use of the term "beauty" in the medieval epoch is accurate and succinct:

> . . . the concept of beauty that is occasionally discussed by Aquinas and somewhat more emphatically by a few other medieval philosophers is not linked with the arts, fine or otherwise, but

> treated primarily as a metaphysical attribute of God and of his creation. . . Among the transcendentals or more general attributes of being, *pulchrum* does not appear in thirteenth-century philosophy, although it is considered as a general concept and treated in close connection with *bonum*.[14]

One of the most often quoted statements of Aquinas in relation to the concept of beauty is the following:

> . . . for those things are said to be beautiful which please when seen. Hence beauty consists in due proportion, for the senses delight in things duly proportioned, as in what is like them -- because the sense too is a sort of reason, as is every cognitive power. Now, since knowledge is by assimilation, and likeness relates to form, beauty properly belongs to the nature of a formal cause.[15]

However, this statement is not found within a discussion of art but rather within the context of goodness and is part of a refutation that goodness is an efficient cause. In contrast, Alberti offers a definition of beauty within the context of a discussion of architecture:

> In order therefore to be as brief as possible, I shall define Beauty to be a harmony of all the parts, in whatsoever subject it appears, fitted together with such proportion and connection, that nothing cou'd be added, diminished or altered, but for the worse.[16]

While the two statements may sound remarkably alike, Aquinas is speaking of what God makes while Alberti is speaking of what man makes, of the function of beauty within art. It is precisely this contextual difference which marks the separation of medieval and Renaissance thought.

As has been stated, Alberti was directing these remarks to architecture and was distinguishing between beauty as an inherent quality and Ornament which was an extrinsic quality. But this same notion of beauty is found in his other treatises on painting and sculpture. In all of these cases, beauty is thought of by Alberti as an idealized entity which requires some manipulation by the artist but which, at the

same time, is subject to rules. For example, Alberti related the story of Zeuxis with the following result:

> Because he [Zeuxis] thought he could not find in a single figure among the Crotonians as many aspects of beauty as he sought, since nature did not give them all to one person, he therefore selected the five most beautiful girls from all the youth of that land, to take from them whatever beauty is praised in women. . . Therefore we should always take what we want to paint from nature, and always pick out the most beautiful things.[17]

Thus we have a rather conflicting notion of beauty as both universal and particular, but what Alberti seems to be saying is that beauty is perceived by the viewer as a universal quality, a perfection which exists in the mind if not always in life. The artist may have to pick and choose in his execution of the work to achieve this sense of beauty, but it will then be recognizable to the viewer as such. Because of this notion of beauty, Alberti also made a distinction between personal taste and artistic judgment which called for an understanding of the arts on a rational plane:

> Whoever wou'd build so as to have their building commended . . . must build according to a justness or proportion, and this justness of proportion must be owing Art. Who therefore will affirm, that a handsome and just structure can be raised any otherwise than by the means of Art? and consequently this part of building, which relates to beauty and ornament . . . must without doubt be directed by some rules of art and proportion. . . But there are some who will by no means allow of this, and say that men are guided by a variety of opinions in their judgment of beauty and of buildings; and that the forms of structures must vary according to every man's particular taste and fancy, and not be tied down to any rules of Art. A common thing with the ignorant to despise what they do not understand! . . . I shall only take notice that all Arts were be-got by Chance and Observation, nursed by Use and Experience, and improved and perfected by Reason and Study.[18]

Anthony Blunt notes:

> Alberti believes that man recognizes beauty not by mere taste, which is entirely personal and variable and judges of attractive-ness, but by a rational faculty which is common to all men and

> leads to a general agreement about which works of art are beautiful. Beauty, in fact, is detected by a faculty of artistic judgment.[19]

In other words, because art is a rational undertaking and has a theoretical basis, it transcends personal taste.

The statements of Alberti by no means had the weight of a system of aesthetics at the time they were made, nor were they intended to. They were the explorations of an artist who was thinking about the work of art as art and not as craft. Nevertheless, the work of Alberti was an important step toward the formation of such an aesthetic. He consistently applied a theoretic approach in his writings -- a study of vision for painting, a system of proportions for sculpture, and a theory for city planning. In all of these works, Alberti carefully establishes the theoretical basis for each art and encourages the artist to do likewise. Alberti wrote:

> I like a painter to be as learned as he can in all the liberal arts, but primarily I desire him to know geometry. I like the saying of Pamphilus, an ancient, most noble painter, with whom the noble youths began to learn of painting. He held that no painter could paint well if he did not know a great deal of geometry.[20]

Alberti is important to the early Renaissance because he made the break from medieval tradition in the arts complete: he articulated a theoretical approach to the arts and turned the artist's eyes from tradition to a study of nature. It should be noted that, because of this theoretical approach, Alberti has little to say about the imagination and its role in the arts; in fact, he somewhat negates the role of imagination in order to emphasize the importance of reason and study, the theoretical foundations for art. Blunt notes:

> Seen in relation to his predecessors, Alberti's most striking characteristics are his rationalism, his classicism, his scientific method, and his complete faith in nature. In relation to the Neoplatonists of the later Quattrocento, the feature which stands out most is the complete absence of the idea of imagination in his writings. Everything is attributed to reason, to method, to imitation, to measurement; nothing to the creative faculty. And this is quite logical. The artists of the early Quattrocento whose ideas he expresses were entirely occupied with exploring the visible universe which they had so recently discovered.[21]

If Alberti brought theory to art, da Vinci might be said to have married the two. He was a learned man, as well read and as well versed in the classics as Alberti. He brought to painting an attitude of modern scientific observation, that is, experimentation and direct observation. His notebooks are full of the observations he made on a wide variety of subjects -- from anatomy to zoology. His work in anatomy alone demonstrates the amazing quality of his scientific observations. His devotion to what he would call a scientific approach to painting is demonstrated again and again throughout the *Notebooks*: "Practice should always be based upon a sound knowledge of theory, of which perspective is the guide and gateway, and without it nothing can be done well in any kind of painting."[22] And, "The painter who draws by practice and judgment of the eye without the use of reason, is like the mirror that reproduces within itself all the objects which are set opposite to it without knowledge of the same."[23] He even defines "perspective" in terms of its scientific appeal: "Perspective is a rational demonstration whereby experience confirms how all things transmit their images to the eye by pyramidal lines."[24] This definition also points to the value that da Vinci placed on experience, that is, what is directly observable. He believed that art was a science, and in that light could be verified

as accurate and could be judged. Blunt comments:

> Considered as a kind of knowledge, the art of painting is to be judged by two standards: the certainty of its premisses and methods, and the completeness of the knowledge represented by its productions.[25]

In other words, both process and product could be judged in a scientific way. Furthermore, while the painting is in progress, da Vinci encouraged the comments of other artists and laymen, believing that the artist could become too involved with the painting to remain objective and accurate. While this cannot be heralded as the birth of criticism, it is the first time that an artist is recorded as having asked for criticism from both fellow artists and laymen. And it indicated the beginning of judgment of painting in terms of the painting rather than in terms of the purpose of the painting.

But even as da Vinci espoused the scientific aspects of art, he, unlike Alberti, allowed the presence of imagination in his view of art. This was not the mystical imagination of Cennini but was closer to the modern ideas of talent and creativity. Giving precepts to the painter, da Vinci states:

> For these, then, and other reasons which might be given, you should apply yourself first of all to drawing, in order to present to the eye in visible form the purpose and invention created originally in your imagination; then proceed to take from it or add to it until you satisfy yourself; then have men arranged as models draped or nude in the way in which you have disposed them in your work; and make the proportions and size in accordance with perspective, so that no part of the work remains that is not so counselled by reason and by the effects in nature.[26]

The key phrase here is "present to the eye in visible form the purpose and invention created originally in your imagination," but I have included the rest of the passage to indicate where in da Vinci's scheme

he placed the imagination. He gives imagination the role of instigator in the creative process and "reason" the place of "judge" both in process and product. In another place, da Vinci makes this clear: "The idea or the faculty of imagination is both rudder and bridle to the senses, inasmuch as the thing imagined moves the sense."[27] In a sense, then, according to da Vinci, the imagination has a central place in the creative process, a place that cannot be fulfilled by reason alone. He believed that mathematics could be learned by consistent effort; painting, on the other hand, needed a student with imagination as well as a purely analytic ability.[28] However, it must be reiterated that imagination drew from the images of nature and that it worked hand-in-hand with reason to form the finished product. It is important to note that painting, in da Vinci's view, was a creative process, not merely manipulation of materials nor solely intellectual.

Da Vinci also had a definite opinion on the position of the visual arts. In an oft-quoted passage, he compared painting with poetry. Poetry's position within the liberal arts was firmly established and the comparison between poetry and art helped to elevate painting, and eventually the other visual arts. He begins his argument by asserting that vision is the most important sense -- which is consistent with his view that sense experience is the basis for knowledge[29] -- and that vision gives the most accurate representation of reality. He then points to the poet's reliance upon the verbal:

> Although the poet has as wide a choice of subject as the painter, his creations fail to afford as much satisfaction to mankind as do paintings, for while poetry attempts to represent forms, actions and scenes with words, the painter employs the exact images of these forms in order to reproduce them. Consider, then, which

> is more fundamental to man, the name of man or his image? The name changes with change of country; the form is unchanged except by death. And if the poet serves the understanding by way of the ear, the painter does so by the eye, which is the nobler sense.[30]

Thus, in terms of portraying a concrete reality, one that is perceivable and measurable, painting is superior to poetry; if painting is superior to poetry, then it should be valued at least as much as poetry and placed among intellectual pursuits. Da Vinci continues the argument by noting the non-mechanical nature of painting:

> You have set painting among the mechanical arts! Truly were painters as ready equipped as you are to praise their own works in writing, I doubt whether it would endure the reproach of so vile a name. If you call it mechanical because it is by manual work that the hands represent what the imagination creates, your writers are setting down with the pen by manual work what originates in the mind.[31]

This is an important passage because he emphasized the intellectual nature of painting and equated the pen and the brush as tools of each respective medium. It is also important because it sets aside painting from the mechanical arts. He pressed this point in a comparison of painting and sculpture, where he cited painting as being the more intellectual and demanding art of the two. However, he believed that sculpture also possessed enough of an intellectual basis to be separated from the mechanical arts. In this way, painting and sculpture were made different from the mechanical arts because they involved the use of the intellect while the mechanical arts involved the use of formula without thought. The role of theory in this process of separation was crucial for it formed the basis of the involvement of the intellect in areas that had previously been merely "mechanical."

This separation of the arts was initially informal in nature;

the Fine Arts were not yet named as such nor had they evolved to the point where the theoretical basis was entrenched enough to be challenged by new theories and new schools of painting. While different styles of painting existed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the notion of "schools" of art did not yet exist. Theory up to this point had served two related purposes: giving the visual arts a systematic and abstract foundation and, because of this foundation, elevating them to membership in the liberal arts. However, it had not received a doctrinal status yet; it was still a practical guide for the artist. Erwin Panofsky notes:

> The purpose of art theory as it was developed in the fifteenth century was primarily practical, only secondarily historical and apologetic, and in no way speculative. That is, it aimed at nothing more than, on the one hand, to legitimize contemporary art as the genuine heir of Greco-Roman antiquity and to wrest a place for it among the *artes liberales* by enumerating its dignity and merits; and, on the other hand, to provide artists with firm and scientifically grounded rules for their activity.[32]

It was during the sixteenth century that the Fine Arts began to be readily recognized as something separate from the crafts and that artistic theory began the transition to aesthetic theory. Blunt comments:

> . . . the painter, sculptor, and architect obtained recognition as educated men, as members of Humanist society. Painting, sculpture, and architecture were accepted as liberal arts, and are now grouped together as activities closely allied to each other and all differing fundamentally from the manual crafts. The idea of the "Fine Arts" comes into existence this way, though a single phrase is not attached to them till the middle of the sixteenth century, when they come to be known as the *Arti di disegno*. At the same time critics begin to have the idea of a *work of art* as something which is justified simply by its beauty and which is a luxury product.[33]

The first step toward the autonomous artwork had been taken.

Individualism in the Visual Arts

As in the early Renaissance when a series of currents ran together to change the direction of Western art, so in the late Renaissance several factors met -- not to change the direction of art, but rather to deepen and widen the channel first formed in the early Renaissance. These factors were the acknowledgment of the artist as a creative individual and a transition from art theory as a practical guide to art theory as speculation on the nature of the creative process. Central to both of these factors was the changing view toward the individual involved in the visual arts -- from craftsman to artist and from communal worker to a singular creative genius.

The individual craftsman of the Middle Ages existed as a cog in the machinery of artistic production, as part of a group effort to meet the demands of commissioned work. The workshop was a collaboration of master, journeymen and apprentices, all of whom contributed in varying degrees to the finished product. And the finished products were not just paintings or sculptures but rather a wide variety of everyday products from armorial bearings and flags to patterns for carpet-weavers and embroiderers. The medieval craftsman's workshop was essentially a guild workshop where those who could afford the products went to buy the objects that they needed or wanted to use. Painters belonged to the Guild of St. Luke which also included saddlers, glassworkers, mirror-workers and others. The communal concept and its weight upon the medieval craftsman is apparent; this influence lingered well into the early Renaissance. Hauser states:

> The artist's studio of the early Renaissance is still dominated by the communal spirit of the mason's lodge and the guild workshop; the work of art is not yet the expression of an independent personality, emphasizing his individuality and excluding himself from all extraneous influences. The claim independently to shape the whole work from the first stroke to the last and the inability to co-operate with pupils and assistants are first noticeable in Michelangelo, who, in this respect too, is the first modern artist. Until the end of the fifteenth century the artistic labour process still takes place entirely in collective forms.[34]

The guild system lost its predominance over artistic activity for a variety of reasons: the collapse of feudalistic society, the increasing amount of trade and commerce, the emergence of some masters who were more sought after than others, and the broadening arena of patronage. It might be noted here that where medieval craftsmen served Church and nobility, the artist of the Renaissance received patronage from Church, an increased nobility, and the merchant class. This broadened patronage and also meant in the South that the artist travelled more, thereby loosening guild restrictions. This long process might be seen as ending with the case of the Guild *vs*. Giovanni Battista Paggi in 1590 where the courts found in favor of Paggi and asserted his rights to be a painter in Genoa even though he had not received guild training. The freedom from guild restrictions and the broadening public interest contributed much to the interpretation of the artist as an individual. Blunt remarks: "In his new freedom the artist was no longer a purveyor of goods which every one needed and which could be ordered like any other material goods, but an individual facing a public."[35] This sense of artist as individual creator also caused a kind of competition that would have been unheard of in the medieval workshop. Students began seeking out certain masters because of their reputations; noble

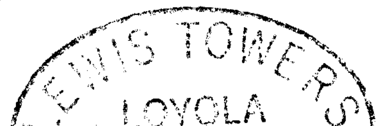
families employed those artists who were well-known and well though of; a town would hire an artist whose reputation would enhance their own. By the middle of the sixteenth century the medieval communal aspect had been laid to rest and the modern concept of the artist as creative individual was born. Blunt remarks:

> The artist was now faced with a wide public consisting of educated people, not merely of Church officials and a few princes, which he attempted to attract by his art; and in this spirit of competition he began to carry out works other than those directly commissioned. The artist was still closely tied to his public, and most of his work was commissioned. The days of exhibitions were yet a long way off.[36]

The feature of competition between individual artists also influenced the product of their work: their work came to be valued as the special product of a special talent. Bernard Myers comments:

> [During the sixteenth century] the individuality of the artist himself was not undermined; quite the contrary, he became a very significant figure indeed. He was no longer the simple guild artisan working for a local patron but more often an important social being, a free agent whose art (the product of his studio instead of his workshop) was much sought after by pope and prince. With his liberation from the guild, the object of art became an "aesthetic object" of interest to collectors and to dealers.[37]

It must be cautioned that the term "aesthetic object" in the above passage does not have its full modern connotations; instead, the phrase connotes an object set aside from utilitarian concerns, an object which might be considered beautiful or delightful but which does not yet have the weight of aesthetic theory attached to it. It must also be added that the reference to "collectors" and "dealers" carries somewhat different connotations from the modern sense. The collectors in the South were, for the most part, clergy and nobility who used art as much to enhance their own status as to simply appreciate it. In the North,


LEWIS TOWERS LOYOLA

where there was an active merchant class and fewer powerful noble families, there was more of an active trade in paintings. Booksellers, publishers of engravings, jewellers and innkeepers dealt in art in the North countries; even framers, who were originally an auxiliary to painting guilds, became dealers who sold the paintings to a rather broad clientele.[38] While this trade in art cannot be seen as the same as modern art trade, it does carry the origins of the modern business of art.

It was not just the freedom from guild regulations that helped form the new conception of artist. The Renaissance emphasis on theory elevated the visual arts to a higher status; in a like manner, theory helped elevate the status of the artist from just another craftsman to a gentleman. Gardner notes:

> We must emphasize again the high value the Renaissance artist placed upon *theory*. In his view, if any occupation or profession were to have dignity and be worthy of honor, it must have an intellectual basis. . . The Renaissance artist strove to make himself a scholar and gentleman, to associate with princes and the learned, and to rise above the long-standing ancient and medieval prejudice that saw him as merely a kind of handicraftsman.[39]

This idea of artist as gentleman was new and was a product of the Renaissance. It was more prevalent in the South than North, perhaps because of Italian humanism and the Italian concept of *virtù*. *Virtù* referred to a sense of personal achievement and enterprise in both thought and action and was indicative of the rising sense of the individual within Renaissance society. While this was not the democratic individualism of modern times, it was an acknowledgment of personal merit which no longer confined great achievement to those of noble birth. Gardner points to this when she remarks: "Class distinctions and social

hierarchies had loosened, and men of ambition and talent could now take their places even as the friends and companions of princes."[40] A mark of the esteem in which a generally wider group of persons was included was the proliferation of biographies written about people other than nobility or saints. Kristeller comments:

> Another branch of historical literature that was very much cultivated by the humanists was biography. There was the model of Plutarch and of other ancient writers, but there obviously was a great contemporary demand for biographies, not merely of princes or saints, but also of statesmen and distinguished citizens, of poets and artists, of scholars and businessmen. Like the portrait painting of the time, the biographical literature reflects the so-called individualism of the period, that is, the importance attached to personal experiences, opinions, and achievements, and the eagerness to see them perpetuated in a distinguished work of art or of literature.[41]

Brunelleschi's biography was the first of an artist, Ghiberti's the first autobiography by an artist. In 1550 Giorgio Vasari published his first edition of *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects,* a collection of artists' lives who were contemporary with Vasari and of those who lived in the early Renaissance. With these publications the artist joined the ranks of celebrated personages. Again, it must be noted that this new status was a great deal different from the anonymity and communal attitude of the medieval craftsman. It was a new way of looking at the artist, and a new way for the artist to view himself. Hauser, referring to the biographies and other honors given to artists, states:

> All this is the expression of an unmistakable shift of attention from the works to the personality of the artist. Men begin to be conscious of creative power in the modern sense, and there are increasing signs of the rising self-respect of the artist. We possess signatures of nearly all the important painters of the Quattrocento, and Filarete actually expresses a wish that all artists should sign their works.[42]

Hauser also goes on to point to the increased self-consciousness of artists, demonstrated by the increasing amount of work done without direct commission. If one is to work on a painting to satisfy a personal desire, often ignoring commissioned work for a period of time, then the implication is of an awareness of talent and vision, a self-consciousness of one's self as an artist. In other words, the artist had something to say, to communicate, that was important enough to him to risk his financial security. The medieval workshop would never have allowed such a pursuit of one's own vision, but more importantly, the medieval craftsman was not self-conscious of himself as a creator. H. W. Janson also points to this changing image of the artist:

> Certainly the tendency to view the artist as a sovereign genius, rather than as a devoted craftsman, was never stronger than during the first half of the sixteenth century. Plato's concept of genius -- the spirit entering into the poet that causes him to compose in a "divine frenzy" -- had been broadened by Marsilio Ficino and his fellow Neo-Platonists to include the architect, the sculptor, and the painter. Men of genius were thought to be set apart from ordinary mortals by the divine inspiration guiding their efforts, and worthy of being called "divine," "immortal," and "creative" (before 1500, *creating,* as distinct from *making,* was the privilege of God alone).[43]

I think we must be careful with this statement for several reasons, but the statement is indicative of the changing perception of the artist, and Janson is an important art historian whose authority is well accepted. But before dealing with those issues, it would perhaps be best to place them in the context of Florentine Neo-Platonism. Marsilio Ficino, the leader of the Florentine group, was employed by Cosimo de' Medici in the early 1460's to translate, interpret and teach the works of Plato, which he did until the 1490's. During this forty year span he published a number of works which dealt with Plato, amon them his

Commentary on Plato's Symposium, Theologia Platonica, and a translation of and commentary on Plotinus. Central to Ficino's writings, and thus to the circle of Florentine Neo-Platonists, were the ideas of contemplation, Platonic love, and the immortality of the soul. Ficino's notion of beauty was associated with the Good in that beauty kindled a desire for Good within the soul and aided man in transcending the corporeal. Perhaps because of Ficino's background in medicine and astrology, this transcendental element had a marked mystical flavor, one that was far different from medieval Scholasticism. We will return to a more detailed discussion of Florentine Neo-Platonism in a later section, but it should be noted at this point that Ficino was not writing about art, but rather on theological and philosophical concerns.

So my first concern with Janson's statement is that his emphasis on Ficino's influence within the arts at the time of his pre-eminent position in Florence is exaggerated. Alberti and da Vinci did not subscribe to Neo-Platonic thought, especially not the mystical portions. Also, it was primarily theological and philosophical in nature and was not resurrected as a main tenet in art theory until nearly a century later when it was joined with Mannerist theory. Panofsky notes:

> Ficino's writings were concerned with beauty, but not with art, and up to then art theory was not concerned with Ficino. But now we are confronted with a notable fact of intellectual history: the mystical, pneumatological theory of beauty associated with Florentine Neoplatonism was resurrected, after the course of a whole century, as a Mannerist metaphysics of art.[44]

Second, the "sovereign genius" of Janson's passage might better be described in more limited terms. While there were strong personalities during this period, neither the status nor the self-awareness of

the artist might be described as "sovereign." Rather, there was an increasingly self-consciousness within the artist which eventually led to the widespread acceptance of the concept of genius. Panofsky notes:

> Insofar as the formation of ideas was connected in Renaissance art theory with observation of nature, it was placed into a realm that, while not yet that of individual psychology, was nevertheless no longer that of metaphysics. This was the first step toward recognizing that which today is called "genius."[45]

And third, during the Renaissance, the artist was not set apart from ordinary mortals but rather from the status of craftsman. However, despite these problems, Janson does raise an important point -- that of the change from "maker" to "creator." Within this context, the "maker" connotes the manipulation of materials in a mechanical way while "creator" implies more than mere manipulation; "creator" signifies origination of a work through the imaginative faculty. Used within the context of art, it implies not only the use of the imagination but a freedom from the slavish copy of nature. As we have seen, in the early Renaissance copying from nature was important to the artist, perhaps because artists felt that the return to what they thought was a more realistic portrayal of the natural world needed a certain amount of direct imitation for a sense of authenticity. Panofsky points to this in the following passage:

> . . . nature could be overcome by the artistic intellect, which -- not so much by "inventing" as by selecting and improving -- can, and accordingly should, make visible a beauty never completely realized in actuality. The constantly repeated admonitions to be faithful to nature are matched by the almost as forceful exhortations to choose the most beautiful from the multitude of natural objects, to avoid the misshapen, particularly in regard to proportions, and in general . . . to strive for beauty above and beyond mere truth to nature.[46]

In the latter part of the Renaissance, the artist entered more and more into the creative process, not just selecting and re-arranging parts into a more beautiful whole, but allowing a new creative vigor into their work. Perhaps the best example of this is Michelangelo Bucnarroti. Michelangelo believed deeply in the creative power of the artist and distrusted other artists' belief in the absolute mathematical measurability of the natural world. To a great extent, the belief in the creative ability of the artist was based on Neo-Platonism. Blunt notes:

> For Michelangelo it is by means of the imagination that the artist attains to a beauty above that of nature, and in this he appears as a Neoplatonist compared with the rational Alberti. To him beauty is the reflection of the divine in the material world.[47]

This Neo-Platonic influence was a strong thread that ran throughout Michelangelo's life, but not withou certain changes. In the early part of his life, Neo-Platonism co-existed with the more scientific attitudes of Alberti and da Vinci; I have said "co-existed" because neither was predominate but both were exhibited. He studied nature, even dissecting cadavers for the study of anatomy, but without the sense of exploration that da Vinci brought to his studies. During this early part of his life Michelangelo also displayed Neo-Platonic influences. To him, the artist was the creator of the artistic product, a product shaped by his hands but formed in his mind. The inspiration for the creation is the Idea, that is, a refined inward image that is a transformation of the external world and one that is a reflection of the absolute Idea of Beauty. In other words, it is the beauty of the natural world which, in the artist's mind, is made to conform to an

ideal standard. For Michelangelo, the artist's inner vision was still closely tied to the external world, but with the transformation to a nobler state made within the mind of the artist.[48] However, with age and the increased insecurity of the times, Michelangelo increasingly emphasized the internal image, the inspiration derived from God, and the divine gift of talent. Embedded in this shift was an imperious concern for his own talent and his own vision. Blunt comments on this aspect of Michelangelo:

> Painting is no longer talked of as an imitation of nature, and the artist's interest is diverted almost entirely towards the inward mental image, which excels everything that can be found in the visible world . . . [49]

The last part of his life Michelangelo spent in what might be termed religious fervor; he spent an increasing amount of energy on the pursuit of spiritual rather than temporal beauty, and even recanted his devotion to art. But, in many ways, the earlier portions of his life, his strong personality, and the Neo-Platonic attitudes of both his poetry and his work combined to create the image of the Artist, that is, someone set aside from the average man by his talent. Italians had a term for Michelangelo and his work: "*terribilita* -- the sublime shadowed with the awesome and the fearful."[50]

The implications of Michelangelo's mystique were far reaching. Gardner comments:

> He mistrusted the application of mathematical methods as guarantees of beauty in proportion . . . Thus, he would set aside Vitruvius, Alberti, Leonardo, Albrecht Durer, and others who tirelessly sought the perfect measure, being convinced that the inspired judgment could find other pleasing proportions, and that the artist must not be bound except by the demands made by the realization of the Idea. This insistence upon the artist's own authority is typical of Michelangelo and anticipates the modern

> concept of the right of talent to a self-expression limited only by its own judgment.[51]

I think this is an important point: with the mystique of Michelangelo set in the minds of those dealing with art, the artist's talent and inner vision were established. Also, the need for self-expression in the artist was set up as an alternative for the utilitarian purposes which had previously motivated artistic production. The artist was not only an educated man, but one who possessed special abilities that set him aside from the ordinary man. Gradually, over the course of the next two hundred years, the conception of "genius" became firmly intertwined with the artist and with artistic pursuits. A great part of this evolution came about because of the value that was attached to the process of artistic creation, the step-by-step process of making the product. Hauser comments on the increasing value of the internal process of the artist:

> For the Renaissance, the drawing and the sketch became momentous not merely as artistic forms, but also as documents and records of the creative process in art; they were recognized to be a particular form of expression on their own, distinct from the finished work; they were valued because they revealed the process of artistic invention at its starting-point, where it was almost completely merged with the subjectivity of the artist.[52]

During the course of time, both the artist and his product became separated from the normal currents of everyday life -- the artist by virtue of his new status and special ability, and his product through losing its connection with everyday life; it was no longer the banner or carpet pattern, but was the work of art.

The emergence of the individual artist, along with the lessening influence of the guilds, gradually led to another method of teaching

new generations of artist -- the academy. During most of the Renaissance, the strong personalities and glittering reputations of the major artists attracted young men who wanted to study with them. Not only did the students of a particular master champion his work, but so did patrons and laymen who were involved with the master. Myers points to this development of different "schools" of thought about the visual arts and their effect on later artists:

> There were many "schools" of art during this era, centering about transcendent personalities like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo rather than about workshops, but all had in common the aspiration toward an ideal human form and an ideal state of being. Grandiose general statements were made in sculpture and architecture that were destined to form the basis for later academic practice. Painting techniques became more standardized; these systematic procedures were also fated to be transmitted to future generations.[53]

The "schools" of art were informal in nature until the middle of the sixteenth century when Vasari helped to form the *Accademia del Disegno* in Florence in 1563, which was totally freed from guild obligations and restrictions by 1571. The Roman academy of St. Luke was raised to the status of an art academy in 1593. Kristeller describes the academies in the following way:

> The Art Academies followed the pattern of the literary Academies that had been in existence for some time, and they replaced the older workshop tradition with a regular kind of instruction that included such scientific subjects as geometry and anatomy.[54]

This is not to say that the workshops of the Renaissance did not teach any geometry nor anatomy, but these subjects were taught in a less comprehensive and systematic manner than the later offerings of the academies.

As well as establishing a course of studies, the academies created a blend of professional and non-professional that was unique

to the history of art. Not only were artists admitted to the academies, but also amateurs and laymen of a cultured circle. Hauser comments on some of the effects of this new mingling:

> The fact that amateurs and laymen are also elected to membership of the art academies creates a solidarity between the cultured circles of the general public and the artist which is without precedent in the history of art. The Florentine aristocracy is strongly represented in the Accademia del Disegno, and this new role leads to quite a different kind of interest in artistic matters from that connected with previous forms of patronage. The same academicism, therefore, which on the lower level separates the artists as a body from non-artistic craftsmanship, on the higher level bridges the gap between the productive working artist and the cultured layman.[55]

Indicative of the involvement of the layman in the arts during the sixteenth century was the gradual acknowledgment that the layman could become an active judge of the work of art.[56] Lodovico Dolce, writing in *L'Aretino* in 1557 gave a formal recognition to this new place of the layman within the arts. In answer to the question "whether a man who is not a painter himself is qualified to judge painting," Dolce replies:

> I maintain that man's ability to judge comes, in general, from practical experience of the way things are. And since nothing is more familiar and close to man than man himself, it follows that each man is qualified to pass judgment on what he daily sees -- that is, to judge the beauty and ugliness of any individual human being. What produces beauty is nothing other than a harmony of proportion, such as resides in the human body in general, and in the relation of limb to limb in particular; and disproportion similarly gives rise to its opposite. Granted this, therefore, when the eye is called upon to make a judgment, who is the man who cannot distinguish the beautiful from the ugly? Certainly no one can fail, unless he lacks altogether both eyes and intellect. Thus, if man has (as indeed he does have) this knowledge of what the true form is for an individual of this kind -- that is to say, a living human being -- why should he not have the same knowledge, only much more so, in the case of the suppositious reality of inanimate painting?[57]

One of the interesting effects of the inclusion of laymen into the arts was the fact that it was not the general public who was admitted to this circle, but rather a select group. This group was composed of the aristocracy and learned men who were already familiar with artistic theory and had been educated to understand and appreciate the visual arts.[58] Dolce had argued that any man could make a judgment about painting because of painting's fidelity to nature and because of all mankind's intrinsic "sensitivity towards . . . beauty and ugliness, in such a way that they recognize the attributes."[59] However, Dolce goes on to say:

> My argument, however, does not turn generally on the masses, but specifically on certain men of fine intelligence, who have refined their powers of judgment with the aid of literature and practical experience. In this way they can reliably judge a variety of things, and most expressly painting.[60]

Thus it would seem that Dolce is limiting the circle of laymen who can creditably judge the work of art. Moreover, these "men of fine intelligence" had the leisure to explore new ideas and new styles within the arts. I think this is a very important distinction because it set up a pattern that the arts were to follow for centuries after. During the previous periods, art had been a real part of everyday life, not only as utilitarian objects but also as something which could be readily understood. But with the attachment of theory to art, art became something that had to be learned, not only for the practitioner but also for the viewer. With more of the content of the visual arts returning to classical themes, combined with the increasing role of theory, the understanding and appreciation of art became more and more connected with an elite circle of "cultured" people.

Nathan Knobler offers an interesting definition of "academy":

> The cultural and artistic establishment, formerly an elected group with teaching (academic) and standard-maintaining responsibilities.[61]

I have maintained that an elite circle of cultured people formed the nucleus of the new-born Artworld and I believe that Knobler has pointed accurately to this group in the choice of the phrase "cultural and artistic establishment." In recent years the term "establishment" has acquired a pejorative sense, one in which the opposition to change is pre-eminent. However, the *Oxford English Dictionary* supplies a more balanced definition:

> A social group exercising power generally, or within a given field or institution, by virtue of its traditional superiority, and by the use especially of tacit understandings and often a common mode of speech, and having as a general interest the maintenance of the *status quo*.[62]

Does this definition fit the academy of the late Renaissance? Yes, in most ways, it does. With the advent of the academy there was indeed a "social group exercising power . . . within a given field or institution." That social group was composed of artists and of aristocratic laymen who may be called *cognoscenti* or connoisseurs. The power that they exercised was fledgling. However, it was still enough to prohibit an artist admittance to the group. Moreover, art was rapidly becoming a field of its own, that is, an area that was beyond normal daily activity and required special knowledge obtained through study and exposure to or experience of the art object. Their "tacit understanding" and "common mode of speech," although in the early stages of formation, existed. For example, in treatises on the visual arts beauty was discussed more in a speculative manner and less in a theological manner,

thus widening the theoretical horizons of art and narrowing the participants in the discussion. This theoretical and speculative discussion of the visual arts helped to enclose art within the confines of an educated minority whose leisure and education formed an "informed vocabulary" and common attitude. I think the phrases "traditional superiority" and "maintenance of the *status quo*" might be found acceptable also. The Renaissance sense of superiority was not based on a traditional continuity, but rather on the Renaissance belief that the "dark ages" had been abolished by the light of classical learning to which they were heirs. The *status quo* was certainly something to be maintained -- new heights of artistic creation had been achieved and it was difficult for the Renaissance artist to believe that succeeding generations would not be in his debt. Hence, the academy which would supervise academic areas and maintain standards of artistic production would indeed be interested in maintaining the *status quo*; maintenance was an inherent part of the academy. So, in the sense that Knobler had defined art establishment, I think that we can say that an art establishment existed at the end of the Renaissance.

How did this establishment differ from what had gone before, particularly in the Middle Ages? It might be argued that such an establishment existed in the Middle Ages in the form of the guilds. In a limited sense, this is true. However, there was a marked difference between the guild and the academy which dramatically affected the perimeters of the Artworld. I would suggest the two important areas of difference lie in the inclusion of laymen and the addition of a theoretical base for art. Both of these changes rest upon an educated

practitioner and an educated audience. In other words, the base of those who participated on an educated level was expanded while the actual audience contracted. This seeming paradox may be clarified if we again think of the utilitarian nature of the crafts during the Middle Ages in contrast with the non-utilitarian nature of art in the Renaissance. The craft establishment of the Middle Ages was composed of guild members. Church and monarchy acted as patrons or consumers of the art product. But I do not believe that these consumers could properly be called part of the craft establishment anymore than they could have been counted as part of the establishment of any other guild. They bought art products in the same way they bought clothing or food products -- according to personal preference but without being an expert in the areas of winemaking or weaving. In contrast, by the end of the Renaissance, the uninformed consumer began to be supplanted by the educated connoisseur, that is, someone with expert knowledge of the field. The addition of both laymen and a theoretical basis for art to the medieval craft establishment helped to change the structure of the visual arts in the Renaissance to a more exclusive practice.

Summary

As we have seen, the transformational influences during the Renaissance may be described as the technological and internal discoveries, the role of theory and of the individual, and the formation of new ways to educate the artist and the viewer. The first of these, the technological and internal discoveries, helped to transform the direction of art in several ways. The technological advances of

papter-making, engraving, and moveable type helped to disseminate artistic ideas throughout Europe more easily and more quickly than ever before. The medieval dependence upon the relationship between architecture and painting and sculpture also changed in the Renaissance. A percentage of this change came with the technological advances within the arts. During the medieval period, the craftsman who painted was limited to frescoes to adorn church works or to the illuminated page. In the Renaissance, the framed painting and free-standing statue were developed. In breaking away from the medieval conception of painting and sculpture as handmaidens to architecture, the framed space and free-standing statue heralded a new way of perceiving art, a new way of looking at art as a separate entity which was to be separated from the medieval criteria for judging painting and sculpture as part of the architectural enclosure. Each was transformed to an entity of its own, to be appreciated on its own merits. The third technological discovery of the Renaissance was the introduction of perspective studies which included a theoretical basis in geometry. This advancement, which made a reproduction of the natural world more possible for the artist, was seized upon by some artists of the Renaissance to provide a theoretical basis for art which would then carry art to a higher plane than the medieval craftsman had ever envisaged. If the visual arts had not been provided with a theoretical foundation in the Renaissance, further discussion in later ages could not have occurred, especially on a philosophic level.

Closely intertwined with the new status of art was the new status of the artist. He not only received a higher place in Renais-

sance society than he had ever had before, but he also began to emerge as an individual whose talent was an integral part of his success. This latter feature was consistent with Italian Humanism. During the Renaissance, as a body of theory began to accumulate around the artist, as he gained a sense of individual recognition, and when the idea of talent had become accepted, the artist began to practice art in a new and different way. He was no longer a craftsman practicing his craft -- he was an artist creating art. This new way of viewing the artist, both by the public and by the artist, certainly prefigured the idea of genius. And more importantly, it set the precedent that the artist, by virtue of his talent and individuality, could not always be expected to be easily understood nor could his product receive the immediate response that the craftsman's had. The product no longer had the immediate recognizability of the utilitarian object and the artist no longer had a clear-cut status within the society. He had embarked upon a new path which, at this point, was still not clearly delineated.

Finally, we find, toward the end of the Renaissance, a new way of training artists -- the academy. The medieval guilds gradually lost their monopoly over artists and their training. While this loss of influence may be traced to several sources, much of it was no doubt due to the increased status of individual artists of the Renaissance and the theoretical teaching that these artists espoused. The academy was basically composed of artists who were elected for their talent and reputation and of laymen who were elected for their knowledge of the arts and their culture. It is the inclusion of laymen, thought acceptable as judges of artistic creation, that becomes an important

point in the development of the Artworld. Election to the academy was not granted to anyone "off the street," but rather to a select group who were educated to appreciate and judge the work of art. The formation of an art establishment in conjunction with the emergence of the art object and the artist as artist signalled the birth of the Artworld.

Notes:

[1] Paul Oskar Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought II* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1965), p. 2.

[2] This idea will be explored in both this chapter and the next; suffice it to say, at this point, I will use the term "aesthetic object" only after the establishment of aesthetic theory in the eighteenth century.

[3] Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1970), p. 511.

[4] Ibid., p. 410.

[5] Ibid., p. 407.

[6] Villard de Honnecourt, "The Sketch Book," in *A Documentary History of Art*, ed. Elizabeth G. Holt (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1958), vol. 1, p. 91.

[7] Cennino Cennini, "The Craftsman's Handbook," in *A Documentary History of Art*, vol. 1, p. 140.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Leon Battista Alberti, "On Painting," in *A Documentary History of Art*, vol. 1, p. 212.

[10] Leonardo da Vinci, *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, ed. Edward MacCurdy (New York: George Braziller, 1954), p. 902.

[11] H. W. Janson, *History of Art* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 305.

[12] Cennini, "The Craftsman's Handbook," p. 137.

[13] Alberti, "On Architecture," in *A Documentary History of Art*, vol. 1, pp. 218-19.

[14] Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (I)," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12 (October 1951): 509.

[15] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, in *The Basic Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Anton C. Pegis (New York: Random House, Inc., 1945), I, Q5, Art. 4, p. 47.

[16] Alberti, "On Architecture," p. 230.

[17] Alberti, "On Painting," p. 217.

[18] Alberti, "On Architecture," p. 231.

[19] Anthony Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy 1450-1600* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 17.

[20] Alberti, "On Painting," p. 212.

[21] Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy*, pp. 21-22.

[22] da Vinci, *Notebooks*, p. 910.

[23] Ibid., p. 901.

[24] Ibid., p. 993.

[25] Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy*, p. 26.

[26] da Vinci, *Notebooks*, p. 882.

[27] Ibid., p. 30.

[28] Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy*, p. 36.

[29] da Vinci stated: "All our knowledge originates in our sensibilities." *Notebooks*, p. 67.

[30] Ibid., p. 852.

[31] Ibid., p. 853.

[32] Erwin Panofsky, *Idea: A Concept in Art Theory* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968), p. 51.

[33] Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy*, p. 55.

[34] Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art* (New York: Vintage Books, n.d.), vol. 2, pp. 54-55.

[35] Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy*, p. 56.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Bernard S. Myers, *Art and Civilization* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1957), pp. 394-95.

[38] Hauser reports that there was almost a surplus of painters in the north countries, which probably led painters to leave some of their work with the framers so that customers might see the work and perhaps buy it. Thus it might be said that these dealers were the forerunners of more modern gallery owners. See Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, vol. 2, pp. 207-25.

[39] Gardner, *Art Through the Ages*, p. 428.

[40] Ibid., p. 372.

[41] Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought II*, p. 11.

[42] Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, vol. 2, p. 65.

[43] Janson, *History of Art*, p. 348.

[44] Panofsky, *Idea*, p. 97.

[45] Ibid., p. 67.

[46] Ibid., p. 48.

[47] Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy*, p. 62.

[48] Ibid., p. 63.

[49] Ibid., p. 73.

[50] Gardner, *Art Through the Ages*, p. 467.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, vol. 2, p. 71.

[53] Myers, *Art and Civilization*, p. 395.

[54] Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts," p. 514.

[55] Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, vol. 2, pp. 132-33.

[56] Blunt, *Art Theory in Italy*, p. 56.

[57] Lodovico Dolce, "Aretino," in *Dolce's "Aretino" and Venetian Art Theory of the Cinquencento*, Mark W. Roskill (New York: New York University Press, 1968), p. 101.

[58] A few women completed the circle, especially in the later French academies; however, their main purpose was to add refinement not erudition to the group. For an interesting account of the role of women in the academies see Germaine Greer, *The Obstacle Race* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1979), especially chapter 14.

[59] Dolce, "Aretino," p. 103.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Nathan Knobler, *The Visual Dialogue* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), p. 483.

[62] *Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 1, p. 976. H. Fairlie, writing in hte Sept. 23, 1955 issue of *Spectator* is credited with the first contemporary usage of "establishment": "By the 'Establishment' I do not mean only the centres of official power -- though they are certainly part of it -- but rather the whole matrix of official and social relations within which power is exercised."

CHAPTER III

SEVENTEENTH TO TWENTIETH CENTURIES:
MATURATION OF THE ARTWORLD

Introduction

The last chapter examined the birth of the Artworld in the Renaissance. This chapter deals with the additional elements that occurred within the Artworld during the seventeenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries which created the concept of an art movement, a theory of art and which removed the contextual restrainsts of the work of art to create the autonomous work of art. The elements which are examined within this chapter are the Mannerist painters, the Neo-Platonic and Peripatetic arguments concerning a theory of art, the rise of personal collections and museums, and the introduction of formal criticism to the visual arts.

The Mannerists

The beginning of the Renaissance had signalled major changes in the fabric of life in Western Europe; so too, did the end of the Renaissance. Politically, France, England and Spain assumed power under highly centralized monarchies and the Italian peninsula was primarily controlled by puppet governments of Spain and France. The political climate was also much affected by changes in the religious structure of Europe. What had begun as an effort to reform certain

abused practices within the Church of Rome had lead to the formation of Protestant sects, primarily Lutheranism, Calvanism and Anglicanism in the sixteenth century. The Catholic Church countered with the Council of Trent, 1545-1563, but the universal Church of the Middle Ages was gone. Civil and religious strife not only plagued the security of Europe, but new theories and discoveries in science challenged and expanded the notion of the world that Western man had held since classical times. Copernicus provided the first impetus toward a new science with his theory that the planets revolved around the sun. Kepler, Galileo and Newton followed in his footsteps to provide the foundation for modern mathematics, astronomy and physics. Francis Bacon argued for the tools of modern science -- induction, observation and experiment -- and helped to usher in the new age of scientific knowledge. The seventeenth century saw Newton create the fundamentals of calculus and formulate the universal law of gravitation, Pascal contribute to geometry, physics and computing machines, Descartes add to the theory of analytic geometry and algebraic symbolism, Napier invent logarithms and use the decimal point, and Leibniz add to the knowledge of symbolic algebra, probability and number theory. Important discoveries were made in physiology, botany and zoology and provided the basis for the modern natural sciences; alchemy was gradually transformed into the systematic study, chemistry. As well as laying a foundation for modern scientific thought, these new discoveries -- and the new attitude toward science -- combined with the religious and political upheavals to end the Age of Faith and put Western man firmly on the path of "rationalism," that is, accepting reason as the supreme

authority in all areas of dispute.

The beginning of these changes can be traced to the middle decades of the sixteenth century: Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther in 1521, the Sack of Rome by Charles V occurred in 1527, Calvin published *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536 and Copernicus published *On the Revolution of the Celestial Bodies* in 1543. At the same time, a new generation of artists followed the masters of the High Renaissance into prominence. They have been called the Mannerists and the period of their production was roughly from 1520 to 1600. The Mannerists are important because they are the first of the "modern movements" in art, that is, the first of the pendulum motions from or toward a particular theory within artistic practice. They also must be noted for their insistence upon the artist as creator and the introduction of a self-conscious expressiveness in their work.

For a long period of time, the work of the Mannerists was viewed as nothing more than a degeneration of the Renaissance, a period in which artists tried to emulate the masters of the Renaissance without success. However, more modern art historians tend to view the Mannerists as a separate group who stand between the Renaissance and Baroque periods, not as a negative entity but rather as a transition between the two periods. It is perhaps misleading to call these artists a "group," because art historians for the most part do not readily agree upon a particular group but include various artists according to their view of Mannerism. The most often included artists are Bronzino, Parmigianino, Jacopo Pontormo, Giovanni da Bologna, Andrea Palladio, Tintoretto, and El Greco. The visual characteristics of Mannerism,

opposed to the restrained classicism of the Renaissance, involved slendarized and elongated figures and more emotional and complicated surface compositions in which the manipulation of space has become a more conscious device. Gardner has described *maniera* as "a self-conscious stylization involving complexity, caprice, bizarre fantasy (the 'conceit'), elegance, preciosity, and polish."[1] Perhaps the difference between the High Renaissance classicism and Mannerism can be demonstrated best by a comparison of the Last Supper as portrayed by da Vinci (figure 5) and by Tintoretto (figure 6). Da Vinci's is calm, with a balanced stability due, in part, to the strong horizontal movement. Christ occupies the center of the canvas and the central vanishing point is directly behind his head. And even though the painting portrays the moment when Christ has announced that one of the apostles will betray him, there is a feeling of restrained emotion in the painting. In contrast, Tintoretto's is based on a strong diagonal axis which gives it a dynamic quality that the horizontal does not have. The painting is full of figures of both natural and supernatural origin and the Christ figure is identified by the brilliant halo of light behind him. The moment, too, has changed, from betrayal to the Eucharistic feast. This is a much more emotional rendition, and one which includes not only a multitude of everyday details but the supernatural as well. The restraint and simplicity of the Renaissance is gone. Myers, commenting on this painting, highlights the basic differences between the Renaissance and Mannerist painters:

> Like other Mannerist works, Tintoretto's version destroys single-point perspective, stresses the spiritual over the rational, and transforms the balanced, closed composition of the Renaissance

Figure 5: *The Last Supper*, Leonardo da Vinci, 1495-98.

Figure 6: *The Last Supper*, Tintoretto, 1592-94.

> into a deliberately unbalanced, infinitely extending space in which figures assume uneasy agitated postures.[2]

Tintoretto's painting was not only a departure from what had come before but it was a reaction against what had gone before. Although the Mannerist drew heavily from the artists of the Renaissance, their anti-classical stance was a revolt from the "coolness" and rationality of the previous period. The qualities of *maniera* overcame the qualities of restraint and simplicity which were important in the Renaissance; expression of emotion overcame the rational approach of artists like Alberti and da Vinci. Federico Zuccari, founder of the Academy of St. Luke in Rome, wrote a refutation of da Vinci's insistence upon a mathematical foundation for art:

> I say -- and I know I am saying the truth -- that the art of painting does not draw her principles from the mathematical sciences. Nor is there any need to have recourse to them in order to learn this art's rules and methods, nor even in order to be able to discuss them theoretically.[3]

A bit later, Zuccari, still referring to mathematical rules, notes:

> The artist's mind should be not only clear, but free. His fancy should not be trammeled and restrained by a mechanical slavery to such rules.[4]

Thus the scientific foundation for art that Alberti and da Vinci had believed so important for art became unwanted baggage for the Mannerists.[5] In a like manner, the scientific observation of nature which had been so important to the Renaissance artist was relegated to a less-position by the Mannerists. Giovan Battista Armenini, now more known for his writing on painting than his own painting, advised students that the best method for perfecting their own painting technique was to copy an acknowledged master, one whose work approached that of an-

tiquity. He further stated:

> . . . that besides seeking the best and most perfect things of nature, you must supplement them with a good manner, and go with it as far as you deem sufficient, because, once you have combined a good manner with a good living model, you can make a composition of excellent beauty.[6]

While this advice may sound quite similar to that given by medieval craftsmen, it is quite different. In contrast to da Vinci's advice to observe nature, Armenini counsels the student to seek "the best and most perfect things of nature," that is, what comes closest to ideal beauty. This is an echo of Alberti, but framed within the Mannerist context of Neo-Platonism (which will be discussed more fully a bit later). Armenini then suggests that one may further improve on the original with a good manner. In other words, the artist may "interpret" what is before him. The medieval craftsman interpreted the visible world to a great extent, but would never have believed he was doing so; his interests lay beyond the natural world. The Renaissance artist on the other hand, was primarily interested in the natural world, and while he used selection and arrangement as tools, they were not an overriding concern. With the Mannerists, however, selection and arrangement became even more important and became intertwined with the artist's desire to create. In this sense, interpretation took on a new meaning to the artist, one which allowed him to express his own point of view. The aim of Armenini is not fidelity to nature but rather "a composition of excellent beauty." Fidelity to nature has been subordinated by a desire to create "art" as a primary aim of the artist. Gardner points to this in the following statement:

> The Mannerists, instead of continuing former research into nature and natural appearance, turned for their models to the masters of

> the High Renaissance, especially Michelangelo, and to Roman sculpture, especially relief sculpture. Thus, instead of nature as their teacher, they took art. One could say that whereas their predecessors had sought nature and found their style, the Mannerists looked first for a style and found a manner.[7]

Hauser also comments:

> We are dealing here . . . with a completely self-conscious style, which bases its forms not so much on the particular object as on the art of the preceding epoch, and to a greater extent than was the case with any previous significant trend of art. The conscious attention of the artist is directed no longer merely to choosing the means best adapted to his artistic purpose, but also to defining the artistic purpose itself -- the theoretical program is no longer concerned merely with methods, but also aims.[8]

Thus, it is both in the turning to art rather than nature and in the revolt from the previous period that the Mannerists initiated the notion of a "movement" in art. The artist began to build the Art-world, consciously marking out the perimeters of his concerns. The Mannerist artist had fastened his attention more upon the work he did in relation to other artists and less upon the utilitarian context of his work.

Art Theory and Philosophical Thought

As Hauser has pointed out, Mannerist theory was not only concerned with methods but with the aims of art; at the center of art is the creative act and the Mannerists turned their theoretical inquiry in that direction. If art had not become more self-conscious, had not seen the artist as creator, then the need to scrutinize the creative act would not have become as important. And if the Mannerists had not put fidelity to nature in a secondary place, the need to explore the relationship between the external world and the artist's imagination

might not have been felt at this early date. However, the writings of two Mannerists clearly show that the relationship between ideation and sensory experience had become important. The first of these writers was Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, mentioned in the previous chapter in connection with the Neo-Platonism of Marsilio Ficino. Lomazzo published *Trattato del'Arte della Pittura, Scultura, et Architettura* in 1584 and *Idea del Tempio della Pittura* in 1590, but it is the latter work that holds interest for us. In chapter 26 of *Idea*, Lomazzo offers a definition of beauty that is often quoted as *the* Mannerist position: "First we must understand that beauty is nothing more than a certain spiritual and lively grace . . . "[9] However, the full quotation bears a somewhat different message:

> First we must understand that beauty is nothing more than a certain spiritual and lively grace, which by means of the divine ray is first infused into the Angels, in whom the shapes of any sphere may be seen; reflected in the Angels these are called exemplars and Ideas. Then it passes on to the spirits, in whom these shapes are called reasons and notions, and finally into matter, where they are called images and forms . . . [10]

Ficino's contribution to this passage comes from chapter 6 of *Commentary on the Symposium* which is entitled "What Components Are Needed to Make a Thing Beautiful, and That Beauty Is a Spiritual Gift." This passage is as follows:

> . . . Beauty is a certain vital and spiritual grace, which is infused first into the Angel by the divine ray, then into the spirits of men, and following these, into corporeal forms and voices; and this grace by means of reason and sight and hearing moves and delights our spirit; and in delighting, enraptures, and in enrapturing, inspires ardent love.[11]

Ficino was speaking of beauty in relation to the good, and the ardent love of which he speaks is basically the love of God. Lomazzo, on the

other hand, was writing a tract on art and used this definition as an introduction and basis for his following remarks. For Lomazzo, the heart of the creative act is beauty which is the "face of God" and is reflected through the angels, the human soul and finally into the corporeal world. This is not to say that beauty is at all corporeal, but rather that it remains like the light which transmits it; it is recognized on a spiritual level. Lomazzo states:

> And the spirit, created as it is, surrounded by an earthly body, stoops from its corporeal ministry. Weighed down by this propensity, it forgets the beauty that is hidden within it, and insofar as it is enveloped in a terrestrial body, it proceeds to use this body, accommodating to it the senses and sometimes also reason. Hence it does not behold this beauty which radiates within it, until the body has matured and reason has awakened, with which it observes the beauty that shines in the sight of the whole world and there abides.[12]

In other words, Lomazzo believed that beauty abides within man, a "stamp" of God, an internal image, and that it is recognized through the intellect. Beauty is a visible manifestation of the good, one which is perceived internally through reason and not through the senses. Lomazzo notes:

> True beauty is only that which may be truly understood through reason and not through these two corporeal windows. This may easily be demonstrated in that no one doubts that it can be found in the Angels, in the spirits and in the bodies, and that the eye cannot see without light. So that the shapes and colors of the bodies are not seen, if not illuminated by light, and they do not appear with their matter to the eye, although they must be in the eyes in order to be seen.[13]

This rather confusing passage may be clarified by examining Ficino's explanation from which Lomazzo borrowed:

> We do not doubt that this Beauty is incorporeal, since it is manifestly incorporeal in the Angel and the spirit, and we have shown above that it is incorporeal in the bodies. From this then we can understand that the eye does not see else but the light of the

> sun, because the shapes and colors of the bodies are never seen unless illuminated by light, and they do not appear with their matter to the eye. Yet it seems necessary to have them in the eye, so that they may be seen by the eye. Hence one and the same light of the sun, painted with the colors and shapes of all the bodies it strikes, presents itself to the eyes. The eyes through their own natural rays receive the light of the sun so painted, and once they have received it, they see the light and all the paintings that are in it. That is why the entire order of the world, which is visible, is perceived with the eyes, not in the matter of the bodies, but in the light which flows into the eyes. And because this order is in the light, separated from matter, it is necessarily incorporeal.[14]

Thus, Lomazzo argues, it is not the eyes which see beauty, but the intellect which recognizes it. Within this somewhat transcendental and mystical presentation, Lomazzo has settled the conflict of ideation and sense perception to his satisfaction by placing both issues within a divine context.

While Lomazzo concentrates on the concept of beauty, the second Mannerist writer, Federico Zuccari, addresses the nature of the creative act in a more direct fashion. In his *L'Idea de' Pittori, Scultori e Architetti*, he states that the work of art exists first in the mind of the artist, but uses an argument that is more within the tradition of the Scholastics than Lomazzo's Neo-Platonism. He calls the idea *disegno interno* and the resulting work of art as *disegno esterno*. He defines *disegno interno* as:

> I shall say that by Inward Design is meant the concept formed in our mind which enables us to apprehend any object and to do practical work in accordance with this concept. . . It is true, though, that by this term Inward Design I do not mean solely the concept formed in the mind of the painter, but also that concept which is formed in any intellect; but for the sake of greater clarity and for the better understanding of my fellow artists, I have defined in the beginning this term Inward Design for our profession alone. If we wish to define the term completely and universally, we shall say that it is the concept and the idea formed so as to understand and to put into practice any object.[15]

According to Zuccari, this "idea" exists first in the mind of God, then in the angels and then in the mind of man. It is again, like Lomazzo, divine inspiration. But unlike Lomazzo, Zuccari does not overlook the role of sensory experience. He acknowledges the debt that any corporeal being has toward the senses, but he also subordinates the senses to the idea. He states:

> Here perhaps some fine mind may want to object by saying that this ideal concept, this intellectual Design, although it provides the first impulse and the first light to the intellect, does not operate by itself, inasmuch as the intellect does everything by means of the senses.
>
> A penetrating objection, but empty and of no substance: for as communal things are the property of all, and each may use them freely, possessing a part of them as the wealth of the republic, yet no one may become their absolute master except the Prince himself; in the same way we may say that, since the intellect and the senses are subjects to Design and concept, Design, as their Prince, ruler, and governor, uses them as his own property.[16]

Thus the senses become participants in the process, but are always at the service of the idea. The act of artistic creation has become just that -- creation. Since man may share in Divine inspiration through his intellect, man also shares in the ability to create. Zuccari borrows from Thomas Aquinas to apply this concept directly to the visual arts:

> The reason, then, that art imitates Nature is that the inner artificial Design, and therefore art, proceeds to bring forth artificial objects in the manner that Nature itself proceeds. And if we wish to know why Nature can be imitated, it is because Nature is guided toward its own goal and toward its own procedures by an intellective principle. Therefore her work is the work of unerring intelligence, as the philosophers say; for she reaches her goal by orderly and infallible means. And since art, chiefly with the aid of the above-named design, observes precisely the same method in its procedure, therefore Nature can be imitated by art, and art is able to imitate Nature.[17]

It should be noted here that Zuccari is not talking about the direct

reproduction of the external world as mimetic, but rather is examining the *process* of the creative act. His argument is based on the fact that art follows the same ideational procedure as nature and so imitates nature's generative forces. The notion of "genius" became acceptable in application to an artist because of the artist's participation in the idea.[18]

With the writings of Lomazzo and Zuccari, both Neo-Platonic and Peripatetic thought became a part of the theory of the visual arts. However, both men were Mannerists and as the sixteenth century closed, the Mannerist movement came to an end. As the Baroque age began, the new generation of artists reacted against the Mannerists much in the same way that the Mannerists had reacted against the Renaissance masters. Many of the new artists viewed the Mannerists as degenerate and excessive.

One of these artists was Michelangelo da Caravaggio whose work may be characterized as uncompromising realism. The term "naturalism" has been used in connection with Caravaggio's work and the reason can be seen when examining such work as *The Calling of St. Matthew* (figure 7). In this painting we see a sacred theme treated in a totally contemporary and realistic manner. The place might have been a common Roman tavern of the times, and the participants drawn from common people of the day. The supernatural of the Mannerists has no place in this work; it is intended to be a statement that the common people could associate with. The very thin halo over the head of Christ is the only suggestion of his divine nature. The emphasis on Christ is achieved by the manipulation of light, which is a characteristic of

Figure 7: *The Calling of St. Matthew*, Caravaggio, ca. 1597-98.

Caravaggio. But it is the realism of the situation that is so striking, its everyday setting and characters. However, as much as Caravaggio had intended his work for the common man, it was not well received in that quarter. Janson notes:

> His work was acclaimed by artists and connoisseurs, but to the man in the street, for whom it was intended, it lacked propriety and reverence. The simple people resented meeting their likes in his paintings; they preferred religious imagery of a more idealized and rhetorical sort.[19]

Albert E. Elsen also shares this opinion:

> Dedicated to making art that would meet the needs of the masses, Caravaggio was a failure, for the people, conditioned by more aristocratic images of insincere piety, distrusted the stark reality of his types and the brutal realism with which the Bible was interpreted. It was with connoisseurs and artists that the recognition of his talent was achieved.[20]

Caravaggio not only brought realism to his religious art, but also extended the concept of painting by being one of the first genre painters (*The Card Sharps, The Fortune Teller*) and still life artists (*Basket of Fruit*). It is in relation with the latter that he caused reaction among other artists. He believed that regardless of the subject matter, the treatment should be consistently on a high level which meant that he would take as much trouble with a still life as a Biblical scene. His insistence on a realistic portrayal of all the world around him sharply separated him from the Renaissance and the Mannerists; it also divided him from theorists of the time who found his naturalism lacking in intellectual capabilities and imagination.

One of the foremost spokesmen for the seventeenth century visual arts was Giovanni Pietro Bellori, a layman who had been appointed "antiquarian of Rome" by Clement X. He was associated with the Academy of St. Luke in Rome and also with Colbert and Poussin. Although he was not a painter by profession, he was considered an expert judge of art by his contemporaries and in his "L'Idea del Pittore, dello Scultore e del'Architetto" he argued against the excesses of the Mannerists on one hand and the naturalism of Caravaggio on the other.

Bellori began with the accepted Neo-Platonic exposition of the idea.

> Sublunar bodies . . . are subject to change and deformity; and although nature always intends to produce excellent effects,

> nevertheless, because of the inequality of matter the forms change, and human beauty is especially disarranged, as we see from the infinite deformities and disproportions that are in us. For this reason the noble Painters and Sculptors, imitating that first maker, also form in their minds an example of superior beauty, and in beholding it they emend nature with faultless color or line.[21]

He then cited the story of Zeuxis which Alberti had used to demonstrate this point. It was from this reference that Bellori went on to argue against the likes of Caravaggio whom Bellori accused of being a slave of nature and of painting without the benefit of the idea.

> Thus nature is for this reason so inferior to art that the copyist artist and imitators of bodies in everything, without selectivity and the choice of an Idea, were criticized. Demetrius was told that he was too natural, Dionysius was blamed for having painted men resembling us . . . just as in our time Michel Angelo da Caravaggio was criticized for being too natural in painting likenesses . . .[22]

But Bellori also had to contend with what were felt to be excesses by the Mannerists, that is, the ignoring of nature and the turning inward to expression. Bellori therefore stated that the idea had its roots in the senses, but the senses as purified and raised from their lowly state.

> Born from nature, it [the Idea] overcomes its origin and becomes the model of art; measured with the compass of the intellect it becomes the measure of the hand; and animated by fantasy it gives life to the image . . . The Idea of the Painter and the Sculptor is that perfect and excellent example of the mind, to which imagined form, imitating all things that come into sight assimilate themselves. . . Thus the Idea constitutes the perfection of natural beauty and unites the truth with the verisimilitude of what appears to the eye, always aspiring to the best and the most marvelous, thereby not emulating but making itself superior to nature; revealing to us its elegant and perfect works, which nature does not usually show us as perfect in every part.[23]

He summarized his argument against both extremes as follows:

> Quintillian teaches us that all things perfected by art and human ingenuity have their origin in the same nature, from which the true Idea springs. Hence those who without knowing the truth

> follow common practice in everything create spectres instead of shapes; nor are they dissimilar from those who borrow from the genius and copy the ideas of others, creating works that are not natural children but bastards of nature, so that it seems as though they are wedded to the paintbrushes of their masters. Added to this evil, arising from lack of genius or the inability to select the best parts, is the fact that they choose the defects of their teachers and form an idea of the worst. On the other hand, those who glory themselves with the name of Naturalists have no idea whatever in their minds; they copy the defects of the bodies and satisfy themselves with ugliness and errors, they, too, swearing by the model, as their teachers. If the model is taken from their sight, their whole art disappears with it.[24]

Thus Bellori had dealt with both schools of painting, counseling a middle path for the artist. By using a blend of statements and attitudes from such Renaissance masters as Alberti and da Vinci and by answering the twin challenges of Mannerism and Naturalism, Bellori formulated into a concrete theory what had been only implied speculation before. It had become a system of thought, one that to enter into French, German and English writings on art as a basis for aesthetic theory.[25]

Bellori also added this interesting comment about the relationship between the common man and the visual arts:

> Yet the common people refer everything they see to the visual sense. They praise things painted naturally, being used to such things; appreciated beautiful colors, not beautiful forms, which they do not understand; tire of elegance and approve of novelty; disdain reason, follow opinion, and walk away from the truth in art, on which, as on its own base, the most noble monument of the Idea is built.[26]

It would seem that the argument which Dolce had first put forward, that the refined and educated man can best judge art, had found an echo in Bellori. In this second instance, it is a stronger statement and seems to be predicated on the fact that the common people rely solely on the senses and are not trained to use their intellect when viewing the work of art. When so much emphasis had been put on the use of

reason as a transcendental part of making art and viewing art, it would seem natural that those who were illiterate and limited in using their intellect were relegated to a lesser position, a position where they might view but were not expected to appreciate.

Thus far, art theory had been a conglomeration of thought from artists and art theorists, both practicing artists and laymen, who had borrowed from various philosophical writings and brought these writings into the Artworld. Also, the rift between the artist and the general public was widening, due in great part to the increasingly complicated theoretical basis for the visual arts which required training in classical images and thought. This gap was to continue to widen with the rise of public exhibitions, art criticism and museums.

Formalization of the Institution

Leadership in the visual arts, which for so long had rested in Italy, began to be posited in the hands of the French during the seventeenth century. However, many of the leading French artists had been educated, or at least had spent time in Italy and much of Italian thought found its way into the new French ascendency. Particularly noticeable was the spread of the academy from Italy to France. The *L'Academie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture* was founded under the leadership of Charles LeBrun in 1648 and was modeled after the Academy of St. Luke in Rome. By 1655 the Academy had acquired the exclusive rights to teach life drawing, and with the death of Cardinal Mazarin in 1661, the Academy came under the increasingly centralized power of Louis XIV, the "Sun King," and his Finance Minister, Jean Colbert.

Colbert, who was in charge of economic policy for the King and who had organized and regulated most industries and trade for France, became *surintendant des bâtiments* and brought the same type of policies to the French artists and craftsmen. Using a government subsidy, Colbert put the Academy under the firm control of the monarchy in 1664. All artists who won commissions from the government had to join the Academy and all members of the Academy were expected to show their work in the annual exhibitions which began in 1665 in the galleries of the Palais Royal. These exhibitions were limited for many years to court society much in the same way that the painting and sculpture was limited to the glorification of the monarchy. 1664 also saw the beginning of the *Conférences* which LeBrun initiated to set down a body of theory which was as absolute as the monarchy.[27] The *Conférences* took the form of lectures before the Academy in which works of art were discussed and principles drawn from the discussion. The following example is excerpted from a lecture entitled "Concerning Expression in General and in Particular" which LeBrun gave in 1667 and which was published in Amsterdan in 1698:

> When anger takes possession of the soul, he who experiences this emotion has red and inflamed eyes, a wandering and sparkling pupil, both eyebrows now lowered, now raised, the forehead deeply creased, creases between the eyes, wide-open nostrils, lips pressed tightly together, and the lower lip pushed up over the upper, leaving the corners of the mouth a little open to form a cruel and disdainful laugh.[28]

This is a short example of the type of cataloguing that the Academy attempted. While this type of cataloguing had been done since the Renaissance, it never before had the weight of authority that the Academy carried. This kind of authority also affected the subject matter that

was thought to be appropriate for painting. This attitude toward subject matter can probably be traced from Bellori and Poussin to LeBrun.[29] In "Observations on Painting," published by Bellori in *Vite de' Pittori Scultori et Architetti Moderni* in 1672, Poussin counsels the painter as follows:

> The grand manner consists of four elements: subject or theme, concept, structure, and style. The first requirement fundamental to all the others, is that the subject and the narrative be grandiose, such as battles, heroic actions, and religious themes. . . Thus the painter not only must possess the art of selecting his subject, but judgment in comprehending it, and must choose that which is by nature capable of every adornment and of perfection.[30]

This attitude had been present in the Renaissance, but had never been explicitly stated as a canon of artistic belief or placed in the position of primary importance.

Poussin's attitude toward beauty follows that of his Italian predecessors, but his definition of painting adds a new note to art theory and the viewing of art:

> It is an imitation made on a surface with lines and colors of everything that one sees under the sun. Its end is to please.[31]

The interesting elements here -- that painting is imitation and that its aim is to please -- may have been implied before this time, but never in such an unadorned manner. It is quite likely that Poussin was commenting on, or perhaps quoting from *De Picturâ Veterum* by François Junius, but this statement was published under his name and can be acknowledged as representative of his thought. The reference to painting as imitation would seem to carry the usual Neo-Platonic connotations, i.e., that the process of creation shares in the divine. However, the second part of his statement, that the aim of art is to

please, is a further development. In the Middle Ages this notion would have been impossible; in the Renaissance, irrelevant. The Mannerists, particularly Lomazzo, pointed in this direction with their emphasis on beauty and the creation of beauty. But it is with this statement that the ground is fully prepared for aesthetic theory.

It is interesting to note that the concept of the *beaux arts* was popularized at this time, especially in the works of Abbé Dubos (1719) and Abbé Batteux, who published *Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe* in 1746. Batteux, in fact, established the main categories of the Fine Arts which have been accepted until recent years: the separation of the Fine Arts from crafts, or mechanical arts, and the five major divisions of the arts into music, poetry, painting, sculpture and the dance, with the addition of the theatre as a combination of the others.[32] The audience who viewed the *beaux arts* was still primarily a court-centered aristocracy whose world centered on the *bon mot*, court intrigue and the splendor of Louis XIV. It was an educated, refined and elite society that maintained the Rococo period until the French revolution.

Because of the tremendous influence of the French court during this time, academies of art were opened all over Europe, so that by the middle of the eighteenth century there were over one hundred academies which exhibited the work of their members in annual Salons.[33] The Royal Academy of Arts in London was granted a charter in 1765 and opened their first exhibit in April, 1769. The French Academy had moved their exhibit to the Louvre and had opened the show to the public in 1725. The exhibits and their openings became important social oc-

casions and the news of them was eagerly sought throughout Europe.

Elizabeth Holt notes:

> Because of the ritual of the opening on the name day or fete of the king and of the ceremony of the awarding of prizes, the annual or biennial exhibition became an event in the court calendar, particularly in France. French was the *lingua franca* of the European courts, as French fashions and customs were paramount. What transpired in Paris was "news."[34]

Reporting and commenting on the exhibits became an established practice. Denis Diderot wrote a commentary on the Salon of 1759 which was conversational in tone and represented his opinions of the works involved.[35] And although this report was published in Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire* for only a small and select group of Europeans, this type of reporting became pervasive with the advent of newspapers and magazines. The end of the eighteenth century saw many periodicals come into existence: *Der teutsche Merkur, Monthly Review, Propyläen, Artist's Repository, The Foreign Quarterly Review,* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* to name a few. The tone of the articles varied according to the publication and author. Holt notes:

> The form these reports took was determined by the type of publication and its subscribers. It could be an informative, descriptive or even critical account of what was to be seen, written for the twenty thousand middle-class subscribers who were as eager to keep up with the news as were the two thousand persons in the literary and artistic world more intimately involved with the works exhibited.[36]

An early example of this commentary is J. H. Wilhelm Tischbein's "Letters from Rome about new works of art by contemporary artists," published in *Der teutsche Merkur* in February, 1786.

> Recently a painting was put on exhibition which attracted the attention of all Rome. In the history of art we read of no painting that might have awakened more uproar on its appearance than this one. Not only artists, art lovers, and connoisseurs, but even the

> people troop by from morning until evening to see it. The enthusiasm is general. We must, willingly or unwillingly, join one side or the other. No one is allowed, in this case, to have his own opinion; that modest judgment of finding the good good and the mediocre mediocre no longer counts here. With the present public, a matter is either raised up to heaven or, with a peremptory order, cast down among the most wretched stuff. At parties, at coffeehouses, and on the streets, we hear one judgment or the other, for nothing else is spoken of but David and *The Oath of the Horatii*.[37]

Following a description of the artist and the painting, Tischbein relayed the reactions of the French and the Italians to the painting and the more "neutral" reactions of German and English critics. While reluctant to admit David to the ranks of the great masters like Raphael, he does put David in the same category as the Carracci and calls *The Oath of the Horatii* "the masterpiece of French art and the picture of our century."[38]

A more critical review was written by John Eagles on the exhibit at Somerset House in 1835. Eagles reflects the conservative attitudes of his publication, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. Of J. M. W. Turner's *The Bright Stone of Honour* and *Tomb of Marceau*, Eagles writes:

> How paints the R.A.? All jumble and confusion in effect, colour, and composition. Here is in its utmost poverty, raw white, and unharmonizing blue -- the texture is perfectly fuzzy. It represents nothing, substantial or unsubstantial, neither earth, air, fire, nor water . . . The figures are red and white dolls, and not quite so well painted as dolls usually are. There is not as much poetry as the paring of a nail.[39]

After more criticism of Turner and Constable, Eagles goes on to say:

> The old masters made it [the value of shade] their principal care; we fly to the other extreme, and make light, or rather white the great aim. When I say we, I only speak in reference to the fashion set by some great moderns. If they are right, Claude was wrong; if they are right, Poussin was wrong, the Carracci were wrong, Correggio wrong, all wrong. I have spoken, it will be perhaps thought, on this subject, with too much severity; but it

> is as I feel, when pictures that are meant, or ought to be meant, to please for ever, only to astonish at first, and then give unmitigated pain . . . [40]

In both of these reviews, the authors compare contemporary artists' work against the standards of the masters, that is, those artists from the Renaissance and later whose work was admired. They also state clearly that these are opinions, albeit opinions of learned men. Holt comments on the effect exhibitions and reviews had upon the artist:

> The advent of art exhibitions as such and of widely published popular interpretive criticism brought major changes in both the artist's manner of working and the viewer's manner of evaluating art. By the end of the eighteenth century the artist no longer addressed himself, as he had for centuries, to the preferences of a particular patron or to the requirements of a particular occasion or installation site. He conceived and executed his work according to aesthetic, philosophical and personal principles which belonged to him individually or to a group of artists. Finished works were sent out to compete for public recognition with those of other artistic persuasions. Here they were judged by the public, whose opinion might be disparaged or lauded but could never be disregarded. Because the public, unlike the earlier highly cultured aristocratic patron, frequently felt itself in need of an introduction to and an interpretation of, the myriad of works and schools set before it, the critic became a persuasive and thus powerful arbiter of taste and value in the visual arts.[41]

This change in the Artworld was from the artist working on a commission basis for an aristocratic patron to a "freelance" basis subject to critics and public opinion. It was a major shift, not only in the economic structure but in the foundation of the Artworld. The artist was free to confront his public through the medium of exhibits. However, it should be noted that the "public" was still a relatively small group. Holt has put the number of subscribers to literary journals at twenty thousand which is still a small number of people when compared to the entire population of Europe at the time. The range of classes involved in the visual arts had expanded from the aristocracy and clergy

to the middle class, but the "people" were still another entity who did not belong in the Artworld.

The final element in the formal structure of the Artworld was the advent of the museum. Originally, a few wealthy men collected items of interest to them. These collections included examples of the natural sciences, books, archeological finds and art works. Normally, the collections were broken up upon the death of the collector. However, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the collections became larger, more methodical and provided the basis for later museum collections. For example, the collections of the naturalist Aldrovandi formed the nucleus of the museum of Bologna; the manuscripts of the Earl of Arundel formed the center for the book collection of the British Museum. The earliest modern use of the term "museum" appears to have been in connection with the collection of Elias Ashmole in 1659, which was the foundation of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford that became the property of the University in 1677. Gradually, museums became more well defined and were devoted to either science or art. The formation of art museums was stimulated by the excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum and the need to classify and display the objects found. The *Museo Pio-Clementine* was completed in 1774 and housed many examples of Greek and Roman art, catalogued according to Winckelmann's history of art styles. The Grand Galerie of the Louvre was dedicated to house France's collection of art in 1793 and the *Musée des Monuments Francais* was formed to house chronologically arranged medieval and Renaissance sculpture two years later. Museums added to the stature of the nation and were appropriately designed. Holt notes:

> The exterior form of the museum was that of a temple. Within the museum, heterogeneous art objects of different cultures and previous epochs were subjected to analysis, documentation, and classification. Chronology determined the arrangement of the objects.[42]

Holt also remarks on the differences between the older collections of the nobility and the new museums:

> The nineteenth-century museum was separated from the collections in princely or royal galleries by the impersonal nature both of the installations and the acquisition of the objects. In the museum the single art work or fragment existed for itself, available for contemplation and stimulation, free from any specific purpose. The art museum was a treasury of objects that came to possess the quality of reliquaries whose presence augmented the quality of nationality.[43]

The nationalistic character of the early museums, as well as their educative nature, is clearly stated by Alexander Lenoir, the first curator of the *Musée des Monuments Français*.

> A museum in its institution ought consequently to have two objects in view; the one political, the other that of public instruction. In a political point of view, it should be established with sufficient splendor and magnificence to strike the eye and attract the curious from every quarter of the globe, who would consider it as their duty to be munificent amongst a people friendly to the arts; in point of instruction, it ought to contain all that the arts and sciences combined can produce towards the assistance of public teaching: such were the museums of the ancients, whose memory we still respect.[44]

Another museum of a national character was the National Gallery, opened in London in 1838. Holt describes the early years of the National Gallery and its reception by the public:

> Drawn by the exhibitions as much as by the visits of royalty, Londoners flocked to the building, located on "the finest site in London," the recently completed Trafalgar Square designed by John Nash. Visitors crowded into the National Gallery on Mondays especially, when admission was free. On May 1, the traditional opening date of the Royal Academy exhibition, they hurried to the East Gallery, where the Hanging Committee placed the paintings it considered exceptional, and noted eagerly which artists had been further honored by having work placed "on the line" marked by a

ledge about eight feet from the floor.[45]

Public response was good and museums of art were founded all over Europe and America. While at first most contained paintings or sculpture only, and normally that which was of a national character, the museums gradually began to acquire objects and artifacts from all over the world and from every period of artistic production. The amalgamation of so many diverse pieces created the "museum context," that is, the removal of the work of art from its original context and the substitution of an aesthetic context. Andre Malraux comments upon this transformation:

> So vital is the part played by the art museum in our approach to works of art to-day that we find it difficult to realize that no museums exist, none has existed, in lands where civilization of modern Europe is, or was, unknown; and that, even amongst us, they have existed for barely two hundred years. They bulked so large in the nineteenth century and are so much part of our lives to-day that we forget they have imposed on the spectator a wholly new attitude towards the work of art. For they have tended to estrange the works they bring together from their original functions and to transform even portraits into "pictures."[46]

Malraux at a later point expands his notion of a changed context:

> The Middle Ages were as unaware of what we mean by the word "art" as were Greece and Egypt, who had no word for it. For this concept to come into being, works of art needed to be isolated from their functions. What common link existed between a "venus" which *was* Venus, a crucifix which *was* Christ crucified, and a bust? But three "statues" can be linked together.[47]

The context of a particular piece of art changed when it was pulled into the Artworld and was given aesthetic value. If one views an African mask in a museum one views it as an aesthetic object. To the general observer, little may be known of its function in the society within which it was created; in fact, its original function has little to do with its viewing. The utilitarian and contextual connotations that

it had originally have been superseded by the museum context; the mask is no longer an accoutrement of ritual but rather a piece of primitive art analyzed as an abstract and expressionistic work. When viewed in the museum context, any object was to be viewed as a work of art, as an autonomous artwork.

Thus, by the beginning of the twentieth century we have a matured Artworld, an Artworld that gradually evolved from the practices of the Renaissance to an institution with which we are now familiar. It is populated by artists, critics, connoisseurs and lovers of art; its habitat is the museum, the gallery and the printed page.

Summary

In the centuries following the Renaissance, developments quickly succeeded one another until the adult figure of the Artworld was formed. The first of these developments, the Mannerist "crisis," contributed several elements to the maturation process. The first of these was an art which both built upon and reacted to the preceding period of art. In this dual response, the first "modern movement" in art was created. I think we are able to say that the visual arts turned inward at this point; the artist became aware of what had been done *within* art as a point of commencement for his own work. The notion of "movement" in art came into being with the Mannerists and gradually evolved to the concept of the changeable nature of the visual arts.

The second element that the Mannerists contributed to the development of the Artworld was in the area of theory. While the Renaissance had given a theoretical foundation to art, the Mannerists

expanded the area of theory to include the aims of art and the nature of the creative act. What had been philosophical writings on the nature of beauty and the good, both in Neo-Platonic and Peripatetic traditions, fully entered the Artworld as theories of beauty. With the advent of the Baroque age, these theories underwent change as a new generation of artists reacted to the Mannerists. Bellori stated that the idea had its roots in the senses, that is, what is perceptible in the natural world, but that the senses were purified by the idea, which is man's sharing in the divine. The delicate balance that Bellori had set remained one of the main tenets of art theory; through LeBrun and Poussin, it entered the writings and attitudes of the French Academy where it was filtered and passed on to the rest of the European art establishment.

As the Baroque period moved into the Rococo and Neo-Classical, three other elements became fixtures in the Artworld that completed its basic structure. These elements were the introduction of art exhibits, critics and museums. The pattern of the French Academy, which became pervasive throughout Europe, contributed much toward the development of exhibits and critics. The French court of Louis XIV used their tight control of artists to add splendor to the monarchy; exhibitions of the new works of art, first for the court only and later for the general public, certainly fulfilled the desire for aggrandizement. The openings became social occasions of the first magnitude -- and also became a mark of the refined individual. Because of the evolution of schools and styles of painting, the general public needed a guide through the sometimes bewildering displays. Hence, the critic was born. Follow-

ing in the Renaissance tradition of the educated layman, most critics were just that. The advent of the newspaper and periodical gave these critics a voice and a forum for debate, and they soon became powerful arbiters of public taste. Another arbiter of public taste was the museum. Two conventions of the Artworld followed from the development of the museum: the demarkation between the original context of the work and its aesthetic properties became important, and the creation of the resulting thought that any object might be brought into the Artworld and examined on an aesthetic level. Both of these concepts are important, and both result from the museum context.

What then are the main characteristics of the Artworld at this point? First, we have an art object which may be differentiated from the medieval art product by the fact that it is no longer primarily utilitarian in nature but is autonomous. It is no longer inevitably tied to architecture or book page but occupies its own space. The art object has lost much of the utilitarian feature of instruction for a more contemplative attitude of viewing it as a beautiful object. Moreover, it is an object which requires an unveiling, requires a critic and is at home in the museum. It also requires a body of theory, theory on creating and on the aims of art, to be understood. Second, the artist is no longer considered a craftsman but an artist who draws upon theory and imagination to create the art object. His status is no longer a maker, an equivalent to the weaver or winemaker, but a creator, an equivalent to the poet or man of genius. He no longer is confined to the guild and patron, but by virtue of reputation, can also produce a work for his own satisfaction and present that work to the

public at large. He draws not only on the world around him for inspiration, but also on the body of work done by his predecessors. While at times subject to strict canons of representation, the artist still sees himself more and more as an interpreter and feels the need to express his own vision. And third, there is an audience which is more stratified. Dolce noted that he was less concerned with the masses than the man of refined intelligence, and the advent of the academy reinforced this trend toward a much more restricted and select audience. The more participation that was required to belong to the art establishment, the fewer people who were qualified to belong. Even the audiences of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were given only limited participation in the art establishment, who made judgments about the art object, and who exercised power within the art establishment. Thus, the basic structure of the Artworld is intact by the beginning of the twentieth century and the only remaining component to be examined is aesthetic theory which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Notes:

[1] Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1970), p. 485.

[2] Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art* (New York: Vintage Books, n.d.), vol. 2, p. 100.

[3] Federico Zuccari, "Idea of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects," in *Artists on Art: From the 14th to the 20th Century*, ed. Robert Goldwater and Marco Treves (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p. 114.

[4] Ibid., p. 115.

[5] Rensselaer W. Lee, "Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting," *The Art Bulletin* 22 (1940): 200.

[6] Giovan Battista Armenini, "On the True Precepts of Painting," in *Artists on Art*, p. 109.

[7] Gardner, *Art Through the Ages*, p. 485.

[8] Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, vol. 2, p. 100.

[9] G. P. Lomazzo, *Idea del Tempio della Pittura*, trans. Victor A. Velen in *Idea: A Concept in Art Theory*, Erwin Panofsky (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968), Appendix 1, "On the Method of Knowing and Establishing the Proportions in Accordance with Beauty," p. 143.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Marsilio Ficino, *Commentary on the Symposium*, trans. Victor A Velen in *Idea*, Panofsky, Appendix 1, p. 141.

[12] Lomazzo, *Idea*, p. 143.

[13] Ibid., p. 153.

[14] Ficino, *Commentary*, pp. 131 and 133.

[15] Federico Zuccari, "L'Idea de' Pittori, Scultori, e Architetti," in *A Documentary History of Art*, ed. Elizabeth G. Holt (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1958), vol. 2, p. 88.

[16] Panofsky, *Idea*, p. 91.

[17] Ibid., p. 90.

[18] Ibid., pp. 91-92.

[19] H. W. Janson, *History of Art* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 406.

[20] Albert E. Elsen, *Purposes of Art* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967), p. 184.

[21] Giovanni Pietro Bellori, "L'Idea del Pittore, dello Scultore e del'architetto," Trans. Victor A. Velen in *Idea*, Panofsky, Appendix 2, p. 155.

[22] Ibid., p. 159.

[23] Ibid., p. 157.

[24] Ibid., p. 169.

[25] Panofsky, *Idea*, pp. 108-109.

[26] Bellori, "Idea," p. 171.

[27] Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, vol. 2, pp. 197-98.

[28] Charles LeBrun, "Concerning Expression in General and in Particular," in *The Documentary History of Art*, vol. 2, p. 163.

[29] Bellori was active in the Academy of St. Luke, was a well-known authority on the arts and a connoisseur. He was also a close friend of Poussin. LeBrun visited Rome from 1642 to 1646 and Poussin had returned to Rome in 1645 from France. It is quite likely that there was much exchange among these men.

[30] Nicolas Poussin, "Observations on Painting," in *The Documentary History of Art*, vol. 2, p. 144.

[31] Nicolas Poussin, a letter to de Chambray, March 1, 1665, in *A Documentary History of Art*, vol. 2, p. 158.

[32] Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics (II)," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13 (January, 1952): 17-21.

[33] Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, ed., *The Triumph of Art for the Public* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1979), p. 4.

[34] Ibid., p. 7.

[35] Denis Diderot, "Salon De 1759," in *Diderot: Arts et lettres (1739-1766)*, ed. Jean Varloot (Paris: Hermann, 1980), vol. 12, pp. 62-83.

[36] Holt, *Triumph of Art for the Public*, p. 9.

[37] J. H. Wilhelm Tischbein, "Letters from Rome about new works of art by contemporary artists," in *Triumph of Art for the Public*, p. 16.

[38] Ibid., p. 24.

[39] John Eagles, "Sketcher No. XII," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 38 (August 1835): 149. The attribution of authorship may be found in *The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900*, ed. Walter E. Houghton (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), vol. 1, p. 49.

[40] Ibid., p. 150.

[41] Holt, *The Triumph of Art for the Public*, p. 11.

[42] Holt, *A Documentary History of Art*, vol. 3, p. 272.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Alexander Lenois, "Museum of French Monuments," in *A Documentary History of Art*, vol. 3, p. 281.

[45] Ibid., p. 345.

[46] Andre Malraux, *The Voices of Silence* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978), trans Stuart Gilbert, pp. 13-14.

[47] Ibid., p. 53.

CHAPTER IV

AESTHETIC THEORY AND THE ARTWORLD

Introduction

In the last two chapters the various elements which combined to form the Artworld were examined. The gradual transformation of the Artworld from an informal to a formal institution had been accomplished by the end of the nineteenth century. The art object had emerged as an autonomous entity surrounded by critics, curators, dealers and art historians; the artist had emerged as creator, as an interpreter of his world and his vision; the audience had become educated and refined spectators, led in their taste by critics and curators. However, the last remaining transformation, from art object to aesthetic object remains to be discussed. In this chapter, I would like to briefly examine the beginnings of aesthetic theory in the eighteenth century to demonstrate how they contributed to the conventions of the Artworld and at the same time were a result of the Artworld which they described. This excursion into eighteenth century aesthetic theory is intended to demonstrate the two-way relationship between aesthetic theory and the Artworld. Each aesthetic theory will not be examined in detail, rather particular features of several seminal theories will be discussed. There will be an equally brief excursion into the modern Artworld to demonstrate the other side of the relationship.

Origins of Aesthetic Theory

As we have seen, the theory which surrounded the visual arts until the eighteenth century was primarily a distilled version of Platonic or Peripatetic thought voiced by practitioners of art or those laymen closely associated with the practice of art as connoisseurs or critics. In the eighteenth century this condition changed with the emergence of the philosopher into the perimeters of the Artworld. This is important because it defined the study of art as a distinct area of study, a pursuit that separated the arts from other activities in a special way.[1]

The naming and describing of aesthetics as a separate field was made in the middle of the eighteenth century, but other developments had somewhat prefigured it. Two British writers of the early eighteenth century should be noted here: Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury and Joseph Addison. Both contributed to the notion of "disinterestedness" which was not only important to later aesthetic theories but indicated the separate nature of the aesthetic. Very basically stated, disinterestedness describes a state of contemplation in which self-interest or self-concern is excluded. There is an absence of practical action directed toward an anticipated goal as well as motivation for such action. As a mode of contemplation, the viewer's attention is directed toward and absorbed in the object of such contemplation. That a work of art could find itself the object of such attention in the theories of Shaftesbury and Addison was an indication of the changed status of artworks; they were no longer thought of as

utilitarian objects but rather as autonomous objects.

The concept of disinterestedness first appears in Lord Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, a series of essays published in 1711. Shaftesbury was much influenced by the Cambridge Platonists and he examined ethical and religious concerns of the day from much the same perspective. Shaftesbury was reacting to religious and ethical systems which depended upon future reward or punishment for motivation. Neither seeking good for ultimate benefits nor avoiding evil for fear of punishment seemed to Shaftesbury to be an adequate basis for either ethics or religion; rather, he proposed seeking the good for its own sake only, without thought of eventual reward or punishment. This contemplative mode he called disinterestedness, and his concept of disinterested love may be found in the following passage:

> A love which is simple, pure, and unmixed, which has no other object than merely the excellency of that being itself, nor admits of any other thought of happiness than in its single fruition.[2]

Thus for Shaftesbury, the love of God is unconcerned with anything other than "its single fruition." In a like manner, the contemplation of virtue is of primary importance for the moral life; contemplation of virtue is not instrumental and a man who demonstrates disinterestedness is one who has no thought of eventual reward or punishment.

However, it is not just in the area of moral life that Shaftesbury uses the concept of disinterestedness. He applies it specifically to objects which require the same kind of disinterested attention, that is, nature and works of art. The most commonly cited passage which demonstrates disinterestedness within an aesthetic domain is the

following:

> Imagine . . . if being taken with the beauty of the ocean, which you see yonder at a distance, it should come into your head to seek how to command it, and like some mighty admiral, ride master of the sea, would not the fancy be a little absurd?
>
> Let who will call it theirs . . . you will own the enjoyment of this kind to be very different from that which should naturally follow from the contemplation of the ocean's beauty.[3]

He continues:

> Suppose that, viewing such a tract of country as this delicious vale we see beneath us, you should, for the enjoyment of the prospect, require the property or possession of the land.
>
> The covetous fancy . . . would be as absurd altogether as that other ambitious one.[4]

In these examples and the two which follow, Shaftesbury suggests a contemplation of beauty in which enjoyment of the object is the only end of the contemplation. This excludes a desire to possess, control or use the objects. While this parallels his beliefs for the moral life, the contemplation of beauty is a separate area, in a large part because the object of contemplation is different. When disinterested attention is focused on the work of art, the perfection of the perception and contemplation of the work are the only ends.

Joseph Addison published a series of articles in the *Spectator* entitled "Pleasures of the Imagination" which certainly point toward the concept of aesthetic responsiveness. To Addison, the imagination was contained neither in the realm of sense experience nor understanding. While dependent upon an original experience of the sense of sight, i.e., "when we have them actually in our view," the imagination mediates the original experience:

> We cannot, indeed, have a single image in the fancy that did not make its first entrance through the sight; but we have the power of retaining, altering, and compounding those images, which we

> have once received, into all the varieties of picture and vision that are most agreeable to the imagination . . . [5]

Addison does not specifically define the imagination, but does convey that the imagination is neither purely sensual nor cognitive:

> The pleasures of the imagination, taken in their full extent, are not so gross as those of sense, nor so refined as those of the understanding. The last are, indeed, more preferable, because they are founded on some new knowledge or improvement in the mind of man; yet it must be confest, that those of the imagination are as great and as transporting as the other.[6]

Addison divides the pleasures of the imagination into those which are primary, that is, the pleasure derived from objects before us, and secondary, the pleasure derived from memory or from objects that recall a memory. He then discusses the man of polite imagination:

> A man of polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures, that the vulgar are not capable of receiving. He can converse with a picture, and find an agreeable companion in a statue. He meets with a secret refreshment in a description, and often feels a greater satisfaction in the prospect of fields and meadows, than another does in this possession.[7]

Although Addison does not use the term "disinterested," this passage indicates the same lack of possessiveness, or of desire of possession, as Shaftesbury's description. Addison also examines nature and art as pleasing to the imagination. He finds nature more pleasing but notes the relationship between the two:

> . . . we find the works of nature still more pleasant, the more they resemble those of art . . . Hence it is that we take delight in . . . any thing that hath such a variety or regularity as may seem the effect of design, in what we call the works of chance.
>
> If the products of nature rise in value, according as they more or less resemble those of art, we may be sure that artificial works receive a greater advantage from their resemblance of such as are natural . . . [8]

He then turns his attention to architecture, statuary, painting, description and music, all of which are classified as secondary pleasures

because they are associative.[9] In all of these cases, Addison is referring to a particular kind of experience, one that he might have called "aesthetic" had the term been in use. The clearest exposition of this experience occurs in his discussion of the beautiful, the great and the uncommon as equally viable initiators of the experience:

> Our imagination loves to be filled with an object, or to grasp at any thing that is too big for its capacity. We are flung into a pleasing astonishment at such unbounded views, and feel a delightful stillness and amazement in the soul at the apprehension of them.[10]

This then, is the pleasure of the imagination for Addison: a delightful stillness and amazement in the soul. He has described a contemplative mode and something that is set off from usual experience. He has used this kind of experience to describe the response to the beauty of nature, and also its great and uncommon qualities. Furthermore, he has extended this experience to the Fine Arts, although he does not name the system as such.

The recognition of a separate type of perception or perceptual experience led to the publishing of *Meditaticnes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten in 1735. In contrast to Shaftesbury and Addison, Baumgarten was influenced by Descartes, Leibnitz and Wolff and tried to work out a system of aesthetics according to Cartesian principles. There is no mention of the term "beauty" in Baumgarten's theory; instead, he is interested in the examination of perception, its autonomy and perfection. Perception, especially in relation to the arts, is the core of Baumgarten's theory. Basic to his dissertation was the way one might differentiate poetry from eloquent language and throughout *Meditationes* he attempted to de-

scribe ways in which this could be accomplished. Baumgarten notes:

> The philosophers should be busy in general in drawing boundary lines and especially in defining accurate limits between poetry and ordinary eloquence.[11]

Baumgarten coined the word "aesthetics" to describe this special study, later expanded to the arts in general,[12] which was based on the belief that the arts represented cognition of an inferior kind because this cognition was mediated by the senses:

> . . . *things known* are to be known by the superior faculty as the object of logic; *things perceived* [are to be known by the inferior faculty, as the object] of the science of perception, or aesthetic.[13]

For Baumgarten, aesthetics is the counterpart of logic for sensate cognition and has as its end the perfection of perception. The rationalists had put a premium on clear and distinct ideas, that is, logical discourse. Baumgarten based his theory of poetry and the arts on sensate cognition, that is, clear and confused ideas. By "confused," Baumgarten meant a fusion of sensual images as opposed to the distinct ideas of purely cognitive discourse. The clarity he refers to is what he describes as "extensive" clarity, that is, a compilation of sensuous data as opposed to the "intensive" clarity of logic where essences are the main concern. Thus, for Baumgarten, logic and scientific discourse are concerned with classification and essences; poetry and the arts are concerned with an intuitive representation of concrete sense data. Both are modes of cognition; sensate cognition is an inferior mode, but one that can still be perfected.

All three of these theories, despite their differences, point toward the development of a philosophical inquiry that was new and

different. In Shaftesbury, disinterestedness was central to all of his writings, but was applied specifically to an aesthetic domain. Yet it is difficult to perceive Shaftesbury as a turning point in aesthetic theory, perhaps because large portions of his ideas on the aesthetic were embedded in discussions of the moral life. However, the importance of Shaftesbury lies in his introduction of the notion of disinterestedness to the arts. Addison is equally important because he turns his attention clearly on the nature of the aesthetic experience. He discusses both nature and the arts within the context of the aesthetic and includes the great and the uncommon along with the concept of beauty as integral parts of the aesthetic experience. Both men, publishing in the early portion of the eighteenth century, were pivotal figures in aesthetics in that they took important steps toward underscoring the nature of the aesthetic as an autonomous activity in life. Baumgarten, although his eventual influence upon aesthetic theory was considerably less than Shaftesbury or Addison, should be remembered as more than the man who coined the term "aesthetic." Baumgarten thought that the aesthetic domain was clearly different from other areas of life and tried to apply a rationalist analysis to the aesthetic. In doing this he established a systematic approach to the aesthetic.

Jerome Stolnitz, commenting on the installation of disinterestedness as a central point of aesthetic theory, suggests that it also led to the distinguishing of Fine Arts from those of utility or entertainment:

> . . . that the work of art must be evaluated in respect of its intrinsic structure and significance, not as a moral vehicle or a source of knowledge. . . That the work is autonomous and unique,

> and that it therefore defies such extra-aesthetic criteria, is an idea which comes into prominence only after the concept of "disinterestedness" has established itself. For it is just in its relation to disinterested perception that the work is autonomous -- because it is attended to for its own sake -- and unique -- because such perception dwells upon and relishes its qualitative individuality. . . It is by reference to the aesthetic attitude that other thinkers distinguish "fine" art from "the arts of utility" or "entertainment."[14]

This is a complex statement and there are several important points to be considered in it. First, that the Artworld, by its evolution from the Renaissance had already prepared this step. As we have seen in the previous two chapters, the art product of the Middle Ages evolved into the art object of the eighteenth century through its gradual divorce from utilitarian purposes -- the art object had been divested of most of its utilitarian connections with architecture and common usage, its ritualistic connotations and its feature of instruction -- and had been invested with its own purpose -- to be viewed as a beautiful object. If this had not happened, the next transformation, from art object to aesthetic object, could not have happened. And indeed, it is this second transformation which Stolnitz has described. Disinterestedness describes and names what had become a common feature of the Artworld, that is, the contemplation of the art object without utilitarian or contextual considerations as primary. The art object had attained the status of an autonomous object, one whose purpose for being was to be appreciated; the aesthetic experience gave a name for the mode of appreciation or contemplation for this special object. Aesthetic theory attempted to describe this mode of attention, to discuss it in systematic terms, and to define the perimeters of the aesthetic. Harold Osborne has noted the autonomy of the work of art:

> A work of art, it is now held, is in concept an artifact made for the purpose of being appreciated in the special mode of aesthetic contemplation; and although particular works of art may be intended to do other things and may in fact serve other purposes as well as this, the excellence of any work of art *as art* is assessed in terms of its suitability for such contemplation. This is what is meant by claiming that art is *autonomous*: it is not assessed by external standards applicable elsewhere, but by standards of its own.[15]

This statement occurs during a discussion of the autonomy of the work of art as a relatively new attitude. Osborne goes on to note that while the autonomy of the work of art is an accepted notion now, it was first implied within the notion of the Fine Arts, which made its appearance in the eighteenth century, and from there found its way into aesthetic theory. The concept of disinterestedness was the first step toward an aesthetic theory; it was also the first naming of the work of art as autonomous by those outside the practice of art.

Second, although Stolnitz does not emphasize it, the concept of evaluation is an important facet of his statement. He notes that the classification of works into Fine Art categories or other categories is dependent upon an evaluation of the work's uniqueness and qualitative individuality. I think this sense of evaluation is important in the transformation of the art object to aesthetic object and very much part of the structure of the Artworld at the time of this transition. There are several interconnected issues here. One is that evaluation became part of being an artist, an artist who was known by reputation as an individual capable of creative genius. The medieval craftsman had been embedded within the guilds and guild system; when individuality had been introduced in the Renaissance and extended by the Mannerists and academic system, the evaluation of the work of a particular artist be-

came an integral part of the Artworld. Not only was a work judged on the basis of its craftsmanship, but also on the notion of the creative genius of its creator. The later development of the connoisseur, the critic and the curator reinforced the idea of evaluation as a major factor of the Artworld.

Another issue is the consistency of the visual art object from the Renaissance to the time in question in Western European culture. While painting had experienced several movements -- the Renaissance, Mannerist, Baroque, Rococo and Neo-Classical movements -- there had been a general agreement within the Artworld as to what constituted a painting: (1) a general agreement to theme; (2) a basic understanding of plastic elements, which might include composition, perspective, color, light, pigment, line, space, general handling of surface; and (3) the representational method, that is, production of a recognizable image of the natural world. For example, in the early part of the eighteenth century a great debate raged among painters who were divided among the "Poussinistes" and the "Rubénistes." The one group, who followed the writings of Poussin and LeBrun, insisted that form was the most important of the plastic elements; those who were "Rubénistes" thought color the most important of these elements. The debate was internal to painting, that is, was based on a discussion of accepted conventions that were painterly. The discussion assumed canvas, pigment and a certain relationship among methods of painting. The style of painting of Antoine Watteau, a colorist, might be discernable from that of Hyacinthe Rigaud but both would be recognizable and regarded as paintings. The same kind of understanding or assumptions could also

be applied to sculpture, or for that matter, to other arts. Thus, at the time when aesthetic inquiry was becoming a separate field, the visual arts had developed an evaluative criteria that changed somewhat from movement to movement but was basically consistent because there was noting within the Artworld to challenge the criteria. It is not until the mid-nineteenth century that the Artworld began to experience serious challenges to its conventionally held notions. We might say then, that when aesthetic inquiry was originated, it was within an Artworld that had solidified and concrete expectations of artists, their products and the presenters of the works of art.

For brevity's sake, I think we can say that early aestheticians were aware of a particular kind of attention that was afforded to nature and to certain objects which were considered works of art. Aesthetic theory, which even in its inception was multifaceted, grew in different directions as it developed. Attention was most often concentrated on the aesthetic object or the perception of the object. Rather than pursue in detail the developments within these areas of aesthetic theory, I would like to return briefly to the Artworld to delineate changes which affected the further development of aesthetic theory.

The Modern Artworld

In the mid-nineteenth century, the visual arts began what was to be a radical change. This change was most apparent in what I have described as the understanding within the Artworld as to what constituted a particular medium. I described those factors in painting as a general agreement to themes, a basic understanding of plastic elements,

and a representational method. The challenge to the first came primarily from Gustave Courbet and the movement called Realism. Courbet wanted to paint the reality of what he could see, that is, the people and situations around him. In this he defied the conventional approach that had long been in operation which stated that grand themes of painting should come from fiction, history or imagination.[16] Courbet was criticized for the commonplace character of the subject matter of painting, but in his treatment of the everyday he opened the way to later painters. Courbet noted:

> In particular, the art of painting can consist only in the representation of objects visible and tangible to the painter. An epoch can be reproduced only by its own artists. I mean by the artists who have lived in it. I hold that the artists of one century are fundamentally incompetent to represent the things of a past or future century . . . It is in this sense that I deny the existence of an historical art applied to the past. Historical art is by its very nature contemporary.[17]

He continued:

> I hold also that painting is an essentially *concrete* art, and can consist only of the representation of things both *real* and *existing*.[18]

Courbet thereby placed the everyday and the commonplace directly within the artist's vocabulary.

Courbet also was criticized for his "sloppy" handling of the medium, particularly in using the palette knife at times (see figure 8). The application of paint to the surface of the canvas in this manner, for a finished product, was virtually unknown. This was the beginning of the challenge to the second of our factors, the plastic elements. This second challenge was begun in earnest by the Impressionists and continued through successive movements until the present

Figure 8: *The Stone Breakers*, Gustave Courbet, 1849.

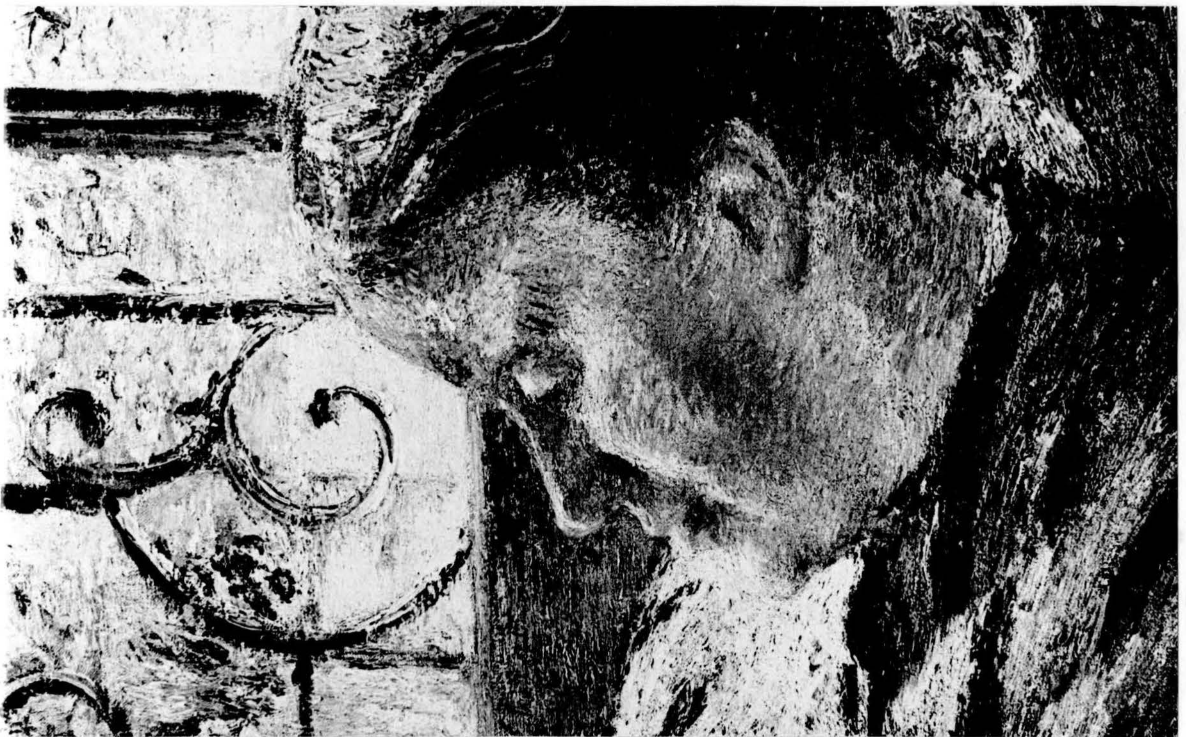


Figure 9: Detail, *Portrait of Mme. Pissarro Sewing Near a Window*, Camille Pissarro, 1878-79.

time. Katharine Kuh has analyzed the modern movements in terms of their break-up of the plastic elements and has commented:

> The art of our century has been characterized by shattered surfaces, broken color, segmented compositions, dissolving forms and shredded images. Curiously insistent is this consistent emphasis on break-up. . . And during the last hundred years, every aspect of art has been broken up -- color, light, pigment, form, line, content, space, surface and design.[19]

If we examine the Impressionists, we can see this initial break-up. Their emphasis on the fleeting moment and the quality of light caused experimentation with the palette knife to build up juxtaposed areas of color that when viewed from a distance merged together to form highly saturated colors (see figure 9). This also ended the traditional underpainting and brushwork techniques.

These initial experiments were carried further with Post-Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism, Surrealism and finally abstract art. During the progression of these movements, all of the conventional plastic elements were changed in drastic ways. For example, the multiple viewpoints and simultaneous presentation of discontinuous planes by the Cubists resulted in a new kind of pictorial space (see figure 10).

During this same progression, our last factor, the representational mode, was also denied. The very term "abstract" explicitly denies the representational mode as the only means for expression. While the abstract movement might be seen as climaxing with Kasimir Malevich's *Suprematist Composition: White on White* in 1918, I think the progression through each movement -- and their interrelationships -- was not in fact complete until the New York School of abstract painting in the

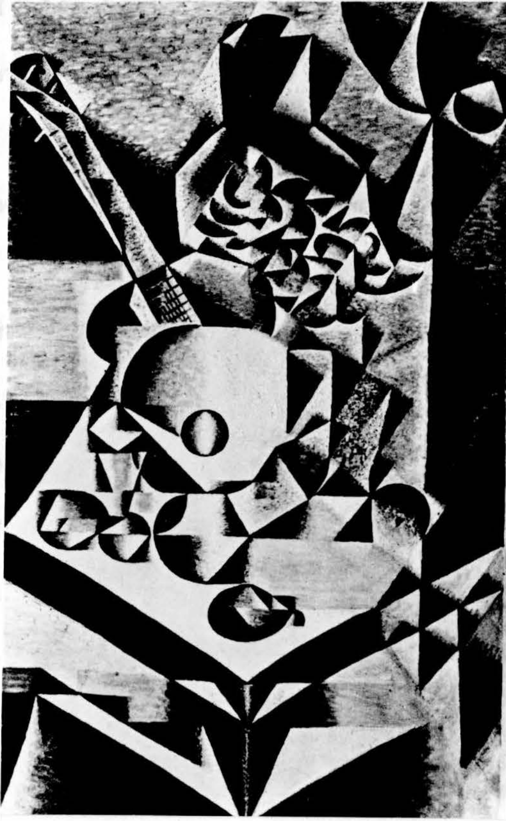


Figure 10: *Guitar and Flowers*, Juan Gris, 1912.

Figure 11: *Man's Head*, Pablo Picasso, 1907.

Figure 12: Mask, Itumba region, Africa.

1950's with works of artists like Jackson Pollack and Willem de Kooning. It should also be noted that although I have used the term "progression," I have not used this term to describe a linear sequence where one movement followed another. Rather, many movements were concurrent with one another and some artists were active in more than one movement.

Simultaneous with the break-up of all of the conventional factors which had previously defined painting there was also a recognition of new objects, new media and new technology in the Artworld. The new objects ranged from Japanese prints to African masks and other ritual objects. I have commented in the last chapter on these items and the fact that they were brought into the Artworld, but it should be noted here that they helped to broaden the idea of what art could be. These objects influenced many modern artists directly (see figures 11 and 12); they also expanded the plastic elements by bringing to attention their expressive and stylized elements.

The new media included photography and film, and most recently video. Each required its own category within the system of the arts because each had characteristics similar to but yet very different from existing categories. For example, film was like theatre in that it shared the basic story-telling characteristic; yet film changed the idea of proscenium presentation, time sequence and location. The viewer was no longer "rooted" in one position while the action of the drama unfolded before him in the theatre. With film, an overview of a battlefield, medium shots and close-ups of the men in battle could be cut together to move the viewer through the action. Small details

could be shown as easily as full-scale scenes. Moreover, film could demonstrate the mind of the actor by directly projecting such psychological effects directly onto the screen, either as special effects or flashbacks. In *Spellbound* (1946), Gregory Peck's character begins to unravel his amnesia by association of certain sights with others; this associative process is shown to the viewer by short cuts of the original sight with those he is currently seeing. There are many other conventions within film that helped to separate it from the theatre, but this discussion is not intended as a complete description or analysis of film. Rather, it should be noted that the new media were admitted to the Artworld and that they helped to enlarge the horizons of the Artworld. It should also be noted that each of these -- photography, film and video -- had its roots in what Erwin Panofsky has called folk art.[20] In other words, they began as documentation (photography) or entertainment (film and video) and only later came to be recognized as art forms. The genesis of photography as an art form will be discussed in detail in chapter 6 as a case study for the theory of the institutional analysis of the Artworld.

The new technology included materials never before used, from plywood and plastics to neon, and methods like vacuum molding. These new materials and methods also helped to change the categories in which the visual arts had been placed. Painting and sculpture had been two definite and distinct areas, but with new materials and the explorations they caused, sculpture and painting became much less differentiated.[21] Sculpture often had painted surfaces that were comparable to two-dimensional paintings, and which were quite different from older

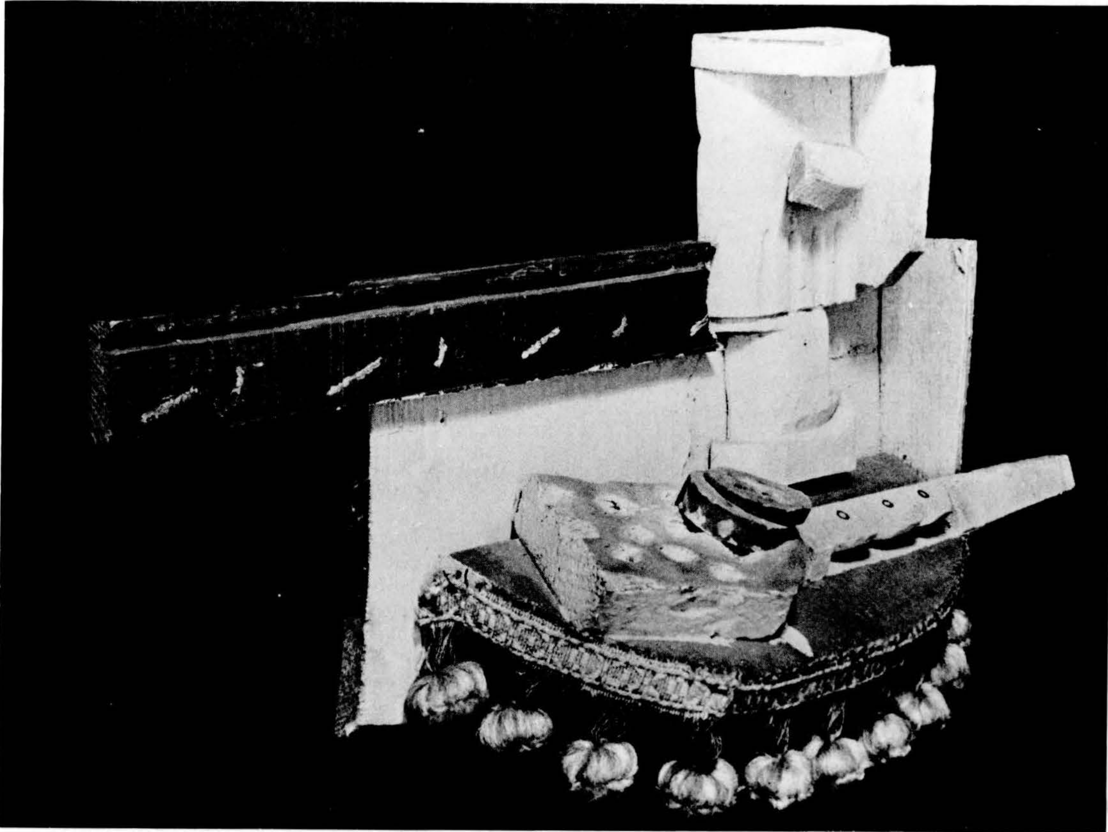


Figure 13: *Still Life*, Pablo Picasso, 1914.

polychrome forms. An early example of this blending of the conventions of the two media was Pablo Picasso's *Still Life* which featured painted wood and curtain fringes (figure 13). Also, paintings were no longer always contained within two-dimensional space, but expanded to three dimensions, either by the addition of three-dimensional objects to the canvas or by expanding the dimensions of the canvas itself. Sculpture and painting also lost additional distinctive characteristics with their entry into performance pieces and environmental events. A good example of this merger of theatre and sculpture was Jean Tinguely's *The Machine that Destroyed Itself*, a found-object sculpture which self-destructed on the grounds of the Museum of Modern Art.

The addition to the Artworld of new objects, media and technology in conjunction with the break-up of the traditional plastic elements increasingly focused attention on what constituted the work of art. As we have seen, from the Renaissance to the mid-nineteenth century, the work of art was clearly identified as a work of art; the definition between what was art and what was not art was clear. In a sense, until the modern movements, the more clearly the work of art was perceived as autonomous, the more clearly the conventions governing the work of art were understood by artists and audience. It would clarify the changes in the Artworld if we could examine them with the aid of a more formal definition of conventions. George Dickie has noted the use of conventions within the Artworld as a relational attitude between artist and audience.[22] He describes the conventions as primary and secondary. The primary convention is a shared agreement between artist and audience that they are engaged in a formal activity; secondary conventions include spatial and/or temporal cues which emphasize the primary convention. He suggests that primary and secondary conventions are specific to each art form and while the secondary conventions may change as the Artworld changes, the primary convention remains stable. A more detailed discussion of Dickie's use of conventions will be presented in the next chapter, but this will at least provide a starting place for the notion of conventions within this context. The idea of a primary convention is tied very closely with the viewing of the artwork as autonomous. If we examine Dickie's statement that a primary convention is a shared agreement between parties who are engaged in a formal activity, we must ask what that formal

activity is. The answer to the question must be the creation and viewing of the work of art. This assumes an autonomous work of art, one that is created to be viewed for no other purpose than its viewing and ultimately its appreciation. Thus, we can say that the primary convention is the creation or viewing of the autonomous work of art. As we have seen in the previous two chapters, the work of art became recognized as an autonomous creation beginning in the Renaissance; until some of the modern movements, this autonomy of the artwork was clear and unchallenged. The same was true of the primary convention. For example, Impressionism or Cubism, although appearing different from previous movements in art, did nothing to challenge the proposition that artists were creating and audience viewing a painting, a work of art. It should be noted that when these works were originally created, they were not accepted by all members of the Artworld as great, or even good art; however, this was an evaluation of the work, and at no time were these objects rejected as not being artworks. On the other hand, Marcel Duchamp's "ready-mades" challenged the very notion of an artwork as autonomous and the primary convention of sculpture. The essential nature of a "ready-made" negated the autonomy of the art object because the objects were mass manufactured and "pulled" from everyday life by the artist basically as they were.[23] In other words, the act of creation -- if any -- was in the naming of the objects as artworks, not in the conventional creation of the object. The formal activity engaged in between artist and audience was radically challenged -- Duchamp's *The Bicycle Wheel* or *Fountain*, albeit within the precincts of Dadaism, challenged the notion that the work of art was

created as an original form from the artist's imagination to be viewed and appreciated as a work of art. *The Bicycle Wheel* was not hewn from stone nor carved from wood -- it was assembled with "pre-fabricated" parts; *Fountain* was a more blatantly "pre-fabricated" piece. The intention of the artist was one of challenging the primary convention. Duchamp used the ready-mades as neutral objects presented to the Artworld as works of art. Octavio Paz has noted:

> The "ready-mades" are anonymous objects which the gratuitous gesture of the artist, by the simple act of choosing them, converts into "works of art." At the same time this gesture dissolves the notion of work. Contradiction is the essence of the act; it is the plastic equivalent of the pun: the latter destroys meaning, the former the idea of value. The "ready-mades" are not anti-art, like so many of the creations of Expressionism; they are *an-artistic*. . . . It would be stupid to discuss them in terms of their beauty or ugliness, as much because they transcend beauty and ugliness as because they are not works but rather question-marks or signs of negation that oppose the idea of works.[24]

Duchamp himself adds:

> Dada was an extreme protest against the physical side of painting. It was a metaphysical attitude. It was a way to get out of a state of mind -- to avoid being influenced by one's immediate environment, or by the past: to get away from cliches -- to get free. . . . Dada was very serviceable as a purgative.[25]

The ready-mades were a protest, a challenge and, as Paz has noted, a visual pun which signalled a questioning of the values of the Artworld. They were a way of negating the conventional attitudes of the Artworld, of obtaining distance from the conventions of the Artworld.

While Duchamp and the Dadaists were challenging the primary convention, other artists were challenging the secondary conventions, albeit with the intention of exploration rather than negation. As we have seen, Dickie has described secondary conventions as spatial and/or temporal cues which reinforce the primary convention. Dickie does lit-

tle to broaden this description, especially for the visual arts. If we are to view the secondary conventions as Dickie has suggested, as a relational attitude between artist and audience, not only the work but the relations between artist and audience must be included. I think the secondary conventions can be made more explicit by referring to the historical precedents cited earlier. For example, the general agreement to theme, the handling of plastic elements and the use of a representational image might very well be considered secondary conventions for painting during the seventeenth through mid-nineteenth centuries. Along with these elements, the framing and hanging of paintings in special galleries and museums, the internal discussion of painting and the subsequent theories of painting, the analysis and criticism of painting by critics, juries and curators, and the viewing of the paintings by an audience in special places, i.e., museums, galleries or the artist's studio, might also be considered secondary conventions. Therefore, I think we can say that the secondary conventions for the visual arts include the way of handling the plastic elements and the theory surrounding the creation, presentation and viewing of the artwork.

As Dickie has noted, these conventions are subject to change in a way the primary convention is not. The secondary conventions which have been noted changed with the onslaught of the modern movements in the mid-nineteenth century. As we have seen, the most immediately noticeable changes were in the handling of the plastic elements. But the theories surrounding painting were also dramatically changed -- for artists, presenters and audience. As each movement formed, dis-

cussion centered on the concerns of each movement and the discussion expanded the notions of what the painting could be. The Impressionists' concern for the momentary image of nature, the Cubists' use of simultaneous surface images, or the Post-Impressionists' emphasis on the expression of emotion all broadened the notion of what painting could look like, as well as what the audience response could and should be. The viewers of the modern movements were asked for an educated awareness of the rather fluid conventions the artists were forming as few other audiences before had been. In relation to the change which had occurred in the Artworld previously, the changes which the modern movements caused were extremely rapid and forced the viewer constantly to expand his understanding of the secondary conventions. This applied to aestheticians as well as other members of the Artworld. For example, the older aesthetic theories of beauty and mimesis were ill-equipped to deal with art that did not reflect the traditional secondary conventions. As a result, new aesthetic theories, or modifications of older theories, were formulated in response to the challenges of the new art. One such theory was that of Clive Bell first published in 1913. It was intended as a positive response to the criticism of Post-Impressionist painters. Bell argued that the essential quality in all works of art was that which provoked a personal response from the viewer, an aesthetic emotion. He called this quality "Significant Form" and defined it as "lines and colours combined in a particular way, certain forms and relations of forms, [which] stir our aesthetic emotions."[26] He rejected the older notion that the essential quality was beauty because the response to beauty is not confined to the work

of art and the object of aesthetic emotion must be a more confined idea applicable only to the work of art. In this way, the older idea of beauty was transformed to Significant Form, a term which was more in keeping with the non-representational images of the Post-Impressionist painters. Also, Bell's emphasis on the aesthetic emotion, a subjective response, reflected the shift from a search for absolute objective criteria for the work of art to a more relativistic and personal response on part of the viewer. This shift was indicative of the changing and expanding condition of the secondary conventions. To be relevant to the state of the Artworld, aesthetic theory had to make adjustments to reflect the change from stable and consistent secondary conventions to those which were expanding with each new movement of the moderns.

It should be noted that the rapidity of change and the expanding notions about the work of art increased the gap between the "average man on the street" and the members of the Artworld. Very often "Everyman" did not come into contact with the new art and when he did, his lack of understanding of the secondary conventions precluded appreciation of the artwork. The Artworld had become too complicated and too riddled with competing theories to be viewed without an education in the preceding and current theories.

The change and expansion of secondary conventions continued and, with the addition of new objects, media and technology, resulted in a proliferation of new movements in the 1960's and 1970's which challenged virtually every convention of art that had previously existed. Op, Pop, Minimal, Photographic Realism, Conceptual and Anti-

art movements, to name a few, have all found favor within the Artworld in the last twenty years. Pieces like Jasper John's *Painted Bronze* (figure 14), Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (figure 15), a number of empty flower pots, piles of dirt or other objects or even telephone calls that circled the earth have all found their way into museums, galleries, art books and journals. The state of the Artworld at this point has led one critic and artist, Helen Parmelin, to state:

> Something extraordinary is happening in the world of art. The situation, which was already strange, is now approaching a bizarre climax. It is a situation where anything goes and all is forbidden . . . a situation in which art has every right, is losing its every means, and is discovering other means.[26]

Some of these movements seem to be challenging the secondary conventions, some the primary. For example, Photographic Realism seems to be attempting to blur the distinctions between the secondary conventions of painting and photography; earthworks and wrappings seem to challenge the museum setting. On the other hand, Anti-art and Conceptual movements seem to resume where Dada had stopped, that is, with a challenge of the primary convention. While Anti-art mounts the challenge in a very similar manner to Dada, Conceptual "art" attacks the central idea of the art object, i.e., replaces the art object with a concept. The artifacts which are presented in museum or gallery are usually documentation of the concept or resulting act, although occasionally the act itself is presented in a museum setting.

It is at this point that traditional aesthetic theories found themselves unable to deal with the Artworld they were supposed to be addressing. A new discussion was begun which tried to define art in a way which could take into account these occurrences within the Art-

Figure 14: *Painted Bronze*, Jasper Johns, 1960.

Figure 15: *Spiral Jetty*, Robert Smithson, 1970.

world. One of the most interesting theories to emerge from this discussion is the institutional theory of art which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Summary

The final transformation of art object to aesthetic object was made in the eighteenth century with the appearance of aesthetic theory as a separate field of philosophic inquiry. Lord Shaftesbury provided the first step by applying the principle of disinterested contemplation not only to the moral life but also to nature and art. Joseph Addison took another step with the attention that he focused on the nature of the aesthetic experience. In his discussion of the "man of polite imagination," he describes what is very much the same quality that Shaftesbury had called disinterestedness. In both cases, aesthetic disinterestedness pointed to the aesthetic as an autonomous activity in life. The confirmation of this autonomy could be seen with Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten when he instituted the study of the aesthetic as a particular branch of philosophic inquiry, named it as such and began the systematic study of it. With the initiation of a particular branch of study of the aesthetic and the installation of disinterestedness as a central concept in the aesthetic, the autonomy of the art object was fully realized. In this way, aesthetic theory joined the other currents within the Artworld which had formed a new chapter in the history of art in the West. The territory occupied by the Artworld was a distinct area defined by the autonomy of the aesthetic object, an object created only to be viewed and appreciated.

Conditions within the Artworld did not remain stable for long. By the mid-nineteenth century, the series of modern movements had begun and with them, a series of challenges to the conventions of the Artworld. I have described the primary convention as a shared agreement between artists, presenters and audience that they are engaged in a formal activity which involves the autonomous work of art. The secondary conventions for the visual arts included the way of handling the plastic elements and the theory surrounding the creation, presentation and viewing of the artwork. It was these secondary conventions to which most of the modern movements addressed their challenges. The first challenge came from the Realists, particularly Courbet, who challenged the convention of theme. In a like manner, the modern movements, beginning with the Impressionists and continuing through the Abstract Expressionists, challenged the way of handling the plastic elements. The representational image was no longer considered the only method of painting. The theory which surrounded each of the modern movements provoked discussion of the secondary conventions and these conventions were broadened to include the new artworks. Along with the acceptance of the new movements and the subsequent expansion of the secondary conventions, new objects, new media and new technology further expanded the secondary conventions. As a result, the conventional distinctions between media were blurred: painting could encompass three-dimensional shapes or photography could be sculptural. Thus, while not changing the primary convention -- the work of art remained autonomous -- the secondary conventions changed as artists explored new paths of creation.

However, there were challenges to the primary convention in the form of Dada, Anti-art and Conceptual movements, the latter two occurring within the last fifteen years. These attacked the primary convention in two ways: by denying the autonomy of the artwork and by denying the artifactuality of the artwork. Both Dada and Anti-art removed the object which was created and original and replaced it with common, everyday objects that were usually mass produced. The conceptual movement removed the artifact and replaces it with a concept or an act which represents the concept. In both cases, the primary convention has been challenged. The evaluation of the work of art seems to be as much in a state of flux today as other convention within the Artworld. Traditional theories of the aesthetic seem inadequate to deal with the barrage of contemporary movements and their challenges to the conventions of the Artworld. However, one must remember that these challenges appear within the context of the Artworld -- they appear in museums and galleries, on the pages of art books and critical reviews. It would seem that a theory could be constructed which took into account the current state of the Artworld as well as past conditions in its formation. The institutional analysis of George Dickie seems to provide a starting place for a discussion which can encompass the medieval illuminated page, the masters of the Renaissance and wrapped buildings. Dickie's theory will be examined in the next chapter, as will certain modifications which will render it a more complete analytical tool. What should be noted at this point is that the Artword is a formal institution with conventions governing its participants. These conventions, both primary and secondary, have

grown with the formation of the Artworld since its genesis in the Renaissance. They include an agreement between participants that they are engaged in a formal activity involving an autonomous work of art as well as secondary conventions which govern the creation and viewing of the artwork.

Notes:

[1] Jerome Stolnitz, "On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 11 (April 1961): 98.

[2] Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. John M. Robertson (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1964), II, p. 54.

[3] Ibid., II, pp. 126-27.

[4] Ibid. •

[5] Joseph Addison, *Spectator* no. 411, in *The Works of Joseph Addison*, ed. George Washington Greene (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1864), p. 323.

[6] Ibid., p. 324.

[7] Ibid., p. 325.

[8] *Spectator* no. 414, pp. 337-38.

[9] *Spectator* no. 416, p. 349.

[10] *Spectator* no. 412, pp. 327-28.

[11] Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, in *Reflections on Poetry: Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's 'Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus,'* trans. Karl Aschenbrenner and William B. Holther (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954), p. 79.

[12] This is articulated in *Aesthetica* of which the first volume was published in 1750, the second in 1758.

[13] Baumgarten, *Meditationes*, p. 78.

[14] Stolnitz, "Significance of Lord Shaftesbury," p. 99.

[15] Harold Osborne, *Aesthetics and Art History: An Historical Introduction* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1970), p. 263.

[16] It should be noted that Jean Francois Millet and Honore Daumier are often included in the Realists, but it was Courbet who was the primary spokesman and delivered the aplogia for Realism.

[17] Gustave Courbet, "Open Letter to a Group of Prospective Students," in *Artists on Art: From the 14th to the 20th Century,* ed. Robert Goldwater and Marco Treves (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p. 296.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Katharine Kuh, *Break-up: The Core of Modern Art*, Greenwich, Connecticut: New York Graphic Society Ltd., 1969), p. 11.

[20] Erwin Panofsky, "Style and Medium in the Motion Picture," in *Problems in Aesthetics: An Introductory Book of Readings*, ed. Morris Weitz (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), pp. 528-29.

[21] This is not to say that the new technologies caused the explorations of artists; rather, the exploration of new media and technology was concurrent with, and in some ways caused by the break-up of the traditional conventions of the Artworld. However, the new technology was there when artists decided to explore previously unexplored areas.

[22] George Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), pp. 174-81.

[23] A distinction may be made between Duchamp's true ready-mades (*The Bicycle Wheel*) and corrected ready-mades (*L.H.O.O.Q.*). The distinction is pertinent to this discussion because the corrected ready-mades used what Dickie has called art in the derivative sense where the true ready-mades culled the everyday object and elevated it to a work of art through the baptism by the artist and gallery which presented it. See Carla Gottlieb, *Beyond Modern Art* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1976), pp. 103-07.

[24] Octavio Paz, "The Ready-Made," in *Marcel Duchamp in Perspective*, ed. Joseph Masheck (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), p. 84.

[25] Marcel Duchamp, "Painting . . . at the service of the mind," in *Theories of Modern Art*, ed. Herschel B. Chipp (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 394.

[26] Clive Bell, *Art* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958), p. 17.

[27] Helen Parmelin, *Art Anti-Art: Anartism Explored,* trans. J. A. Underwood (London: Marion Boyars, 1977), p. 5.

CHAPTER V

A THEORY OF THE ARTWORLD

Introduction

In the last chapter, the origin of modern aesthetic theory in the eighteenth century was examined. Aesthetic theory became a separate field of philosophic inquiry and with the concept of "disinterestedness" as a keystone in the theory, the autonomous nature of the work of art was underscored. The advent of the modern movements in the mid-nineteenth century caused the modification of older aesthetic theories and the formation of new ones in an attempt to better analyze occurrences in the Artworld. In this chapter, I would like to examine one of the most recent theories, that of the institutional analysis of George Dickie. The theory has caused considerable comment within philosophic circles, most of it critical. However, by making certain modifications based on the concept of the Artworld which has been presented in the previous three chapters and on John Rawls' notion of an institution, a more complete institutional theory may be achieved. Using these modifications, the perimeters of the Artworld then will be examined in an effort to distinguish art and non-art objects.

An Institutional Analysis

While there have been several institutional theories proposed

in recent years, one of the most complete is that of George Dickie. Central to this analysis is the attempt to define art, and to fit this definition within a cultural, social and historical context. He rejects the traditional attempts to define art and the contention that art cannot be defined and instead argues that art can be defined by relational and non-exhibited properties. As Dickie sees them, the defining characteristics are artifactuality and conferred status. A work of art is placed within the realm of the Artworld when it has conferred upon it the status of candidate for appreciation by some member or group of members of the Artworld. But before examining these ideas, it would be best to begin with a few distinctions that Dickie makes.

Dickie begins with the well known proposal that art cannot be defined by Morris Weitz.[1] Weitz maintains that art cannot be defined because the necessary and sufficient properties for such a definition are lacking. If such properties existed, then art would be a closed concept, but by its very nature it is open. The properties which are often taken for defining are in reality noting but "strands of similarities. Weitz notes:

> But the basic resemblance between these concepts is their open texture. In elucidating them, certain (paradigm) cases can be given. I can list some cases and some conditions under which I can apply correctly the concept of art but I cannot list all of them, for the all-important reason that unforseeable or novel conditions are always forthcoming or envisageable.[2]

Thus, to Weitz the concept of art and its subconcepts remain open. Dickie refutes this argument in the following manner:

> All or some of the subconcepts of art may be open and the generic conception of art still be closed. That is, it is possible that all or some of the subconcepts of art, such as novel, tragedy, sculpture, and painting, may lack necessary and sufficient con-

> ditions and at the same time that "work of art," which is the genus of all the subconcepts, can be defined in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. Tragedies may not have any characteristics in common which would distinguish them from, say, comedies *within the domain of art*, but it may be that there are common characteristics that works of art have which distinguish them from nonart, nothing prevents a "closed genus/open species relationship.[3]

The second of Weitz's arguments, that of classification, breaks down the concept of "X is a work of art" into descriptive and evaluative utterances. For the descriptive sense, Weitz sees no necessary or sufficient conditions but rather the "bundle of properties" which normally are present when we describe a work of art but which need not be. Weitz notes:

> None of the criteria of recognition is a defining one, either necessary of sufficient, because we can sometimes assert of something that it is a work of art and go on to deny any one of these conditions, even the one which has traditionally been taken to be basic, namely, that of being an artifact: consider, "This piece of driftwood is a lovely piece of sculpture." Thus, to say of anything that it is a work of art is to commit oneself to the presence of *some* of these conditions. . . But . . . no one of these or any collection of them is either necessary or sufficient.[4]

Weitz also points out that the evaluative sense is used in two ways: one in which the criteria of evaluation becomes synonymous with art or one where the criteria are used to justify a particular definition of art:

> . . . what cannot be maintained is that theories of the evaluative use of "art" are true and real definitions of the necessary and sufficient properties of art. Instead they are honorific definitions, pure and simple, in which "Art" has been redefined in terms of chosen criteria.[5]

Dickie criticizes Weitz's position in several ways. First, he makes note of Maurice Mandelbaum's[6] contention that the essential nature of art may be found in non-exhibited relational characteristics,

that is, those characteristics which are not directly perceivable or are perceivable only in combination with others. Mandlebaum makes the following distinction:

> Like the biological connections among those who are connected by family resemblances . . . such a characteristic might be a relational attribute, rather than some characteristic at which one could directly point and say: "It is this particular feature of the object which leads me to designate it as a work of art." A relational attribute of the required sort might, for example, only be apprehended if one were to consider specific art objects as having been created by someone for some actual or possible audience.[7]

In other words, Mandlebaum sees the relationship between object, artist and audience to be more important than specific qualities of the pictorial surface. The former, relational characteristics, are basically what Dickie considers non-exhibited properties while the latter, specific qualities of pictorial surface would be an example of exhibited properties.

Second, Dickie introduces Richard Sclafani's[8] notion of a third sense of "work of art," that of the contingency of a non-artifact upon a paradigm work of art which is always an artifact. For example, a piece of driftwood, which is a non-artifact, may have properties in common with Brancusi's *Bird in Space* which is an artifact. It is the continuation of these properties in the eyes of the viewer which extends the term "work of art" from Brancusi's sculpture to the piece of driftwood. Sclafani notes that there is a primary or paradigmatic sense which is derivative. It should be noted here that the derivative sense is normally employed from non-artifact to artifact, but it can also be used from artifact to artifact. Dickie then proceeds to assert that there are three senses of the concept "work of art": (1)

the classificatory or descriptive which is primary; (2) the secondary or derivative; and (3) the evaluative. The first sense, the classificatory, is to Dickie a purely descriptive one used to identify a work of art. Dickie notes:

> We rarely utter sentences in which we use the classificatory sense, because it is such a basic notion: we generally know immediately whether an object is a work of art, so that generally no one needs to say, by way of classification, "That is a work of art" . . . [9]

The evaluative sense, on the other hand, carries quality meanings, or a belief that the referent has valuable qualities. Thus, the phrase "That is a work of art" can have three meanings or senses of interpretation, depending upon the context of the utterance. In the case of any of these three uses, Dickie believes that artifactuality is a necessary condition of the work of art.

Dickie then proceeds to the second defining characteristic of a work of art, that of conferred status. To do this, he enters Arthur Danto's "artworld." During a discussion of two "identical" appearing paintings and their possible interpretations and derivations, Danto turns to knowledge of theories of art and history of art as essential to the understanding of contemporary art. He states:

> To see something as art requires something the eye cannot decry -- an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld.[10]

Dickie interprets this statement as agreement with Mandelbaum's idea of non-exhibited relational properties. Dickie believes that Danto is pointing to the institutional nature of art; that art is not only the doing but the knowledge of what has been done and why within a loosely structured coalition of artists, presenters and audience.

Dickie uses the term "artworld" "to refer to the broad social institution in which works of art have their place."[11] He further delineates his use of "institution" by equating it with an established practice. This established practice exists within the systems (theatre, painting, sculpture) and subsystems (theatre of the absurd, collage, junk sculpture) of the artworld and is not only the doing of the artists involved, but the conferring of status upon the products of their work by the people who populate the artworld of a particular time and place.

This brings us to Dickie's definition of a work of art:

> A work of art in the classificatory sense is (1) an artifact (2) a set of the aspects of which has had conferred upon it the status of candidate for appreciation by some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the artworld).[12]

Dickie draws an analogy between some legal actions of the state and the conferring of status in the artworld. For example, a grand jury indicting someone, the chairman of the election board certifying that someone is qualified to run for office, a minister pronouncing a couple man and wife, or congress conferring the status of national monument upon a thing or an area. He also gives examples of a non-legal conferring of status: a degree bestowed by a university, the election of someone as Rotary president, or the title of village idiot upon someone. He goes on to say:

> The counterparts in the artworld to specified procedures and lines of authority are nowhere codified, and the artworld carries on its business at the level of customary practice. Still there *is* a practice and this defines a social institution. A social institution need not have a formally established constitution, officers, and bylaws in order to exist and have the capacity to confer status -- some social institutions are formal and some are informal.[13]

He defines the members of the artworld as practitioners, producers,

museum directors, museum-goers, theatre-goers, reporters for newspapers, critics, art historians, art theorists, philosophers of art and others. "In addition, every person who sees himself as a member of the artworld is thereby a member."[14] And it is through membership in the artworld that status may be conferred. A sure sign of this would be a performance in a theatre or a show in a museum or a gallery. However, one person acting alone and privately may confer this status:

> The status in question may be acquired by a single person's acting on behalf of the artworld and *treating an artifact as a candidate for appreciation*. Of course, nothing prevents a group of persons from conferring the status, but it is usually conferred by a single person, the artist who creates the artifact.[15]

This conferring of status is in no way connected with the evaluation of the work. The work becomes a candidate for appreciation; it is not necessary that the work actually *be* appreciated. By "appreciation" Dickie means "in experiencing the qualities of a thing one finds them worthy or valuable."[16] He finds no difference between appreciating art and nonart except that the object of appreciation differs. However, he does believe that the work in question must have at least the potential for being appreciated.

Dickie also introduces two other conditions to the artworld: human intentionality and originality. The first he uses to eliminate things like chimpanzee paintings and accidents. If paintings done by chimpanzees were exhibited at a scientific museum, they would not belong to the artworld; however, if they were exhibited in an art museum, they would belong to the artworld because they were sponsored, with human intentionality by the director of the museum. It should be noted here that Dickie is not using human intentionality in the interpretive

sense, that is, the author's intention as a necessary part of the meaning of the piece, but rather as a human function. So, in other words, if a museum curator found the paintings of a chimpanzee interesting enough to be hung in the museum, then those paintings would enter the artworld via the credit of the curator.

The second condition, that of originality, would remove fakes or copies from the artworld. Originality covers the concept of a deliberate fake for Dickie, but following the lead of Danto, he believes that work which is derivative or imitative is different from the deliberate attempt to duplicate a particular work of art. Dickie draws an analogy between the function of originality within the artworld and the concept of patent law. He states:

> Once an invention has been patented, one exactly like it cannot be patented -- the patent for just that invention has been "used up." In the case of patenting, of course, whether the second device is a copy or independently derived is unimportant but the copying aspect is crucial in the artistic case.[17]

Dickie believes that originality is an "antecedent requirement" for painting but is hesitant to extend this condition in a blanket fashion over the rest of the arts.

In the discussion of aesthetic objects, Dickie again rejects various aesthetic attitude theories which are based in the belief that the aesthetic attitude is a special psychological state. Instead, he believes a relational "attitude" exists between artist and audience in that they are both aware of the conventions of the art practice and are governed by these conventions which he describes as primary and secondary conventions. He suggests that the primary convention is a shared agreement between artist and audience that they are involved in

in a formal activity.[18] Secondary conventions would include spatial and temporal cues which emphasize the primary convention. While the primary convention changes very little, the secondary conventions are subject to change as the artworld changes. Dickie does little to explain or define these conventions except to offer an example of a traditional theatre production. The primary convention is the realization of the audience and actors that they are present at a theatre presentation -- perhaps as opposed to a riot or a supermarket opening. The secondary conventions might include a specific stage area, seats arranged to view the stage, house lights dimming, the curtain being raised, a program, an arrangement of acts or scenes in a serial order, and even a backstage area which is concealed from the audience. These secondary conventions might vary from theatre to theatre, or with the kind of play presented; certainly the conventions of the ancient Greek theatre are different from the theatre of the absurd or from No drama of Japan. Dickie also states that these conventions are learned in an unself-conscious way, much like people learn their native language. Thus, Dickie feels that discrimination between aesthetic objects and other things are obtained through knowledge of these conventions:

> In general, the ability to make the locations and distinctions in a given case depends upon an understanding of the type of art which the given case is an instance. This means that the distinguishing of aesthetic objects is a piecemeal affair, since it depends upon experience and understanding of specific art forms. Each art form has a primary convention or practice for presenting works of that type, together with a variety of secondary conventions of greater and lesser importance.[19]

Thus, the conventions are used to "locate and specify" the aesthetic

features of a work of art. He further states:

> . . . if one must know of the aspect in order to understand what is presented through a primary convention, then that aspect of the work is also an aspect of the aesthetic object of the work.[20]

One might say that the artist is bound by the primary convention, that is, to create a work of art, and the audience shares in this aspect of the aesthetic when it seeks to locate and specify the aesthetic features in the work. Dickie makes the distinction between the work of art and its aesthetic features in the following manner:

> Quite naturally, when the concern is with what makes something a work of art . . . the emphasis will be on the aspects of the artworld that make creation possible -- on acting on behalf of an institution, on conferring of status, on being a candidate, and on appreciation. When, on the other hand, the concern is with the aesthetic and nonaesthetic features of works of art . . . the emphasis will be on those features of the artworld that govern and direct the spectator's attention. The connectedness of the two aspects of the artworld is obvious: the aesthetic object is the aspect of the work for the sake of which the art is created.[21]

Let us examine a few examples that Dickie gives to concretize his views. First of all, a piece of driftwood could be considered a work of art in the derivative sense if it shared properties with a paradigm work of art. It would also seem that this piece of driftwood would have to be elevated to the status of candidate by a member of the artworld. Second, a work like Duchamp's *Fountain* would seem to be a work of art in the classificatory sense because an artist has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation and a museum director has seconded the nomination. However, the question of the potential for appreciation might be raised in that the gesture of Duchamp could be appreciated but the object itself could not. Dickie replies that only a minimal potential value is needed and that *Fountain* shares many

qualities with the work of Brancusi and Moore like gleaming white surface, pleasing oval shape, etc. Finally, there is the case of forgeries and copies. Dickie insists these are not legitimate works of art because, like a patent, once the original piece is enfranchised, the franchise has been used up. As has been noted, Dickie is hesitant to extend his comments on originality beyond painting, but even in the area of painting he does not really distinguish between a forgery and a copy. He furthermore ignores related areas, those of printmaking and photography, where the distinctions could be demonstrated more readily.

Dickie's theory is interesting in many ways, but one of the most important features is the flexibility it gives to the artworld. Objects which were not originally created as part of the artworld can be brought into the artworld. And change within the artworld is acommodated by the acknowledgment of the change in membership through successive centuries, periods, artists and audience. Change, to Dickie, is a key concept, and perhaps the *raison d'être* for the institutional analysis. However, in his concern to formulate a theory which not only accommodates the artworks of today but also those of past and future, Dickie has left the theory very open-ended. If drawn to its logical conclusion, any person can elevate any object to the status of a candidate for appreciation. This is one of the main criticisms that Dickie's many commentators have made. Other criticisms point toward problems with the classificatory nature of the theory and the sense of ambiguity in conferral of status, in the object of conferral and in membership in the artworld. Let us examine some of these criticisms leveled at the institutional theory.

The first criticism has been voiced by Ted Cohen[22] and although Dickie has considered some of the objections previously, it would be well to examine Cohen's position. Cohen asks for clarification of two points: "in what circumstances and by whom can this property be bestowed, and what qualifies a thing to receive this bestowal."[23] Cohen questions the example of the *Fountain* that Dickie has cited -- who precisely confers status upon the object, the artist or the museum director? Would the end result have been the same if a plumbing salesman had entered the piece in the show? What if Duchamp had been rejected from the show but displayed the object in his studio? And what if a well known artist came to your house and drew on the wall to cover some cracks in the wall? How would this be different from a workman doing the same act? Cohen suggests that at least part of the answer to these questions lie in the enfranchisement of the artist:

> . . . one of the ways the "artworld" breeds Art is by way of enfranchising Artmakers. Anyone who did "Nude Descending a Staircase" and the rest would be an Artmaker (however good), but only an Artmaker could make that urinal Art (if it is art). It is because he did "Nude" that Duchamp is an artist; it is because he is Duchamp that "Fountain" is not just a misplaced urinal.[24]

He does not pursue this line but turns again to question the construction of Dickie's analogy between legal enfranchisement and the artworld's. He points out that an aldermanic candidate is not just "made," even by the mayor or the head of an election board. Rather, there are constraints placed upon the candidate (minimum age, residence requirements, etc.). And, if the analogy is extended, then there must be constraints placed upon the art object also, or upon the artmakers. Furthermore, Cohen states that "there must be a boundary, how-

ever hard to chart, between making art, and trying but failing to make art."[25] Cohen returns to Duchamp's *Fountain*, stating that perhaps we should neither judge it art nor non-art:

> . . . I think we must give up the compulsion to *decide* about "Fountain," to rule it in or out; and I think we can do this by taking seriously the suggestion that whether "Fountain" is art depends upon whether and how a certain kind of act was performed. . . . What we need to discuss are the ways in which "Fountain" is very much like normal art and the ways in which it is altogether unlike normal art, and then how this bears on the character of Duchamp's act of putting it forward and having it called art.[26]

Dickie answers Cohen on several of these objections. First, he states that *Fountain* must be classified as an artwork because it shares with other artworks the distinction of being in art history books and being displayed in galleries. And he adds that "In the case of more ordinary art it is less easy to notice the *status* of the works as art because we are so used to experiencing such works and because their non-status features seize our attention."[27]

Second, Dickie denies that every feature of political analogy could be transferred to the artworld. "Specifically, I did not intend to suggest that the ability to confer the status of candidate for appreciation is acquired in a formal, procedural way . . . "[28] Dickie also feels that his example of the plumbing salesman reinforces the non-formal qualities of the artworld. He believes that "the plumbing supplier could have conferred the relevant status *if* he were able to see himself in relation to and as an agent of the artworld and wanted to create a work of art."[29] And, in reference to Cohen's question to the status of *Fountain* if it had been refused by the museum, Dickie says:

> . . . in speaking of an institutional setting, I was not talking about a thing's being in a museum or some similar physical institutional location; rather, I was referring to a social way of thinking about and regarding things -- a social practice.[30]

And third, Dickie restates his belief that any object can be placed as a candidate for appreciation.

> . . . the very things which Cohen cites as paradigms of things which cannot be appreciated -- ordinary thumbtacks, cheap white envelopes, and plastic forks -- have appreciatable [sic] qualities which can be noted if one focuses attention on them. Photographs frequently bring out these qualities of quite ordinary things by focusing narrowly on them.[31]

He adds that if there are constraints and whatever they might be, they are not very limiting and almost anything can be a work of art.

Richard Sclafani has also raised questions concerning the analogy that Dickie used. First, he asks who can and who cannot confer status on behalf of the artworld. What he is asking for is a delineation of who is a bonafide member of the artworld. Sclafani thinks a minimal condition of membership in the artworld is a concept of what a work of art is. If Dickie's analogy is to work, whether it refers to a political, an ecclesiastical, or an academic world, knowledge of that world is necessary. In other words, to be a member of that world implies a knowledge of "a vast network of beliefs, attitudes, conventions, social practices, and historical happenings"[32] of that world. Sclafani rules out the plumbing salesman because he would not have the knowledge of the artworld sufficient to make this gesture:

> The significance of Duchamp's act cannot be divorced from his ingenious conception of what the artworld of the World War I era was and was not ready for. This required an intimate familiarity on Duchamp's part with both the recent and not so recent history of European art. It also required the recognition and development of the notion that artistic creativity need not involve manual craftsmanship.[33]

Second, he questions Dickie's contention that any object can have art status conferred upon it. Sclafani suggests that at least some justification be given for the object's status since so much is left unsaid about who can bestow status. Third, he asks for clarification of the act of conferring status: is it simply the act of production or is there another act which actually confers the status? Fourth, he asks if Dickie's definition does actually reflect linguistic practice. And he suggests that Dickie is "committed far more strongly to a theoretical stance on the nature of art than he would like to admit."[34]

Bruce N. Morton suggests that one odd feature of Dickie's theory is that it makes creating a work of art independent from an institution virtually impossible. For instance, if a painter painted a picture in his studio, kept it there for several days without showing it to anyone, and then destroyed it, Morton believes it would still be a work of art according to Dickie's sense; however, if the same procedure was done by a person outside the artworld, someone impelled to do this one painting even though he had no knowledge of art, Morton feels that Dickie would have difficulty fitting this example into his definition without stretching it to include everyone living in the society:

> To admit that almost any member of society has sufficient status within an artworld to be able by his own activity to confer the status "work of art" is to abandon any serious reliance on the notion of an institution within the institutional analysis. So we require some criterion (even if a very lenient one) to pick out those individuals able to confer status from within an institution, from those unable to do so because they are outside the institution.[35]

He goes on to point out that to say membership is contingent upon

creation of a work of art develops a circular notion in which works of art exist for the artworld rather than the artworld existing for -- or because of -- works of art. He also denies the existence of the use of the classificatory sense in common practice.

Joseph Margolis feels that Dickie's position can offer much in the way of analysis of the world of art, but as a definition it lacks credibility. Dickie has described artifactuality as a simple matter, but Margolis disagrees. In the example of the driftwood, Dickie has stated that artifactuality can be conferred upon the object. Margolis asks if this is concurrent with conferral of the status of candidate, and if they are, then what distinguishes the two? He also believes that Dickie has not delineated the conventions within which an aesthetic object is presented and what is aesthetically relevant to appreciation.

A fuller criticism is offered by Anita Silvers, who quotes from Samuel Butler's "Erehwon" and suggests that the artworld occupies in reality a similar place as Erehwon -- nowhere. She begins her argument with a brief look at the artworld as sketched by both Danto and Dickie, and some differences between these pictures. Silvers believes that Danto's artworld is people by theories about art: "In Danto's Artworld, agents seem to play a secondary role; they exist to formulate relationships holding among art objects and to devise art theories which express these relationships."[36] She sees Danto's agents dealing with art objects in a more constrained manner because they must deal with the objects from a theoretical perspective. On the other hand, she feels that Dickie's artworld is peopled with agents who are vir-

tually unrestrained by art objects; indeed, it seems that "the Artworld is completely logically prior to art objects."[37] Silvers draws an analogy between the conferring of status and between naming a child. A parent has an institutional position and can name a child anything the parent wants, regardless of the consequences to the child, other relatives, or the parents themselves. Naming a boy "Sue" may lower the credibility of the parents in society in general, but the name remains valid. However well this reflects Dickie's position, Silvers believes that naming a child is an act of individuation -- naming a specific -- where naming art should be a classification rather than an act of individuation:

> Presumably, classification involves sorting things together and distinguishing them from other sorts of things in terms of their membership in a group rather than in terms of their individuality. Sorting things into a class or group would be useless if everything equally warranted membership in the class.[38]

She continues that there is nothing in Dickie's artworld that would stop a member from conferring status upon every object in sight, thus destroying all distinctions between the artworld and the world in general. She points to the pen and paper she is writing with and finds it hard to believe that they can share the same aesthetic status as *Guernica*. She discounts the notion that Dickie would accuse her of confusing the evaluative and the classificatory sense by stating that the two are "inextricable bound together in usage."[39] She adds that in cases where new theories are proposed and the artworld is expanded these theories very often are defended by evaluative criteria as well as acknowledged through evaluative criteria:

> The heart of the matter, then, lies in the attempt of Institution-

> al theorists to provide a liberal and tolerant account of art on which everything, from can openers and plumbing fixtures to artists' actual or threatened self-inflicted wounds, has an equal opportunity to qualify as art. This drive for what might be termed universal aesthetic sufference [sic] enjoys a current popularity which extends beyond the purveyors of the Institutional Theory of Art.[40]

Silvers sees this phenomena resting upon what she calls the "transmigration thesis" where an object is changed into an art object; moreover, it is these borderline cases which she finds interesting. In contrast to Cohen, she believes that borderline cases are important by the very fact that we are forced to consider what we mean by art. She re-examines the *Fountain* and suggests that what Duchamp did was not only to make a gesture but combined an object with the gesture in a total activity.[41] She goes on to note that this complicates *Fountain* because one must be aware of the activities of Duchamp as a Dadaist as well as the object itself; and the "uninitiated" would not be able to apprehend both constituents. She believes that *Fountain* was about art, that it was a conceptual statement.[42] However, while she agrees that there is an institutional aspect to art -- an identifiable group of participants who travel within the artworld -- she denies that it is the definition of art:

> . . . the fact that members of an institutionally defined group engage in applying the term "art" to unusual objects does not prove that the term "art" is defined by reference to that institution. To make such an inference is analogous to claiming that, since policemen constitute the group who most often apply the term "criminal," the term is to be defined by those who are members of the institutionally defined Policeworld.[43]

She finishes by saying that a definition of art cannot be contained within the confines of the Artworld.

Jay E. Bachrach also finds several points of criticism of

Dickie's position. First of all, he takes the act of conferring status as a command "that one take X in terms of certain conventions for appreciating it."[44] And a command once ordered is difficult to dispute. However, disputes do exist, and they exist because other people refuse the command, or perhaps because they issue a counter-command that X is not art. What is needed is justification -- that X may prove valuable enough to be appreciated. Next, Bachrach asks how an individual acts in behalf of the artworld. He suggests that acting in an institution as a member is not the same as acting on behalf of that institution and that those who act on behalf of an institution normally have been granted the authority to do so:

> But in presenting a work he (the artist) does not act in behalf of anyone but himself unless he is acting as the representative of a school of art, a movement, or an academy, in short some institution in the narrower, more clear-cut sense of that term, not the kind that Dickie says the artworld is.[45]

If Dickie means acting in the artworld then the distinctions between the artworld and the general world are blurred and become meaningless.

Next Bachrach looks at other structures within the artworld. For instance, membership within the artworld seems to be overly democratic in that an occasional museum-goer has the same status as an art historian. Moreover, it is unstable. In addition, the individuality of the conferring of status renders a social structure meaningless -- if one does not need museums or critics to confer status, then why have a social institution at all? Thus, Bachrach feels that the artworld should not be present within a definition of a work of art. He believes that status can be conferred but in a much different social sense than Dickie has used:

> The huge, untrained silent majority who time and again object to the untraditional offered as a work of art demonstrate that conventions are not sufficient for making it so. . . I would like to stress . . . that one takes the object as work of art only insofar as he or she accepts it as initially worthy for appreciation.[46]

Bachrach finds the terms "taking as a work of art" and "is a work of art" as non-equivalent terms. He further states that an object must have positive or negative aesthetic values -- not neutral as in the case of the tumbtack -- to be considered a work of art. He then offers his own definition of the work of art, one which omits Dickie's artworld.[47]

Patricia H. Werhane argues that Dickie has ignored the evaluative aspect of the classificatory sense. She believes that it is possible for a viewer to say that "X is not a work of art," not basing this opinion on the object's lack of interesting aesthetic qualities but rather questioning the artworld's classificatory criteria. She states: "The classificatory process is a selective process, a process which employs criteria for selectivity. And at least some of the criteria for selecting and rejecting phenomena as art are evaluative."[48] She lists some of the evaluative criteria used in the artworld as follows: (1) any artifact done in a conventional or traditional medium or uses traditional materials; (2) phenomena produced by recognized artists; (3) phenomena produced by those who claim to be artists; (4) natural objects presented as art objects; (5) original uses of materials, art forms, or subject matter; and (6) artifacts with a content that comments upon philosophical, theological or sociological concepts. She further states that this list is not conclusive, is used by producers and consumers, is subject to historical and cultural constraints, but

does not need to be used singularly nor applied all the time. But it is important to recognize that there is a process of selection which is prior to the art object:

> This process is partly arbitrary, and the qualifications for "final choices" cannot be exhaustively delineated. But this is an important process, because what is finally chosen as art is determined by these evaluative and selective standards. Thus the institutionalization of art phenomena depends on evaluative criteria, and this element of classifying art has largely been overlooked by institutional definitions.[49]

W. E. Kennick[50] has also raised some questions about Dickie's theory. He contends that the whole notion of the artworld is obscure as Dickie uses it and that not using the concept of art aids in this obscuration. Kennick asks who exactly belongs to the artworld -- a museum's custodian as well as the director and his secretary? Equally unclear is the concept of acting on behalf of a university in the conferring of a degree, which can also be denied or withdrawn. And how do we know if an artifact has had the status of candidate conferred upon it? Could we expect some notification process? Kennick has no answers for these questions, nor does he expect Dickie's theory to provide any.

As a final comment on Dickie's institutional theory, let us examine Jeffrey Wieand's assertion that there cannot be an institutional theory at all. He begins by delineating two kinds of institutions: A-institutions which are action oriented and governed by rules and P-institutions which are agent oriented. He notes:

> An A-institution, then, is simply a kind of *conventional* act. Examples of such acts include promising, christening, saluting, and marrying; examples of social practices which are not A-institutions include smoking cigarettes and driving to work. . . In general, a P-institution acts through those of its members who are empowered

to act on its behalf.[51]

He gives the Catholic Church as an example of the latter when it is engaged in fund raising or condemning an injustice. He also notes a certain ambiguity in the term "institutional act."[52] Wieand states that the actions of an A-institution, as an established practice, must conform to the conventions and that the members of a P-institution, as a social group, must act as agents. He argues that Dickie has described what is a P-institution but has refused to acknowledge the artworld as anything but an A-institution. He feels this is particularly true when conferral of status is considered. If viewed as a P-institution, Dickie's artworld still lacks the necessary ingredient for an institution because Dickie's artworld has agents without having an accreditation process. Wieand also cites the lack of the ability to name or describe the conventions which govern the conferral of status as a sign that Dickie's theory is not an institutional one. He concludes with the following:

> If art itself were an institution in an *interesting* sense it would either be a kind of conventional act or a social group. But art, understood as a body of works or as an activity, is plainly neither of these things. . . Art is inextricably bound up with social institutions and artistic conventions, but none of these is so crucial or pervasive as to determine the nature of art itself.[53]

The main concerns that these critics have voiced seem to center on what they perceive as an egalitarian description by Dickie that obscures positions and processes within the Artworld and also obscures any delineation between the perimeters of the artworld and other worlds. An underlying concern seems to be the absence of any evaluative criteria within Dickie's theory, whether the evaluation is ap-

plied to the aesthetic object or to the membership process within the artworld. The next section in this chapter will draw a more definitive portrayal of the artworld which will render this theory a better analytical tool and answer the criticisms that have been described.

The Artworld Revisited

It might appear that from the foregoing considerations that Dickie's theory of art is somewhat of a shambles. But, however severe his critics have been, all have taken him seriously enough to carefully examine his theory. I think this serious attention is indicative of the very perceptible sense of confusion within the Artworld today. For example, the philosopher's concern about a lack of evaluative criteria within Dickie's theory echoes a concern within the Artworld's membership about a similar lack of evaluative criteria, particularly with the rise of Anti-Art and Conceptual movements. As we have seen, both of these movements have challenged the primary convention by either negating the autonomy of the artwork or denying artifactuality. In doing this, they have also challenged the traditional and conventional understanding of evaluation of the aesthetic object. And because of the quotidian aspects of the objects or acts that these movements and artists have introduced into the Artworld, they have provoked a discussion of art and non-art that precedes a discussion of evaluation of the aesthetic object. When empty flower pots, piles of dirt, or the self-infliction of wounds by the artist appear within the precincts of the museum or gallery, the focus of discussion must deal with the issue of what differentiates these objects and acts from those ex-

isting outside the Artworld. The discussion therefore becomes, with more and more frequency, "Is is art?" before "Is it good art?" I think this discussion of differentiation between art and non-art -- which is unequivocally a modern phenomena -- is what Dickie has noted with the classificatory sense of the work of art. What he has not noted is that this is a recent development and that such a distinction would have been as incomprehensible before the challenges to the primary convention as aesthetic contemplation would have been to a Navaho working on a sand painting two hundred years ago. He has also failed to note that the classificatory sense is operant within an institutional framework. This is what Werhane has underscored in her suggestion that the classificatory has an evaluative connotation -- within the Artworld. All of the six classificatory criteria which she has stated (see page 139 of the previous section) are part of the secondary conventions which govern the Artworld, i.e., the theory surrounding the creation, presentation and viewing of the artwork. The classificatory process is embedded within the theoretical framework of the Artworld and therefore does not lend itself to a simple "yes/no" situation. The complexity of classification within the Artworld may be better explicated if we look at an example.

The classificatory process, in general as a logical tool, is usually used to establish a general category and the features which help to distinguish items within the category from those outside. These distinguishing characteristics are also used to establish subcategories and their relationships. For example, if one instituted a category as "chair," one would look for features which would dis-

tinguish a chair from a non-chair. If we described chair features as a seat with a back, legs or other support usually intended for one person's seating, we would then have characteristics with which we could distinguish a chair from other objects. This would allow us to do several things. First, it would eliminate such objects as stools (no back support), floor pillows (no legs or other support), sofas (intended for multiple seating), or other objects which clearly are not seats such as desks, tables or trees. Second, it would allow us to create sub-categories of chairs such as "rocking chairs" or "chaise longues." Third, it would help identify the Saarinen chair (a pedestal chair) as a chair even though it looks different from traditional chairs and is made from different materials. And finally, it would also help us to see a relationship between chairs, stools, pillows and sofas that might cause us to create a category called "seating" where all of these items would be sub-categories. In all of these cases, the concepts and relationships among concepts are simple. As finer distinctions are made between chairs for sub-categories, as between a Saarinen chair and an Eames chair, more of the history and theory of chairs must be known. Thus for a simple item, a simple description of the item is sufficient; for a finer discrimination -- or for a more complex item -- considerable knowledge of the item is required. The concept of "work of art" is very complex because of its changing nature and the history and theory in which it is embedded. If we examine the chair as a work of art within the confines of the Artworld, we can see the much more complex nature of the work of art. The first chairs which come to mind in this context are those which were made by other

cultures in different times and which have been brought into the Art-world at a later date from their origin. In this way, an Egyptian chair and a medieval throne are viewed in the museum as works of art. They have lost their original context, whether it be symbolic of power or comfortable seating, and are viewed as aesthetic objects. As we have seen, the museum context is a fairly recent occurrence and was achieved through a complex evolution. It rests on the autonomy of the art object and the selection of the best examples available for display. Part of the selection process also depends upon the knowledge of the curator and his ability to make very fine discriminations. So even this comparatively simple example for the Artworld is a very much more complex notion than the simple discrimination between chair and non-chair. The chair in the Artworld becomes an even more complex notion when it is used as a motif. Alan Artner, art critic for the *Chicago Tribune*, has noted the use of the chair as a motif in recent art. Reviewing an exhibit of chairs at the Museum of Contemporary Art by artist Margaret Wharton, Artner describes one of the pieces in this way:

> . . . one wall piece from 1975 is a chair that has been cut into small sections, restructured with the addition of protruding wires and hung from a single nail. Everything slumps, as if pulled by gravity like a marionette on a peg. However, once we notice that Wharton has called the work "Martyr," the wires suggest flagellation as surely as the overall attitude reflects suffering or death. But whose suffering, whose death? First, the chair's, as its life as a functional object has been drained through sectioning and hanging; then the entire range of willing victims so often memorialized in Western sculpture; and, finally, more humorously, anyone who would think of occupying the seat of so prickly a chair.
>
> This kind of richness is characteristic of all the works on show. It gives pleasure not only because much contemporary art is devoid of allusions, but because Wharton gives us many from

> which to choose. Religious references are shawl-to-shoulder with innocent fun, and as the sculpture matures, there is also the growing sophistication of the artist's wordplay.[54]

An art historian, Carla Gottlieb, also comments on the use of the chair as a contemporary motif within the modern Artworld:

> As to chairs in contemporary art in general, it appears that none, with the possible exception of Rauschenberg, where this point is intentionally made ambivalent, invites the onlooker to sit down. This feature separates contemporary from precontemporary chairs. Contemporary chairs are not meant for leisure; they suggest waiting in tense suspense. Depending upon the artist, this nonleisurely chair motif may be a rejection of Matisse's hedonistic goal for art, or a reference to the psychological unrest of troubled times, or many other things.[55]

She continues:

> None of these comments on contemporary art could be made if a historical background were lacking; without it, the meaning of the empty chair as a motif in an individual artist, in a country, and in contemporary art as a whole, could easily be misunderstood.[56]

The point of the above comments, one from a critic and one from an art historian, is the complex nature of the work of art and how the work of art is understood through an understanding of the secondary conventions. Artner has described a re-assembled chair as void of any utilitarian purpose yet viable as an aesthetic object within the museum context. The viability in large part is due to its title and the allusions which it has created. Gottlieb directly points to the involvement of history and theory in the understanding of the artwork. She states that without an understanding of these secondary conventions, the meaning of contemporary art could be easily missed or misunderstood. In other words, removed from the museum context, the work might not be recognized as a work of art at all. I think all of this demonstrates the necessity of the secondary conventions in making the classification

of art and non-art.

Furthermore, evaluation has been present within the secondary conventions since the advent of the Artworld. In the discussion so far, I have stated that the evaluative sense of classification resides in the theory which surrounds the creation, presentation and viewing of the artwork. I have not mentioned the handling of plastic elements, the other portion of the secondary conventions. This is because the handling of plastic elements is the normal location for the discussion of evaluation within the arts. How well or how poorly the artist has handled the plastic elements -- albeit within the movement -- is what concerns the artist, the critic, the curator and the general viewer. If we make this kind of distinction between the secondary conventions, we can still allow a classificatory sense of the work of art within the confines of an institutional theory. The classificatory sense refers to the theory surrounding the creation, presentation and viewing of the artwork. As has been noted, this involves some evaluative connotations. However, the normal usage for the evaluative sense invokes the handling of the plastic elements. Thus, while the two areas are related, Dickie's evaluative sense can be applied primarily to one, i. e., the handling of the plastic elements. Moreover, what this distinction underscores is the lack of a formal notion of an institution in Dickie's theory. Dickie has defined the work of art in terms of the institution in which the work is embedded. Yet, he has failed to describe the institution in the richness of its traditions, history, theories and conventions.

I would like to suggest that the Artworld is a more formal

structure than Dickie has described. The usual meaning of "formal" is that which is conventional or in accordance with conventional requirements. It is in this sense that the Artworld of Dickie's description lacks dimension and definition. Dickie has called the Artworld a social practice, or an institution, yet has failed to give substance to these terms. In order to expand these terms, and hence our idea of the Artworld, I would like to turn to two definitions offered by John Rawls:

> I use the word "practice" . . . as a sort of technical term meaning any form of activity specified by a system of rules which defines offices, roles, moves, penalties, defenses, and so on, and which gives the activity its structure. As examples one may think of games, rituals, trials and parliaments.[57]

At a later date, Rawls has defined an institution in the following manner:

> Now by an institution I shall understand a public system of rules which defines offices and positions with their rights and duties, powers and immunities, and the like. These rules specify certain forms of action as permissible, others as forbidden; and they provide for certain penalties and defenses, and so on, when violations occur. As examples of institutions, or more generally social practices, we may think of games and rituals, trials and parliaments, markets and systems of property.[58]

While Rawls formulated both of these definitions within the context of a theory of justice, I think they provide a good framework with which to discuss the Artworld.

In Rawls' definition he speaks of a "system of rules" which helps to structure the activity. In games, the system is easy to see and it is equally easy to recognize the system in trials and parliaments. With ritual we can readily accept a system of rules -- that they exist -- but I think we may find them harder to describe or to

name except in the instance of specific examples. Thus a person may not be able to describe "rules for rituals" but could describe the rules present in a Roman Catholic mass, a bar mitzvah, or a wedding ceremony. And I think another name for this system of rules might be "conventions." Thus we might say that the primary convention of a Roman Catholic mass is the understanding shared by the priest and the congregation that they are engaged in a certain kind of formal activity.[59]

I think that the system of rules in Rawls' definition may be taken as an equivalent for Dickie's conventions. However, the notion of rules in the Artworld seems rather harsh and alien, even when called conventions. Rules seem to connote a structure that is unchanging and inflexible and, as we have seen, the Artworld is evolutionary. Working from Rawls' definition of a practice, Thomas Morawetz[60] has distinguished between several kinds of practices and I think these distinctions may be an aid in clarifying the nature of the Artworld. He first describes a practice which is game-like in that it has constitutive rules which must be learned before the game is played and must followed during the game. They are simple, unambiguous, cannot be justified individually, and give to the participant an "internal" point of view. On the other hand, Morawetz contends that there are other practices, like law and language, which are different from games. He suggests that becoming a practitioner of these is an acquisition of bevavior that is appropriate to the practice. Morawetz notes:

> To say that becoming a user may be a matter of acquiring a way of behaving is not to deny that a user of English will have an internal point of view. Being an English speaker involves more than

> emitting appropriate sounds regularly (*i.e.*, behaving *as if* one were following a rule); it is also a matter of being able to criticize misuse by others and to ask appropriate questions.[61]

He also makes a further distinction:

> In brief, the internal point of view of the language user consists not in knowing a definitve set of rules but in having the *notion* of a rule of language. To one who lacks the notion all languages have the character of noise. To one who has the notion of language, particular languages are examples of practices. Thus, a language user may be able to identify a totally unfamiliar language *as* language.[62]

This way, recognition of the practice *as* practice becomes important as well as a proper understanding of the practice. Morawetz also notes that rules for the second kind of practices are not a set of definitive and interlocking constitutive rules but rather are an approximate description of what is done in practice:

> The suggestion here is that in practices of the second kind rules codify and structure the actual practice, but no set of rules is definitive or constitutive of the practice. In these practices, and not in games, the practice evolves, the rules change, through the participation of the participants themselves. While the rules of chess or baseball may evolve or change, they do so of necessity outside and not within particular instances of the game. The rules of practices of the second kind are in a sense malleable and change with usage.[63]

It should be noted that Morawetz refers to the rules of language and law as an approximate description of what is commonly accepted in practice. This may seem to be a simple description of how those engaged in the practice behave, however, upon examination, I do not think this is what he had in mind. A rule-book is definitive in that it gives simple "yes/no" answers as to whether something is permissable or not. A dictionary or codification of law provides a more complex answer -- and also sometimes provides the basis for an argument to be advanced which would eventually change the rules. If this were not true, lan-

guage and law would be mechanical, inflexible and unchanging. It should also be noted that changes in the rules of language and law develop slowly and are subject to the scrutiny of authorities in the field. Thus I think that we can say that the rules for language and law are not simple descriptions of common usage but rather complex descriptions of what has become accepted usage.

Morawetz bases the evolutionary character of rules of language and law on the infinite number of situations in which they are involved. Unlike games which have a finite number of situations, both language and law are involved in situations which are as varied as human nature. It is this variety which gives language and law an "open texture." He notes:

> [The second kind of practice] evolves because it embraces an unforeseeable range of situations in which its rules have employment for social ends. The rules must have open texture and allow indefinite application.[64]

I believe that the Artworld belongs to the second kind of practices which Morawetz has described. The primary convention of the Artworld has in common with the primary conventions of language and law the defining nature of the practice. While we may say that the primary convention of the Artworld is the creation and viewing of the autonomous artwork, we may also say that the primary conventions for language and law respectively are human communication and social order. This is what Morawetz has described as "employment for social ends" and is basically an unchanging convention in each of these practices. The primary conventions of all of these practices define the practices and are logically prior to the practices. If the primary convention was

changed at all, it would also change the practice. However, the secondary conventions of these practices are subject to change and have the open texture which Morawetz has described. As we have seen, the handling of the plastic elements and the theory surrounding the creation, presentation and viewing of the artwork have changed dramatically over the last hundred years. *Spiral Jetty* would be as incomprehensible to an eighteenth century French artist as the word "anti-establishment" would be to a speaker of Middle English or corporate law to the signers of the *Magna Carta*. In each case, the secondary conventions surrounding the practice have changed as the need for new applications have been formed within the society. I think that we can therefore include the Artworld within the group of practices which include language and law and note that their open texture comes from the evolutionary nature of their secondary conventions.

With the above distinctions in mind, we can return to Rawls' definition. In formulating this definition, he has also noted some conditions which are important to the definition. He suggests that the system of rules must be known to the participants of the practice:

> In saying that an institution . . . is a public system of rules, I mean that everyone engaged in it knows what he would know if these rules and his participation in the activity they define were the result of an agreement. A person taking part in an institution knows what the rules demand of him and of the others.[65]

Elsewhere he has noted that these rules must be teachable, that is, they must be able to be taught as a coherent body of information.[66] Yet Dickie has described the learning of the conventions as being "picked up in an unself-conscious way." Does the Artworld have conventions which are taught and are publicly known? I would answer "yes." In the

legal world, there are law schools for practitioners, publication of laws and theory surrounding them, and a certain amount of instruction (both formal and informal) for laymen. There are also equivalents in the Artworld. There are schools of art for practitioners from those which are self-contained (the School of the Art Institute of Chicago) to those which are part of larger educational structures (a Fine Arts Department of a university). There is even a major open to art students which is known as art education. There are also publications within the Artworld from art history texts to theoretical studies by artists, art historians and philosophers. Exhibit catalogues also provide an analysis of the works included in the exhibit, and magazines and journals are published which discuss current trends in the Artworld as well as past movements and artists. And there is instruction provided for laymen in the form of art education in primary and secondary schools, continuing education programs and programming on the arts on both commercial television and PBS. Therefore, I would suggest that there is a coherent body of conventions which may be taught, which are public and which yield conventional behavior within the practice. Moreover, I would suggest that these conventions are not picked up haphazardly but are learned conventions. A child learning a language must first understand that language is a form of human communication, then grasp certain basic fundamental rules and gradually increase his expertise. While instruction at the fundamental stage is mostly informal in nature, the continuing education in language is normally more formal, i.e., classroom instruction in the language arts. An adult's use of language greatly reflects the sophistication of the

learning of language he has accomplished. While I hesitate to draw a direct parallel between learning the conventions of language and the Artworld, I would suggest that they are in some ways alike. One must first realize the existence of the primary convention, whether it is human communication or the creation and viewing of the autonomous work of art. Then the secondary conventions of the practice must be learned and the end proficiency in the practice is dependent upon how well the secondary conventions are learned.

Rawls has also noted that the "rules of practices are logically prior to particular cases." He states:

> Now what is meant by saying that the practice is logically prior to particular cases is this: given any rule which specifies a form of action (a move), a particular action which would be taken as falling under this rule given that there is the practice would not be *described as* that sort of action unless there was the practice.[66]

As examples, Rawls cites actions which are described as belonging to the game of baseball. While it would be possible to swing a piece of wood in everyday life, it would only be possible to "strike out" within the game of baseball. The term "strike out" takes its meaning from the practice in which it exists. Thus Rawls states: "unless there is the practice the terms referring to actions specified by it lack a sense."[67] I think Rawls' assertion can be applied to not only actions within a practice but also to roles in the practice. A "batter," "shortstop," and "umpire" also have meaning within the game of baseball. In a like manner, "lawyer," "Supreme Court Justice," or "litigant" have their meaning within the practice of law, as do the terms "bring suit," "prosecute," and "overrule." The Artworld, as I have described it,

also has equivalents. "Critic," "curator," and "sculptor" are terms which find their meaning within the Artworld as do "openings," "exhibitions," and "reviews." For example, a person might view a work of art and give his opinion of it. I think this would parallel the situation in Rawls' example where a person swings a piece of wood. The person is not "reviewing" the artwork any more than the person with the piece of wood is "striking out." A review is written by someone with expertise and is meant to be published. The concept "review" belongs within the Artworld. Moreover, if the Artworld were not a practice, there would be no actions or roles describable as belonging to the practice.

To return to Rawls' definition, he has stated that a system of rules defines "offices, roles, moves, penalties and so on" within the practice. I would suggest that proficiency within the practice, that is, varying degrees of expertise concerning the conventions, serves to delineate offices and roles. Within legal practice there are examples of offices (judge, prosecutor) and roles (defendant, jury). The positions which can be considered offices are those which demand a high degree of expertise in the field. Thus a judge is assumed to be expert and to use this highly developed knowledge to render his decisions. Prosecutor and defense counsel are also expected to be knowledgeable and to use their knowledge for the benefit of their clients. On the other hand, defendants and jury are not expected to be experts. In most jury trials, both counsels present not only factual material but points of law and after the summations, the judge instructs the jury in the points of law which they must consider to come to their

verdict. There are also positions within the practice of law which require various amounts of expertise. These positions can include court reporter, bailiff, clerk to the judge or secretary to the defense counsel. Each of these has knowledge applicable to more specific areas of law. For example, a law secretary may have a much better knowledge of legal terms than the layman, but may not have the knowledge of the law in general to present a case for trial. The mechanism of law is dependent upon all of these offices and roles, but some have more responsibility than others for the final disposition of the case. In a like way, we may describe offices and roles in ritual. Offices may include bishop, rabbi, minister; roles may include member of a congregation, engaged couple, godparent. In ritual it would seem that office holders also have more expertise and knowledge of the conventions involved. However, with language it would seem more difficult to describe offices and roles. Obviously most people fit within the category of user of language. But one would expect a greater amount of expertise and facility with language from some speakers, i.e., teachers of language, linguists, or lexicographers. I would suggest that these experts occupy the offices within the practice of language, but that they are more difficult to identify because they are not voted into or appointed to a specific office that has a title. Yet, they certainly have influence in the practice of language. They also have certain credentials and an amount of experience within the field. If we take the notion of office in this broad sense, not just as an appointed position with a title, I think that we can say there are offices within language practice and that they are predicated upon an

expert knowledge and the quality of experience in the field.

I think that the same general analysis may be said of the Artworld. The office holders of the Artworld are those who publicly present and analyze works of art. For the visual arts at this time, these people are museum curators, art critics, gallery owners, art historians and philosophers of art. As with the other practices discussed above, I think these offices are based on expertise and the quality of experience in the practice. For example, a museum curator does not just declare himself one. He gains sanction and authority from the Artworld in much the same way a judge gains sanction and authority from the legal world. He studies and obtains knowledge of the field, very often receives accreditation at the formal completion of his studies, works in a position of lesser responsibility for a time, and gradually, through the work he has accomplished and the reputation he has achieved, may be promoted to positions with greater responsibility. The point is, a member of the general public does not walk into a museum and appoint himself curator or director of the museum. A great amount of expertise is needed for the position. The same holds true for other offices within the Artworld. What of the roles within the Artworld? I would suggest that the roles are occupied by museum goers, readers of art history and criticism and those who in a general way are learning about the visual arts. In many ways they are like the members of a congregation. Members of a congregation meet periodically to participate in a specific public ritual but also spend time on their own pursuit of other rituals which are related to communal activity. They know enough theory about the practice to follow the precepts of the

practice and to distinguish between their congregation and another one. There also exists within the congregation those who are nominal members and those who are sustaining members. In other words, there is a great variance in the amount of actual participation by members, yet all members in some degree identify with the congregation. I would suggest the same holds true for members of the Artworld. They are aware of the primary convention and have at least some knowledge of the secondary conventions; in other words, they to some degree identify with the Artworld and they are self-conscious about their participation in the practice. It should be noted that this is not a well-defined area. There is not a register of members of the Artworld and there is not a way of determining a basic level of Artworld literacy. However, I think that we can distinguish members from non-members by their recognition of the primary convention, at least some knowledge of secondary conventions and the fact that they are self-conscious participants. It should also be noted that people who fill staff positions within the Artworld may be described as exactly that -- they are part of the mechanism which operates the Artworld and their actual membership is contingent upon their own participation in the broad concept of the Artworld, not within the confines of their specific jobs.

So far, I have not mentioned the position of the artist within the Artworld. Clearly, the contemporary artist perceives the position of the artist as central to the Artworld, as essential. Without the creation of the work of art, there would be no Artworld. The creation of the artist is made to be displayed to the public. If we were to use a sports analogy, the position of the artist would be parallel to

the playmaker. Within law the "playmaker" would be the litigant who has brought suite; within language, it would be the person who has "coined" a new word -- for example, Baumgarten and "aesthetics" -- or in some way caused a change in the language. In these examples, the common thread might be said to be the initiation of an action or the creation of an object which is central to the practice.[69] It is this position that the artist possesses within the Artworld -- as initiator of the move. There are then three distinct areas of participation within the Artworld: as an office holder, as a member, and as an initiator. These three areas correspond to what I have called presenter, audience and artist. All of these positions are dependent upon recognition of the primary convention of the Artworld and delineated by the degree of knowledge of the secondary conventions.

This brings us to what Rawls has called "the rights and duties, powers and immunities" within the practice. I think this general notion of "moves" within the practice is what Dickie has called conferral of status as candidate for appreciation. But while Dickie sees this as a totally egalitarian process -- any member of the Artworld can confer candidacy -- I think that conferral is a much more formal process and one that conforms to the idea of rights and duties of offices and positions. I believe the artwork is given status as a candidate for appreciation by virtue of its public presentation as candidate. It is given public presentation by the office holders in the Artworld. The critic's office may be described by its responsibility to inform and educate the members of the Artworld. He also confers status on the artwork by fulfilling the duties of his office, that is, by publishing

his decisions about the artwork. The curator also confers status by placing an object within the museum. The gallery owner does likewise. The art historian or theoretician confers status by discussion of the artwork in their publication.

In each of these cases, the office holder offers justification as do office holders in language and law. In the case of the critic, justification is central to publication and is inherent to the office of critic. Justification can also be found in exhibit catalogues published by museums, and occasionally by galleries. Art historians and theoreticians offer justification in the same way any scholar does, through a logical presentation of the material. Justification, in all of these cases, is based upon an understanding of the secondary conventions and their application to the artworks in question.

The public aspect of the conferral of status is an important part of the process. As Rawls has noted, a person engaged in a practice must know what the rules demand of him and others. In other words, they must be public. Through the office holders of the Artworld, the conventions become public. And through these office holders, conferral of status also becomes a formal and public action. Conferral of status in Dickie's description is little more than a general nod in the direction of an object. He notes that the conferral is made on behalf of the Artworld, yet gives no clue as to how one can act on behalf of this institution without some sort of public announcement, without some way to communicate this most important function of the Artworld to its members. If the Artworld is indeed an institution, the public conferral of status seems to be a necessary element.

But what of the artwork which has not yet met the public? I would suggest that a work of art has already been given the status of candidate by the artist. The act of conferring status for the artist exists in the act of creation by the artist. The artist's finished product may fail his vision, but if he did not believe in his vision, then he would also negate the intention of creation. The fact that the artist calls himself artist and not some other title like plumber or welder points to his belief that he is creating the autonomous work of art. I think that we can say the artist confers status in a private manner, and that the presentation of the work to the Artworld is the reaffirmation of the conferral process. Thus, candidacy is conferred by public means by the office holders of the Artworld and by initially private means by the artist. The other members of the Artworld, the viewers, do no confer status for or on behalf of the Artworld. They may indeed make personal judgments which are valid for them on a personal level. But to insist that they can confer status, randomly and on their own accord, is tantamount to suggesting that any member of the worlds of language, law or ritual could likewise exercise such authority. Thus we could have any English speaker declaring, on behalf of all English speakers, that "good" will subsequently mean "bad," or a motorist, acting on behalf of all U. S. motorists, declaring that the speed limit is now 90 m.p.h. The result in both cases would be chaos -- and a negation of the institutional nature of the practices involved.

I have argued thus far that the Artworld is a much more formal institution than Dickie has described. To my mind, the keystone of

this more formal institution is the autonomous work of art. As we have seen in the previous chapters, as the art product became the art object, its autonomy became more pronounced and the conventions surrounding it became increasingly more descriptive of its autonomy. The initiation of aesthetic theory underlined the autonomy of the artwork, a work which was created to be viewed and appreciated. Our conception of art assumes the primary convention and functions within the secondary conventions. It is a phenomena which had its birth in the Renaissance and matured primarily in Western society, although its influence has been felt worldwide by this time. What of the "creative urge" we believe to be inherent in all of mankind? I would agree that it exists, from the caves of Altamira and Lascaux to Amish quilt makers. But I think our recognition of the whole range of these works stems from the Artworld which I have described. We in fact appreciate these objects because they have been called to our attention within the context of the Artworld. The concept which has united such disparate objects is the museum context. To a great extent, our perception of the work of art has been formed by the museum context and by the attending secondary conventions. The subordination of the original utilitarian or ritualistic context to the museum context has made these works become autonomous works of art. Otherwise such works may have remained fragments of foreign cultures, interesting but not part of the whole range of artworks to which they now belong. The thread which binds all of these artworks together is not a concept like "beauty" or "expressiveness" -- it is the autonomy of the work of art. The concept of an autonomous work of art belongs exclusively to the

which I have described.

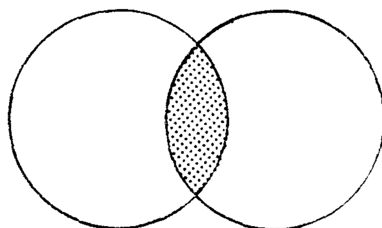
In some ways, the Artworld thus described may appear very narrow or restrictive. What about the natural creativity of children? Of the "Sunday painter"? Of the illustrator or the graphic designer? I do not think there is a simple answer to these questions but that the understanding of each case will help explicate the boundaries of the Artworld.

The idea of children as creative visually is a fairly recent development and one that coincides with the idea of universal education. It would seem that as leisure time became available to an increasingly large number of children, it was thought that drawing might be a valuable tool for the child and was often taught as part of the manual arts. The idea of a small child, crayon in hand, expressing his creativity probably has its roots in the progressive movement of education in this century. This attitude toward childhood creativity has been fostered by the teaching of art education in elementary and secondary schools. This is not to say that children are not creative, but rather that it is a recent phenomena and one that is sponsored, however indirectly, by the Artworld. The distinction between child artists and artists is not only one of age and maturity, but of professional standing. The artist thinks of himself as a professional. This distinction also holds true for the Sunday painter. He will not describe himself as painter or artist but rather as one who paints as a leisure activity. He considers himself to have an amateur standing, and often has had little formal or "professional" training. I think both the child and the amateur painter belong to the Artworld, but

would tend to be classified as members rather than artists because they have amateur status. Children's art may be exhibited and appreciated, but the expectations of the viewers are not the same as when viewing an artist's exhibit. The work is rarely reviewed, and when published normally serves some other context. While the Sunday painter may exhibit, it is often in non-juried shows and again the viewer's expectations are different. The object of painting for the Sunday painter may also be a mixture of creating the autonomous work of art and entertainment. The same may be said of the child's art.

This brings us to the illustrator, graphic designer and a group of other persons whose work closely parallels that done in the Artworld. I would suggest that these persons and their work do not properly belong in the Artworld, although it is possible that they and their work may be brought into the Artworld. This import would be accomplished by the office holders of the Artworld. I think that there are other "worlds" in which these people function and that the primary convention of each of these is quite different from that of the Artworld. For example, I think that we may define an area called the commercial world which would include a very wide variety of people who are involved in print and electronic media and product design. The primary convention of the commercial world may be stated as the creation and promotion of commercial goods. The primary convention is not the creation and viewing of the autonomous artwork. However, both worlds share some of the secondary conventions, particularly the handling of the plastic elements. The end product of both worlds also can resemble one another to a great extent. Thus the work of an il-

lustrator may closely resemble the work of an artist and may be imported to the Artworld where its previous context, that of illustration, is replaced by the museum context and where it becomes an autonomous artwork. The same is true of the work of a graphic designer, product designer, commercial filmmaker, etc. It should also be noted that the commercial world often consciously uses visual characteristics of particular movements of the Artworld. An example of this would be be recent Chanel No. 5 television commercials which rely on the use of images related to Surrealism. In the same way, the Pop movement was based to a great extent upon methods, materials and images used in the commercial world. I think that while these two worlds exist independently, they may at times intersect as illustrated in the following manner:



However, it should be noted that the intersection occurs on the level of secondary conventions, not the primary convention.

I think there are also two other worlds which sometimes intersect the Artworld, namely those of entertainment and documentation. Each is primarily concerned with what the names indicate, i.e., entertainment and documentation. With entertainment, the end product is less important than the process; with documentation, the veracity of the end product is most important. A detailed description of these worlds and their intersection with the Artworld will be given in the

next chapter using photography as an example. But, at this point, I think it should be noted that these worlds exist, that at times they may intersect the Artworld, but that the primary convention of each world remains constant while the area of intersection is the secondary conventions. A disregard of the primary conventions, or a confusion of them, may obscure the perimeters of the Artworld. However, I think that these intersection points may provide much more interesting test cases than those posed totally from within the Artworld -- precisely because they are external to the practice. Duchamp's *Fountain* is an example of a challenge made totally within the Artworld; the challenge is based on conventions operant within the practice. Examples within film, photography, and video give examples of media that exist outside the Artworld as well as within it, and possess objects which share characteristics on the level of secondary conventions.

It should also be noted that the Artworld is indeed a restricted area. Historically, it has been the preserve of an educated elite. The evolution of a mass society has only served to underscore the perimeters of the Artworld as an area containing people educated to the history and theories of the Fine Arts. This is not said as a judgment of the Artworld nor as a reference to the political aspects of the Artworld. There are indeed powerful cliques operating within the Artworld, but the suggestion that the Artworld is an elitist pursuit is not based on the manipulations of a few people. It is based on the knowledge required to participate in the Artworld and the historical precedents described in the previous chapters. The Fine Arts have evolved as a practice separate from everyday concerns, as a practice

revolving around the autonomous artwork. In trying to present a theory which is as open-ended as possible, Dickie has presented his artworld also as open-ended and without definable boundaries. This has proven to be the crux of the problem. I do not think that limiting the perimeters of the Artworld necessarily close the theory. It does not destroy the flexibility of the theory -- or the Artworld -- nor does it render them less open to change. However, it does allow a better analytic tool.

There are two areas where a more definitive idea of the Artworld would have cleared up what I consider to be misconceptions on Dickie's part. The first is Dickie's notion that originality is an antecedent requirement for painting, and perhaps for other media. If this idea is examined in the light of primary and secondary conventions, as defined earlier, I think we can see that originality is not an antecedent requirement for painting or any other media. Rather, it is a secondary convention which has evolved as the Artworld became a more formal institution. Evidently, Dickie's use of originality is used primarily to oppose the idea of a forgery; it is not used in the sense of novelty. I think this is basically a political and narrow sense of the word. Those to whom this sense of originality would be most important are public and private collectors. It would be important to them not only on aesthetic grounds, but on grounds of their financial investment and prestige. Ultimately, the sense of originality brings into question the monetary worth of the object and has little to do with its aesthetic appreciation. Moreover, while this idea is applied most often to paintings of past masters, it has found a corresponding application in

other media. Both printmaking and photography have broadened the concept by accepting signed and numbered editions of prints and authorized prints by people other than the original artist. For example, before her death, Imogen Cunningham set up a foundation to print her negatives. While these new prints, imprinted with the foundation's logo, do not fetch the price of vintage Cunningham prints, they are nevertheless considered "collectable." On the other hand, prints may be obtained from the Library of Congress which are made from negatives by some of the best known photographers of the 1930's and 1940's. These are not considered collectable and have no value on the market. Thus it would seem that originality is derived not from an original negative but from some sort of authorization process. Also, the printing of *Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico* by Ansel Adams seems to be proceeding *ad infinitum*. In both cases, the older printmaking tradition of making a limited edition and then striking the plate seems to be undergoing a change at the hands of art photographers. I think this has enlarged the idea of originality and points to the fact that originality, especially in the narrow sense, is one of the secondary conventions.

The other misconception is Dickie's description of the derivative sense of the work of art. I would suggest that the derivative sense is rarely if ever used from non-artifact to artifact, but is normally used from artifact to artifact. It is this way that objects enter the museum context. They have characteristics which resemble the paradigmatic work of art. The recognition of these characteristics enables the office holders to place the object in a museum -- or some other institutional situation -- where the similarities between the

artifact and its paradigm work becomes most notable. They become most notable under these circumstances because their utilitarian context has been subordinated to their aesthetic appreciation. The characteristics which cause this comparison are located in the secondary conventions, most often in the handling of the plastic elements. A good example of the derivative sense of the work of art is one that has been cited earlier -- the acceptance of new media (film, photography, video) into the Artworld. This is because each of these shared some secondary conventions with media that were already accepted within the Artworld. To ascribe the derivative sense mainly to driftwood cases and other flora and fauna is to mistake its importance in the Artworld. It is the derivative sense which helps comparisons to be made between objects not originally created as artworks and paradigmatic artworks. It might also be noted that once such an object has been inducted into the Artworld, it becomes paradigmatic itself, thus extending the concept of work of art by allowing new comparisons to be made.

I think that Dickie, while providing an important contribution by his theory's institutional nature, has also made important mistakes by not recognizing the formal structure of the Artworld. The Artworld is not an absolutely egalitarian practice nor can every act of human creativity be neatly covered by the institutional theory. To do so would negate the very institutional nature of the theory Dickie has described. Rather, I think the Artworld can be described as a formal institution, as a social practice that is definable using Rawls' definition of an institution. The Artworld is peopled by artists, pre-

senters and audience, all of whom are governed by the conventions of the Artworld. Membership is limited to those who recognize the primary convention and who recognize the primary convention and who have some knowledge of the secondary conventions. Office holders include museum curators and directors, critics, art historians and philosophers of art; these people obtain their offices through their degree of expertise and experience within the Artworld. The conferral of status is accomplished in a public sense by the office holders of the Artworld and in a private sense by the artist. Any object may be inducted into the Artworld through the process of conferral and once so inducted assumes the museum context, that is, is appreciated primarily as an autonomous work of art. Whatever utilitarian context the item may have had is subordinated to the museum context. I have also suggested that there are other areas -- the worlds of documentation, commercialism and entertainment -- which sometimes overlap or intersect the Artworld and that these points of intersection may provide good examples of the delineation between art and non-art. The next chapter will explore photography as a case study of the Artworld, one in which the conditions described above are fully operative and discernible.

Notes:

[1] Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," in *Problems in Aesthetics*, ed. Morris Weitz (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), pp. 145-156.

[2] Ibid., p. 151.

[3] George Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic: An Institutional Analysis* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), p. 22.

[4] Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," p. 154.

[5] Ibid., p. 155.

[6] Maurice Mandelbaum, "Family Resemblances and Generalization Concerning the Arts," in *A Modern Book of Esthetics*, ed. Melvin Rader (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979), pp. 444-58.

[7] Ibid., p. 448.

[8] Richard Sclafani, "'Art' and Artifactuality," *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy* 1 (Fall 1970): 105-08.

[9] Dickie, *An Institutional Analysis*, p. 27.

[10] Arthur Danto, "The Artistic Enfranchisement of Real Objects: The Artworld," in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, ed. George Dickie and R. J. Sclafani (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), p. 29.

[11] Dickie, *An Institutional Analysis*, p. 29.

[12] Ibid., p. 34.

[13] Ibid., p. 35.

[14] Ibid., p. 36.

[15] Ibid., p. 38.

[16] Ibid., pp. 40-41.

[17] Ibid., p. 47.

[18] Ibid., p. 174.

[19] Ibid., p. 179.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., pp. 180-81.

[22] Ted Cohen, "A Critique of the Institutional Theory of Art: The Possibility of Art," in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, pp. 183-194.

[23] Ibid., p. 186.

[24] Ibid., p. 193.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., pp. 193-94.

[27] George Dickie, "Response to Cohen: The Actuality of Art," in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, p. 197.

[28] Ibid., p. 198.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid., p. 200.

[32] Richard J. Sclafani, "Art As A Social Institution: Dickie's New Definition," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 32 (Fall 1973): 113.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., p. 114.

[35] Bruce N. Morton, "Review of Aesthetics: An Introduction," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 32 (Fall 1973): 117.

[36] Anita Silvers, "The Artworld Discarded," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 34 (Summer 1976): 443.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., p. 444.

[40] Ibid., p. 447.

[41] Ibid., p. 449.

[42] Ibid., p. 453.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Jay E. Bachrach, "Dickie's Institutional Definition of Art: Further Criticism," *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 11 (July 1977): 26.

[45] Ibid., p. 29.

[46] Ibid., p. 34.

[47] Ibid., p. 34.

[48] Patricia H. Werhane, "Evaluating the Classificatory Process," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 37 (Spring 1979): 353.

[49] Ibid.

[50] W. E. Kennick, "On Defining Art," in *Art and Philosophy: Readings in Aesthetics*, ed. W. E. Kennick (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), pp. 111-121.

[51] Jeffrey Wieand, "Can There Be an Institutional Theory of Art?" *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 39 (Summer 1981): 409.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., p. 416.

[54] Alan Artner, *Chicago Tribune*, September 13, 1981.

[55] Carla Gottlieb, *Beyond Modern Art* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1976), p. 9.

[56] Ibid.

[57] John Rawls, "Two Concepts of Rules," *The Philosophical Review* 64 (January 1955):3.

[58] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 55.

[59] This is of course a substitution of "priest and congregation" for "actors and audience" in Dickie's description of the primary convention of the theatre cited earlier.

[60] Thomas Morawetz, "The Concept of a Practice," *Philosophical Studies* 24 (1973): 209-226.

[61] Ibid., p. 214.

[62] Ibid., p. 218.

[63] Ibid., p. 215.

[64] Ibid., pp. 221-22.

[65] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 55-56.

[66] John Rawls, "Two Concepts of Rules," p. 25.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid., p. 24.

[69] It should be noted that the open texture of language and law somewhat depends on the notion of initiators of change; they are central to the practice. This is more easily seen in law than language, but I think it is applicable to both.

CHAPTER VI

PHOTOGRAPHY: A CASE STUDY

Introduction

In the past chapters we have examined an institutional theory of the Artworld. We have explored the Artworld as an institution, that is, a social practice and have noted membership, offices, and conventions within the practice. The role of the conventions, both primary and secondary, are important factors -- as is the process of conferral of status. In this chapter, I would like to use photography as a case study of the Artworld. Photography is a relatively new medium within the Artworld and as such may provide an important view of the evolutionary nature of the Artworld. Also, photography has caused many problems within the Artworld, problems which center upon the nature of photography, its place among the Fine Arts, and the conventions which govern photography. It is the contention of this chapter that the conventions which govern the Artworld do not always govern all photographic practice because photography does not function only within the Artworld but also functions in other worlds that have little to do with the Fine Arts. In order to delineate the conventions which govern the Artworld and the sum of photographic practice, we must examine those areas in which photography functions, i.e., the worlds of entertainment, documentation, commercialism, and art.

A Case Study

To examine the perimeters of photography as well as its induction into the Artworld, I would like to begin with the early decades of photographic history. Daguerre introduced his process in 1839, the early portion of the Victorian age when Romantic painting was much in vogue. Daguerreotypes were one-of-a-kind photographs produced on a silvered plate. They rapidly became popular for portraits and scenic views, partially because they were much less expensive than painted portraits and landscapes and partially because they were so realistic. By realistic, I am referring to the representational quality of the photography. The daguerreotype was capable of capturing even the smallest detail in a scene; as the optics improved, so did the capability of reproduction of detail. With Talbot's paper process in 1841 and Archer's wet plate collodion process in 1851 new vistas became possible: multiple prints could be made from one negative, and two or more negatives could be combined. In addition, exposure times were reduced somewhat so that portraits became easier to pose. During this time, photography became identified with documentation. With photography's ability to present a clear, sharp focus, it was thought that the artist's intervention between reality and its portrayal was not possible. The camera was a machine and therefore only portrayed what was actually present; the reproduction was automatic. The photographer did not create the photograph; it was made.

However, after the first thirty years of photographic history had passed, some photographers began to wonder if more could not be

expected from their medium. C. Jabez Hughes wrote an article entitled "On Art-Photography" in 1861. In the article he argued for the expansion of photographic horizons: "Hitherto photography has been principally content with representing Truth. Can its sphere not be enlarged? And may it not aspire to delineate Beauty, too?"[1] Photographers responded to this and, perhaps with the mechanical aspects of photography prominently in their minds, turned not to the paradigms of Realism but rather to the canons of the Romantic movement. Allegorical pieces such as Rejlander's *Two Ways of Life* (figure 16) and Henry Peach Robinson's *Fading Away* (figure 17) certainly did not fit into the image photography had as documentation. Julia Margaret Cameron also produced a number of allegorical photographs which were influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites and G. F. Watts. She produced a great number of portraits which were quite different from the allegorical scenes. They were also quite different from the portraits of her contemporaries. She used very few props or scenery, used light in a much more dramatic way, and introduced a softer, slightly out of focus image. She stated her intention with these portraits in the following way:

> When I have had these men before my camera, my whole soul had endeavored to do its duty toward them in recording faithfully the greatness of the inner as well as the features of the outer man. The photograph thus taken has been almost the embodiment of a prayer.[2]

The interesting point here is Cameron's desire to photograph the greatness of the inner man, that is, something intangible, something not readily documented. Indeed, photography as documentation had nothing to do with this kind of photography. It was the beginning of a separate kind of photography: art photography. More and more, art pho-

Figure 16: Detail, *The Two Ways of Life*, O. G. Rejlander, 1857.

Figure 17: *Fading Away*, H. P. Robinson, 1858.

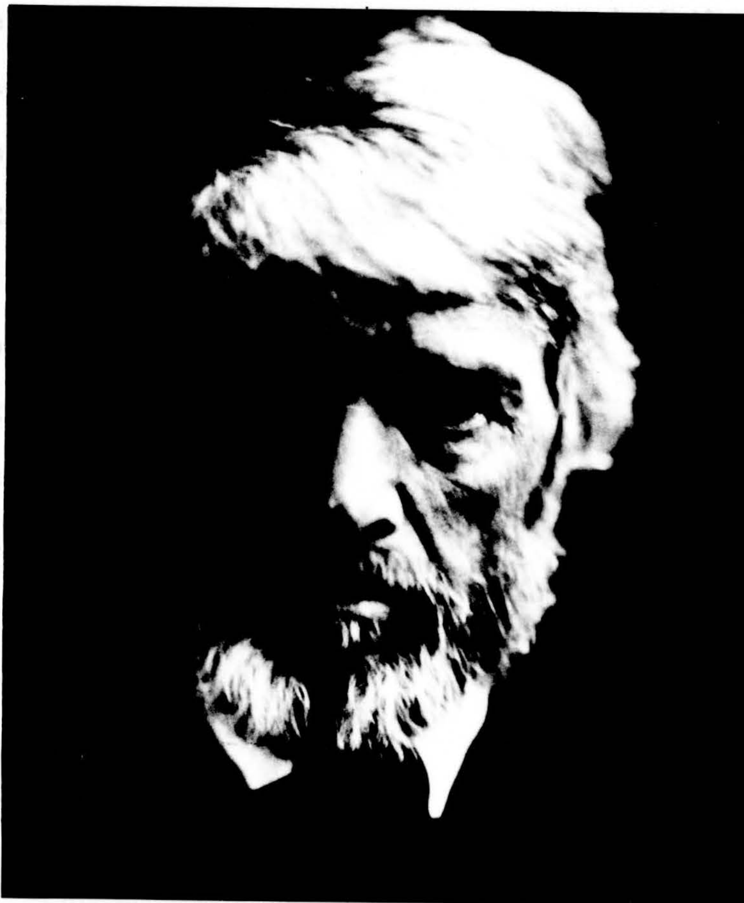


Figure 18: Thomas Carlyle, Julia Margaret Cameron, 1867.

tography became thought of as a separate entity from the rest of photographic practice. It became associated with what came to be called "pictorial" effects -- dramatic lighting conditions; a soft focus normally achieved by the use of diffusion lenses; manipulation of the print which might include retouching, drawing on the negative or combining several negatives; often the use of allegorical themes; and an expressive quality that reflected the creativity of the photographer. Art photography, largely through these kinds of manipulations, was viewed as expressive, that is, dominated by the mechanical nature of the camera but open to the creative processes of the artist. By the

turn of the century, although the use of allegorical themes had lessened considerably, the use of pictorial effects had become synonymous with art photography.

In Cameron's day, some photographs might have been considered "artistic" but photography was not considered one of the Fine Arts. Attitudes began to change in the latter part of the nineteenth century, but not without a vigorous campaign waged by both amateur and professional photographers. In 1891, the Vienna Camera Club held a juried salon and in 1893 the Linked Ring, a London society for pictorial photographers, presented their first salon. Alfred Stieglitz led the fight in this country mounting "An Exhibition of American Pictorial Photography Arranged by the 'Photo-Secession'" at the National Art Club in New York in 1902. Stieglitz also was featured in the "Chicago Photography Salon of 1900," one of the first museum shows of photography in the United States. It became an accepted notion that the hanging and viewing of photographs could be equated with the Fine Arts salons. But it was art photography that was hung and titled in such a manner. Because art photography resembled some painting, and because it was hung in salon settings and titled, the shared secondary conventions of art photography and painting became apparent and comparisons were made between the two. One of the basic claims for pictorial photography as a Fine Art was the recognition of the separation between it and photography as documentation. A well known critic of the time, Charles H. Caffin, underlined this separation:

> There are two distinct roads to photography -- the utilitarian and the aesthetic; the goal of the one being a record of facts, and the other an expression of beauty. . . Examples of utilitarian

> photographs are those of machinery, of building and engineering works, of war-scenes and daily incidents used in illustrated papers, of a large majority of the views taken by tourists, and of the greater number of portraits. . . Lastly, there is the photograph whose motive is purely aesthetic: to be beautiful.[3]

What Caffin has called "utilitarian" photography, I have called documentary, using "documentary" in a broad sense. These documentary photographs imply a factuality, a fidelity to the reality of the moment and the situation. Examples of using documentary in this broad sense would include Roger Fenton' coverage of the Crimean War or Matthew Brady's of the Civil War; Adam Clark Vroman and T. H. O'Sullivan's photographs of the American southwest; Charles Marville and Eugene Atget's shots of a changing Paris; and Eadweard Muybridges' classic studies of motion. Jacob A. Riis and Lewis Hines used photography as a scathing indictment of poverty and slum conditions in the United States. Police had begun using photography to identify criminals, governments to authenticate the death of political insurgents. Medicine and science also had begun using photography as a documentary tool. With further sophistication of printing processes, half-tone reproductions of photographs were easily possible and newspapers and journals used photography as an integral part of reportage. So, we might say that photography existed and functioned within two separate and clearly defined worlds -- those of documentation and of the Fine Arts. The conventions of both were clearly understood by the public. The primary convention for art photography would be that the audience was aware of the distinct aesthetic aims of a particular photograph, that is, the art photograph was created to be viewed as an autonomous work of art. Secondary conventions might be described as "pictorial"

effects for art photography, i.e., the soft focus, the dramatic use of light, manipulation of the print and an expressive quality. Art photographs were usually found in a gallery or on the pages of an art publication. The primary convention of the documentary photograph was the audience's awareness of its utilitarian aims. Secondary conventions would include sharp focus, natural lighting and a factual reportage. Documentary photographs were found in the pages of news publications or in the files of various agencies.

However, this description leaves out Caffin's tourists. In 1889, George Eastman introduced the Kodak #1 camera, a small hand-held camera that used film and which freed the user from the development and printing of his negatives. It became a common companion on tours, vacations and festive occasions. While there is definitely a part of the documentary process involved -- "we visited such and such a place" or "this is Aunt Mary on her eighty-first birthday" -- there is another element involved, that of entertainment. It is entertaining to view the snapshots and to show them to other people, and I think entertainment often exceeds documentation under these conditions. For this reason, I would suggest that the snapshot be placed in what might be called the world of entertainment. I think the conventions of the snapshot were equally well understood as those of documentary and art photography. The primary convention was the understanding of the audience that the aim of the snapshot was enjoyment of a pleasant memory. Secondary conventions might be stated as a complete disregard of photographic conventions. As long as there was an indication of an image, the snapshot was retained in the family album.

This leaves what Caffin has termed "the greater number of portraits." In other words, the commercial photographer. As Daguerre's process became widespread, commercial photographers used the process as itinerant photographers or in small storefront businesses. As the technology of photography improved, these commercial photographers used new processes for their portraits -- the ambrotype, the carte-de-viste and tin-type, and finally the new film and bromide papers of the 1920's. Joining the commercial portrait photographers was the commercial product photographer, or advertising photographer. Again, due to half-tone printing, the advertiser no longer had to rely upon an engraving of the product, they could use a photograph. With the evolution of the journal into magazines like *Liberty, Fortune, Vogue* and *Life*, advertising became an increasingly integral part of the publishing process. Advertisers, in turn, relied more and more upon photography to sell their products. Products and fashion became viable subjects for photographic enterprise. What can we surmise about conventions concerning commercial photography? First, the primary convention views the audience as understanding that the aim of commercial photography is to please the client. The product looks good, the portrait is complimentary. Again, the documentary somewhat exists in the commercial world, but in a very limited position. As photographic processes improved, the ability to "retouch" a photograph also improved. The sitter of a portrait increasingly expected to find lines in the face softened, if not removed. The client for a product likewise expected the product to look "better" than life. Secondary conventions tended to be more of the documentary variety, although mini-

mal manipulation of the print was also expected. Commercial photography could be found where people paid to have the image made, as advertising in magazines or product catalogues or in family surroundings.

I think it would be safe to say at this point that four distinctive worlds existed where photography functioned: the Artworld, the worlds of documentation, entertainment and commercialism. Perhaps if we examine an example of each, we can see this type of differentiation. All four of the following examples show facets of motherhood.

Figure 19 was taken by Hines as documentation of slum conditions in New York. The photographer's interest is as much in the surroundings of the woman as in the woman herself or her relationships to the children. The activity of the people in the picture -- as perhaps contrasted with activities of wealthier families -- is also a focal point, not necessarily as a family activity but as a documented activity, a moment from life.

Figure 20 is entitled *The Heritage of Motherhood* and is by one of the founding members of the Photo-Secession. It is not just a portrait of a woman alone in a barren and forbidding landscape. It is a statement about motherhood. One would expect to see children, a family, instead of the rocky landscape and threatening skies, to see a welcoming attitude in the arms of the woman rather than the hands tightly knitted together. One would have these expectations because of the title and the title in this case acts as an index of meaning in the same way as painting titles. The interesting point with this photograph is that we have no sense of the documentary, indeed, we do not even know if this young woman is married or a mother. There is

Figure 19: Family Picking Nutmeats at Home, Lewis Hines, 1911.

Figure 20: *The Heritage of Motherhood*, Gertrude Kasebier, ca. 1905.

Figure 21: Snapshot, anonymous photographer, n.d.

Figure 22: Studio portrait, Farley Studio, n.d.

no sense of the immediate moment from life, and we expect no sense of documentation. This is also a good example of the use of pictorial effects in its soft focus and use of light. It is quite different from Hines' photograph, which is very flatly lit and uses a much sharper focus.

Figure 21 is a snapshot where the mother's head has been accidently cropped from the picture by the photographer -- the mother is standing behind the grandmother with grandson. Two other relatives met the same fate. While this is not a "slice-of-life" documentation, it is obviously posed, it is documentation of people who were at a particular place at a particular time. But the concern of the photographer was to record this scene for remembrance and the pleasure it envoked.

Figure 22 is essentially the same, only done in a much more formal setting with the assurance that the family would obtain a good likeness. Retouching was normally not done at the time when this photograph was taken. However, the photograph was taken at a commercial photographer's studio and the client's satisfaction was the aim of the photograph.

These four distinct areas remained pretty much the same for a number of years. Perhaps the first indication of change can be seen in the later work of Stieglitz and Paul Strand as they began to divorce themselves from the pictorialists. But I think that the real challenge came with activity in California photography in the late 1920's. Several photographers, among them, Edward Weston and Imogen Cunningham, for the Group f/64, a group dedicated to "straight" pho-

tography as an art form. Straight photography proposed an abandonment of pictorial effects in art photography in favor of the straight approach, that is, the kind of unmanipulated photography which had been previously connected with documentary photography. Paul Strand had earlier verbalized the message of Group f/64:

> Photography, which is the first and only important contribution thus far, of science to the arts, finds its *raison d'etre*, like all media in a complete uniqueness of means. This is an absolute unqualified objectivity. Unlike the other arts which are really anti-photographic, this objectivity is of the very essence of photography, its contribution and at the same time its limitation . . .[4]

Strand believed that the uniqueness of art photography lay in its ability to capture a much fuller spectrum of tonal values than possible in other media, and to do this without manipulation or "tricks of the process." Straight photography was very different from pictorial photography. First, the secondary conventions were changed dramatically. No longer were soft focus, dramatic lighting and situations or expressive ends dependent upon content considered the secondary conventions of art photography. Straight photography utilized other conventions, what the photographers felt were more "photographic" conventions and those which had been associated with documentary photography. Thus, these photographers used large format cameras and small apertures to obtain great definition and a more extended tonal range. Important secondary conventions of straight photography would include an extended tonal range, that is, the most possible steps of grey from black to white, and the portrayal of a sharp, finely focused object. Another aspect of this kind of art photography was the objectivity of the camera. Documentary photography had long utilized this aspect by

its ability to capture all the detail of a given situation in a complete manner. However, it should be noted that the selection of the situation had always rested in the photographer's hands. In the case of straight photographers, the objectivity of the camera allowed the photographer to turn his camera on any object, place or person that presented itself. That object, place or person was portrayed with a "realism" achieved only by the photographic process. Weston photographed such items as common fruit and vegetables, shells and rocks, parts of the landscape and household objects. While this contributed to the democratization of content, the important aspect of straight photography was the emphasis on an unmanipulated print in which the reflected light quality of an object was most important. Thus any object, even a plastic spoon, might be found interesting -- not as an object, but as a photographic representation.

With the gradual acceptance of straight photography as art photography, several things happened. First, what had been considered art photography, that is, pictorial photography, was viewed as an art movement whose time was over. It was a style that became limited to a past development in the particular medium of photography. A parallel example of this kind of change in the Artworld would be the change in the style of painting from Romantic to Realistic or from Impressionistic to Post-Impressionistic. In the same way, straight photography supplanted pictorial photography as the basic style of art photography. Second, while the primary convention of art photography remained the same, the secondary conventions changed dramatically. We might think of the introduction of Impressionism as a direct parallel example of

such a dramatic shift in secondary conventions. But I do not think this is so: while some secondary conventions did change, they were still conventions of the painterly Artworld. The secondary conventions of straight photography had been brought in from outside the Artworld, from documentation, where they had a contextual meaning all their own. As a result, the distinctions between documentary and art photography disintegrated for the Artworld. The documentary photographer became indistinguishable from the art photographer because the secondary conventions had become indistinguishable -- and because the Artworld accepted the new conventions. The "manifestos" of straight photography were published in a number of catalogues and photography publications. For many critics and curators, the early secondary conventions of art photography became transformed and passed the barrier between art and documentary photography. No longer were the old conventions, those of pictorial photography, the accepted conventions for art photography. The change from pictorial conventions to straight conventions was precisely the shift which changed the way that people looked at photography. In using the full capacity of the camera *photographically* and objectively a new photographic credo was created. Thus, in the minds of many critics and curators there no longer existed two separate kinds of photography -- only Photography.

A good example might be Eugene Atget, a photographer who documented Paris from 1898 until shortly before his death in 1927. After an unsuccessful career in the theatre and a short stint as a painting student, Atget turned his attention to photography, becoming in essence the first freelance photographer. He pinned a sign over his door

saying "Documents for Artists" and proceeded to photograph Paris, selling his prints to artists, for post cards, for books about Paris, or to various collections of Paris museums. Man Ray, an artist involved in exploring the photographic medium was one of the first to recognize Atget's work as more than "mere" documentation, but it was Berenice Abbot who fought to bring Atget's work to public notice. She was not successful in his lifetime, but her continued efforts produced both shows and books of his work. In 1968 the Museum of Modern Art acquired the 1,300 negatives and several thousand prints which Abbot had preserved. Other museums, notable the photographic division of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, are now scrambling to "re-collect" prints Atget sold around the turn of the century as documents of Parisian monuments. Atget, originally viewed as just another documentary photographer, was brought into the Artworld. It is interesting to note that some controversy has arisen recently when new prints from Atget's negatives were produced. John Szarkowski and Maria Morris of MOMA have been working with the whole body of Atget's work, not just the more "artistic" negatives embodied in Abbot's collection. They have found what they feel is a new approach to the large body of work. They feel that they have found an artistic maturation in Atget's work that reflects a shift of emphasis from documentation to artistry. How much of this shift is Atget's and how much is due to the changing conventions of photography, and therefore what Szarkowski and Morris are looking for, is a moot point:if the conventions had not changed, any discussion of Atget's work as art would have been impossible.

Figure 23: Aerial view of mud flats, St. Brieuc, France, U.S. Air Force, 1944.

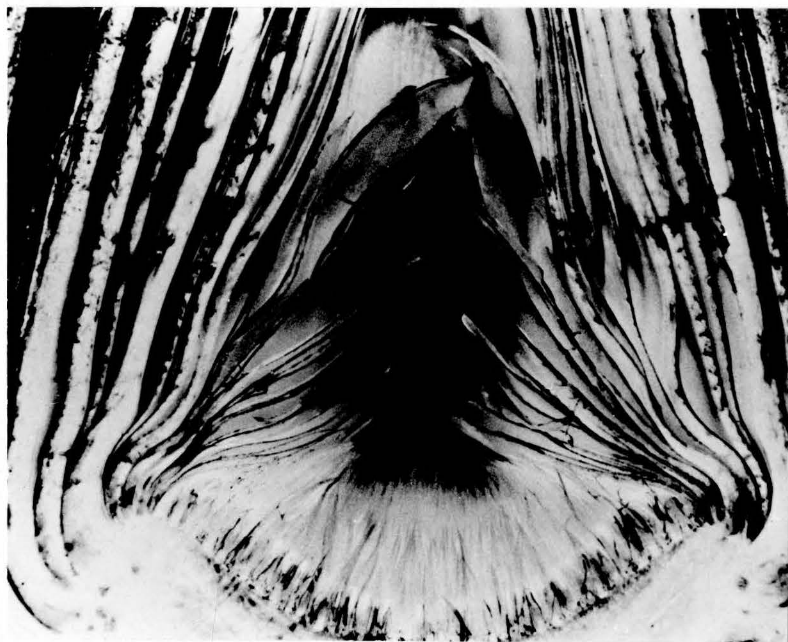


Figure 24: *Artichoke, halved*, Edward Weston, 1930.

Another example which shows the change from documentary to art photography is figure 23, which is an aerial shot of France taken during World War II for reconnaissance purposes. Beaumont Newhall, a noted historian of photography, comments:

> Most aerial photographs are dull enough records. But when the ground possesses a rich pattern, we can often select from photographs taken purely for scientific purposes some which will appeal strongly to our esthetic imagination. Many of the aerial reconnaissance photographs are of intrinsic beauty. They were taken by pilots high above enemy territory flying straight and level on a predetermined course while three automatic cameras made exposures at intervals of a few seconds. . . Each single print . . . is not an independent picture, but merely one unit of a series from which interpreters could extract military information. The pictorial quality which we see is a by-product. . . Scientific photographs taken through the past hundred years are basically similar; it is our acceptance of them as *esthetic* revelations which is new.[5]

In other words, because of the museum context and the similarity of secondary conventions, we may now view the most mechanically produced shots as art photography. When we view an aerial view of mud flats in a museum, we are no longer viewing it as factual data but rather as an abstract representation, a beautiful pattern. We might even associate it with work like Weston's *Artichoke, halved* (see figure 24). This is a good example of the derivative sense of the work of art: when placed together in the same context, both the mud flats and Weston's print share many of the secondary conventions. The viewpoint has changed and the viewer's expectations have changed because of the museum context. Information is no longer the goal, aesthetic interest is.

The logical conclusion of this attitude can be seen in the exhibit *Evidence*, shown throughout the country between 1977 and 1980.

The show featured photography that had originally been produced as documentation for police departments, product testing services and the like. The published account of the exhibit is as follows:

> Surprise, which appears to be the common base of both creative behavior and our response to what is called comedy, is often resurrected out of the familiar by relating the familiar which we have taken for granted to an unfamiliar context; it is this context, the circumstantial, which so often blinds all but the "child" in us each, which is sometimes the sole impulse that allows us to see the evident: "the emperor is naked."[6]

Thus, the point of the show was to demonstrate the shift in context from documentary to art using photography. The exhibit included such pictures as one of a man with a bag over his head and a hand holding a torch trying to burn the bag and one print which included several hospital beds and medical implements in the middle of a field with several people dressed as nurses sitting on a parkbench nearby. Either of these photographs, if viewed from the Artworld, had a definite surreal quality to them. Yet, the original context was the opposite of the surreal -- it was supposed to the reality of a testing situation. Alan Artner, art critic for the *Chicago Tribune*, reviewed the exhibit and commented:

> . . . context is everything. It provides the vocabulary. In corporations and government agencies, the words are task-oriented. One does not think of terms like "surreal," "poetic," or "abstract." But at a museum they naturally come to mind, laying a conceptual base from which comparisons are made.[7]

The concept of the museum context could not be better stated that this brief comment by Artner. Regardless of the original purpose, the new context of the work shown in this show places it in the Artworld. The greater the resemblance of secondary conventions, the easier it becomes to induct the work into the Artworld using the derivative sense

of the work of art.

But what of the other side of this process -- documentary photography? Is all documentary photography necessarily art photography? I believe the answer is "no." Documentary photography has still maintained its primary convention, i.e., that it is to be used as a document. Medical researchers may be impressed by the beauty of a bacteria magnified by a microscope, but the photography of that bacteria is primarily intended to give researchers information. The utilitarian purpose of documentary photography remains its primary purpose. I would suggest that this is one of the cases where the worlds of documentation and art intersect. Each remain a separate entity but have areas that intersect. The question arises at this point whether any art photography could be used as documentation. I think the answer is "yes." Julia Margaret Cameron's portraits of Victorian English writers and painters certainly function as documents of the age.

I have suggested that there are also worlds of entertainment and commercial photography which exist separately from the world of art photography. I think that these worlds also have areas of intersection with the Artworld. In 1967 there was a group show at MOMA of work done by Diane Arbus, Garry Winogrand and Lee Friedlander. This is heralded as the public birth of the "snapshot" school of art photography. It is difficult to describe this movement as anything but anti-photographic, especially when one considers that the secondary conventions surrounding art photography at the time were those of straight photography. The secondary conventions of this new kind of art photography, i.e., the snapshot school, relate very closely to what I have described as the

secondary conventions of entertainment photography -- anything is acceptable as long as there is some sort of image. Winogrand's and Friedlander's work was uncomposed, out of focus, grainy and accidental. As with the previous succession of style, the new snapshot school borrowed many of the secondary conventions of a world external to the Artworld without changing the primary convention of either. Tourists still take snapshots of the changing of the guard at Buckingham Castle and families still take pictures of birthday parties, graduations or weddings; art photographers still work to have their work hung in the museum or shown at a gallery. In this case too, the secondary conventions of the previous style or movement in art photography were disregarded. Another result of the change in secondary conventions is that we find more snapshots from yesteryear being presented in the museum. Thus, I think that we can draw the same conclusions for art photography and entertainment photography as we did for art photography and documentary photography: the two worlds overlap but portions of each remain separate entities.

However, it should be noted at this point that the entertainment photographer is not automatically doing art photography. The photographer who takes pictures of the backyard birthday party must be a member of the Artworld, be aware of the conventions of art photography and then confer status of candidate for appreciation on his photographs to have his work belong in the Artworld. Unless these conditions are met, or unless an office holder of the Artworld confers status upon the work, the pictures remain in the world of entertainment.

The final world that I have described is the world of commer-

cial photography. The intersection between art and commercial photography is perhaps the most subtle in some ways -- or perhaps a bit harder to describe because the secondary conventions are so close, and have been so for a long time. For example, a magazine ad for a bathtub may utilize a photography that can only be described as surreal and looks very much like something Jerry Ulesman might have made. On the other hand, the work of an avowed commercial photographer like Avedon may be found hanging in the museum. Also, many photographers have worked in both areas; Weston and Edward Steichen are good examples of this. However, I would maintain that while the two worlds overlap at places, there are two distinct worlds with two distinct sets of primary conventions. The attitude of many commercial photographers reflects this kind of division: they often speak of doing "their own work" which they view as art photography and quite different from the work they do for clients.

And what of the critics and curators who evidently have been a part of this evolution of art photography? For the most part, they seem to have ignored the way documentary, commercial and entertainment photography have been inducted into the Artworld and therefore seem to have a rather myopic view of photography. An example of this is Susan Sontag's *On Photography*, which is probably the most widely read volume of criticism on photography. Yet, it is based on the premise that there is only one kind of photography, art photography, and that it is embedded firmly in the Artworld.

On Photography is a collection of essays in which Sontag pursues the various wisps of photographic reality -- as she perceives

them -- through the history, development and aesthetic of the photographic image. While there are major themes which recur in the essays, the essay form and Sontag's literary approach make it difficult to neatly categorize these themes. For our purposes, I think an examination of one of the themes, the relationship between art and photography, will suffice.

Sontag's basic attitude toward photography soon becomes apparent -- she believes it to be hazardous for the health of contemporary mankind, especially in its passive effect on the participatory nature of mankind. To her, photography is what Marshall McLuhan would call a "cool" medium, that is, one without passion or involvement. She sees photography as the medium modernists have used to "cool" all of the arts into a non-participatory stance. For instance, she says:

> Aesthetic distance seems built into the very experience of looking at photographs, if not right away then certainly with the passage of time. Time eventually positions most photographs, even the most amateurish, at the level of art.[8]

In this case, Sontag is not using "aesthetic distance" in the usual philosophic usage. To her, "distance" means what aesthetic theory would normally describe as "overdistancing," that is, a non-involvement with the experience. In this passage, she is referring to the appearance in the museum of what were originally documentary, commercial and entertainment photographs. She seems to indicate that the mere passage of time has elevated these photographs to a place within the museum. She takes no note of what Newhall has described earlier, that is, a new way of looking at these photographs on the part of museum curators and members of the Artworld. Furthermore, she extends this

"aesthetic distance" or non-involvement on the part of the viewer to photographs not only within the museum context but to *all* photographs, whether they are in the family album or on the front page of the morning newspaper. She attributes what I have described earlier as the derivative sense of the work of art in a blanket fashion over all photography, regardless of its context. Thus, in a description of the photograph of Che Guevara's dead body which was used by wire services all over the world, she states:

> [The photograph] not only summed up the bitter realities of contemporary Latin American history but had some inadvertent resemblance . . . to Mantegna's "The Dead Christ" and Rembrandt's "The Anatomy Lesson of Professor Tulp." What is compelling about the photograph partly derives from what it shares, as a composition, with these paintings.[9]

She ascribes this built-in "aesthetic distance" to all photography. To Sontag, this distance also indicates a radical leveling of content in photographs where a picture of a starving child is equal to that of a garbage can. She arrives at this conclusion because she feels photography is practically lacking all style. By "style," she means what I have described as secondary conventions. To Sontag, all that remains in the phtograph is its content:

> . . . the formal qualities of style -- the central issue in painting -- are, at most, of secondary importance in photography, while what a photograph is *of* is always of primary importance.[10]

I think this sentence indicates Sontag's insistence upon art photography as the only kind of photography. Her refusal to acknowledge any secondary conventions of photography, regardless of what kind of photography is discussed indicates this narrow perspective. As a result, she defines the content of photography as the only convention worth

discussing. I can think of no other visual art media where the content is the defining characteristic. I think Sontag has set up an impossible situation in making her judgments from the sole vantage point of the Artworld, yet refusing to discuss the secondary conventions of photography and subordinating them to content. She believes that photography is the major tool of the modernist assault on the Artworld yet does not concede that this entire matter is internal to the Artworld. She states:

> The museum's naturalization of photography as art is the conclusive victory of the century-long campaign waged by modernist taste on behalf of an open-ended definition of art, photography offering a much more suitable terrain than painting for this effort. For the line between amateur and professional, primitive and sophisticated is not just harder to draw with photography than it is with painting -- it has little meaning.[11]

She continues:

> That all the different kinds of photography form one continuous and interdependent tradition is the once startling, now obvious-seeming assumption which underlies contemporary photographic taste and authorizes the indefinite expansion of that taste.[12]

Thus, I think Sontag has made a basic error in insisting that there is only one kind of photography, art photography, and in viewing photography from only one perspective, that of the Artworld. This provincialism provides a very narrow foundation for the rest of her observations on photography. Lotte Jacobi, a well respected eighty-five year old photographer, shows more insight into the problems of photography when she states:

> Photography is like any of what you call arts. Not every painting is meant as a piece of art. You paint houses, you paint signs, you paint God knows what. It's all painting -- but it's not all art.[13]

A recent article by Owen Edwards, photographic critic, amplifies Jacobi's statement and also comments on the way specific images from

documentary photography are inducted into the Artworld, and thus to art photography. His article is a review of two exhibitions, one of photographs of space exploration at Grey Gallery in New York and the other of NASA photographs at George Eastman House in Rochester. He raises the question of whether indiscriminate machine-made photographs taken without even circumstantially artistic intention can indeed be viewed as works of art. He states that machines, or systems of machines, necessarily involve the human creative spirit and act as proxies for mankind. As for artistic intention, he answers in this way:

> Not everything can be art, but much can, and nowhere are the boundaries more all-embracing than in photography. Many of the photographs now revered by museum curators were made with little if any regard for art. Anthropology, advertising, propaganda, paid portraiture, science, historical preservation, journalism and other non-artistic pursuits have made artists of Gardner, Nadar, Atget, Beato, Bellocq, and many many others. Each age redefines art for itself.[14]

What Edwards has called "redefining art" I have called the induction of objects into the Artworld. Unlike Sontag, this view recognizes an Artworld, an institution which affects the context in which the object is viewed. The change in context changes the way an object is viewed, substituting an aesthetic meaning for the previous utilitarian one. This change in context must be a conscious one; one that is based on the conventions of the Artworld and also on the recognition of the utilitarian conventions within which the photograph was originally taken.

In summarizing this chapter, I think that the most important point is the existence of four areas in which photography functions,

each with a different primary convention. While the secondary conventions of each may at times overlap, the primary conventions have remained constant. It is the constancy of the primary convention of each and the flux of the secondary conventions which have caused confusion to photographers and members of the Artworld alike. The confusion has been prolonged because, unlike painting, there is no large body of critical work which takes into consideration the differences between these four worlds and the areas of their intersection. Many critics and curators, like Sontag, have simply assumed the Artworld as the only context within which photography functions. This assumption does nothing to clarify photography's role within the Artworld, the expanding perimeters of the Artworld, or the places where the Artworld intersects other worlds.

Notes:

[1] C. Jabez Hughes, "On Art-Photography," *Photography Notes* VI (1861), quoted in *The History of Photography*, Beaumont Newhall (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1964), p. 59.

[2] Julia Margaret Cameron, "Annals of My Glass House," in *Julia Margaret Cameron*, ed. Helmut Gernsheim (New York: Aperture, Inc., 1975), p. 182.

[3] Charles H. Caffin, *Photography As A Fine Art* (Hastings-on-Hudson, New York: Morgan & Morgan, Inc., Publishers, 1971), pp. 9-10.

[4] Paul Strand, quoted in *Photography Rediscovered: American Photographs, 1900-1930*, ed. David Travis (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1979), p. 74

[5] Beaumont Newhall, *The History of Photography*, pp. 167-173.

[6] Robert F. Forth, "Afterword," *Evidence*, ed. Larry Sultan and Mike Mandel (Santa Cruz, California: Clatworthy Colorvues, 1977), n.p.

[7] Alan Artner, *Chicago Tribune*, November 18, 1979.

[8] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: A Delta Book, 1977), p. 21.

[9] Ibid., pp. 106-07.

[10] Ibid., p. 93.

[11] Ibid., pp. 131-32.

[12] Ibid., p. 132.

[13] Interview with Lotte Jacobi, photographer, Deering, New Hampshire, December 2, 1980.

[14] Owen Edwards, "New Things To Be Seen and New Ways To See Them," *American Photographer*, November 1981, p. 30.

CHAPTER VII

IMPLICATIONS OF A THEORY OF THE ARTWORLD

Introduction

In this chapter I would like to examine the implications of the institutional theory described in previous chapters for art education. To do this, I would like to describe the position of art education within the structure of formal education and the problems that I see as inherent in the system. I would also like to suggest that an alternative to the traditional type of art education may exist. However, due to the large amount of material needed to discuss these ideas in detail, I will limit my comments to somewhat broad generalizations rather than specifics of implementation or curriculum. It should be noted that I will use three distinct terms in talking about instruction in the visual arts -- art education, aesthetic education and visual education. While full definitions will be given later in the text, the general use of these terms is as follows. I will use the first to describe the general system of instruction in the arts as it now exists, the second to describe instruction in the appreciation of the Fine Arts, and the third to describe a broad type instruction which is not primarily based in the Fine Arts.

Art Education

The place of art education within the system of schooling in the United States is on the periphery of educational practice. This is due in large part to the perception of the general populace that art education is inexorably tied to the Fine Arts (the Artworld) and that the Artworld is removed from the practical endeavors of everyday life. Efforts to justify the inclusion of art education in a more central position have resulted in the corruption of the ties between art education and the Artworld.

Art education in the United States has had neither a long nor broad history; it didn't make its appearance as part of the general curriculum until well into the twentieth century. Before that time, the general course of instruction in the arts ran the gamut from nonexistent to a tool for education in the trades to a way of obtaining cultural refinement. When included in the curriculum of schools before the turn of the century, it most often featured drawing geometric figures or other representational forms as an aid to training the perceptual ability of students. There was a close alliance between the industrial or vocational arts and art education at this point. A form of art education also existed in "finishing" schools in the form of needlepoint, china painting and genre drawing. The purpose of this kind of instruction was the additional Culture and refinement the arts might give to young ladies. In both of these cases, emphasis was placed on copying simple objects from life or artworks already in existence. The connection between these types of instruction and the Artworld were tenuous at best.

In the 1920's and 1930's, art education separated from the in-

dustrial arts and emerged as a study of its own. This was due in large part to the impetus of John Dewey and the Progressive movement. Dewey was instrumental in promulgating the idea of creative expression in the child to the school system in the United States. Dewey's aesthetic theory, articulated in *Art As Experience*,[1] argued that the aesthetic was part of every experience and was not separate from everyday activity. He placed emphasis on the "process" of art, both in the original creation of the experience by the artist and in the recreation of the experience by the viewer. I think, to Dewey, art was expected to be in the service of experience, an aid to growth in the individual. The application of Dewey's theories to the classroom by art educators -- not necessarily as Dewey would have wished -- resulted in various approaches, from the "laissez-faire" where the child was free to experiment in any direction to "project-building" where art projects were used to demonstrate facts from other disciplines. In both of these cases, aesthetic education as a formal study of the objects, history and theory of the Artworld was not thought to be needed. In the laissez-faire approach, aesthetic education was considered an inhibiting factor in that the child might be intimidated by viewing the products of professional artists. It was thought the child would either discontinue his own efforts or suspend his spontaneity and originality in an effort to copy. In the case of the art project approach, the emphasis was placed on the accuracy of the project and not on aesthetic qualities. Thus, the production of soap carving of Corinthian column, models of medieval castles, or drawings of the first Thanksgiving had little relation to the Artworld.

Art education as it developed over the decades came to be understood as a vehicle for the creativity of the child and often took the form of the two approaches described above. The justification of an arts curriculum was based on the idea of creativity as an inherent human characteristic. While the expression of this creativity is normally thought to be the function of the Artworld, the emphasis of most art education programs and art educators has been placed on a much broader idea of creativity. For example, Viktor Lowenfeld has noted a distinction between art education and the Artworld:

> Art education primarily deals with the effect which art processes have on the individual, while the so-called fine arts are more concerned with the resulting products. It is then quite logical to say that art education is more interested in the *effect* of a greater and more harmonious organization of the elements of art on the individual and his development, while aesthetic growth in the fine arts generally refers to the harmonious organization of the elements of art themselves.[2]

Lowenfeld goes on to argue that the creativity fostered by art education stands as one of the most valuable tools of a free society in that creativity produces individuality and a broader base within the individual for problem solving. This kind of justification, allowing for individual differences among theorists, is one of the most prevalent among art educators. At the heart of this attitude is the assumption that the processes of the Artworld are valuable to the growth of the child but the context in which these processes exist is extraneous. Kenneth Lansing, a well known art educator, has noted this dichotomy:

> If art educators justify their subject by stressing the value of the art *process*, they must admit that one of their objectives is the production of artists. After all, a person is not engaged in an art process unless he produces art; and if he produces art, he is an artist.
>
> By the same token, art instructors cannot logically justify

> their subject simply by pointing to the value of the art *product*. They must admit that they aim to develop connoisseurs. The reason for this is that the full value of an art object cannot be realized if people are incapable of making critical judgments about form and content.[3]

While Lansing's view is not universally held in the art education community, it does point to the problem. In attempting to justify art education programs within the schools, art educators have tried to find a broadly based and practical argument for the continued existence of these programs. The "creativity factor" usually argued provides the practicality and demoncratic framework needed for such justification while an argument based on the training of artists and connoisseurs seems to underline the elitist conception of the Artworld when placed in the context of mass education. I think that this has been the central problem in art education and is somewhat of a "catch-22" situation. Art education is certainly derived from the Artworld and is often perceived by a mass audience as part of an elitist pursuit, as something within the schools that has little bearing on everyday life. To argue its everyday applications, art educators have had to appeal to the Artworld to demonstrate the universality of the creative spirit in man, yet could not use the Artworld as a central part of study because of its elitist connotations. In other words, art educators have had to extract some of the processes of the Artworld and distill these practices to a common level of acceptability.

This means that many of the secondary conventions of the Artworld remain largely unknown to students in art education programs or, in some cases, these conventions may be distorted to fit the dichotomy. For example, creative genius or talent has been one of the major se-

condary conventions of the Artworld since the Mannerist period. The very idea of a "masterpiece" carries the connotation of a rare ability, a rare talent. The general procedure in the Artworld for the artist of study, preparation, and gradual public recognition is also an indication of the important part talent plays in the Artworld. Yet, art education to a great extent ignores this aspect in favor of a more democratic approach. The approach of art education becomes "although not everyone has talent, everyone can be creative." I am not arguing against this approach, but rather pointing to the kind of dichotomy that exists within art education.

I think that other major conventions of the Artworld have been ignored as well. Too often, whether it be an analysis of the handling of the plastic elements or art history or theoretical perspectives engendered by a movement, there is not adequate discussion to make these conventions understood or related to what the student knows. I would suspect that a portion of this is due to the conception that the conventions are esoteric and have little to do with other subject areas studied. Another part is the lack of knowledge of these conventions by teachers, especially on the elementary level.

This last point, the lack of knowledge of the conventions on the part of classroom teachers is significant because it points again to the separation of the Artworld from everyday concerns. This can be seen in the training of student teachers in elementary education programs. At most, these students are given six hours of art education theory and methods in the course of their studies. This is probably equivalent to six hours of Greek in preparation to teaching Greek --

precisely because both "art" and Greek are equally alien to the everyday experiences of most students who are preparing for teacher education. There is no possibility to teach enough of the basics of either art or Greek in six hours of academic experience on the college level to prepare future teachers to teach either art or Greek. The previous statement presupposes minimal experience with art education -- and the Artworld -- on the part of student teachers. Statistics show that about 10% of high school students nationwide enroll in an introductory art class.[4] On the elementary level, few schools employ art teachers and rely upon the classroom teacher for any instruction in the arts. Basically, this means that college students who are preparing to be elementary teachers may have had little previous experience with art education and the quality of that training is open to question. This results in either a dual agenda in the art education classes where secondary conventions as well as methods and materials are taught or emphasis is placed on methods through project oriented presentations. In either case, the result is a superficial exploration of the arts -- especially for those who will be expected to teach art in their own classrooms. If this seems to be a circular situation, it is. The solution would seem to be more hours required for art education in elementary teacher education programs; yet the fact is that few hours can be added to programs which are already over-crowded to meet state certification requirements. This is especially true for a subject area that is perceived as not central to the curriculum.

Another problem exists on the secondary level. In this case, there are very few general survey courses of the arts. Instead, em-

phasis is placed upon studio courses. This means that training is given which is appropriate to practitioners in the Artworld. While the handling of plastic elements is basic to these courses, the history and theory of the Artworld may be given little attention. In this sense, the training can become a rather narrow study within one or two media instead of an introduction to all of the conventions of the Artworld as well as methods and materials used in the Artworld. A parallel example might be teaching the sonnet form without any reference to poets who used it or the *Magna Carta* without any reference to conditions in England in 1215. The contextual settings in these examples which lead to a greater understanding would be lacking. In the same way, the contextual setting of the Artworld may be found lacking in many secondary art education programs.

In both elementary and secondary levels of art education the dichotomy between the exclusive aspects of the Artworld and the need for a democratic art experience for children have tended to create a highly distilled program. The need to justify these programs on the basis of their practicality has lead to a divorce of art education from the rich texture of the conventions of the Artworld, thus widening the gap between the Artworld and the general public. A resolution of the dichotomy between the Artworld and art education might be a systematic instruction in all of the conventions of the Artworld at both elementary and secondary levels. This instruction might also be designed to educate students as members of the Artworld rather than practitioners. This is not to say that studio experience would be absent from such a program, but rather that it would not be predominate in programs as it

is presently.

Visual Education

Another approach to the dichotomy between art education and the Artworld might be to remove the Artworld as the sole basis of art education. Reference has been made in recent years to the "mass arts," that is, popular forms of entertainment or those of a commercial nature. These include movies, commercial television, print media in the form of magazines, and some mass produced products. What differentiates these "arts" from the artworks of the Artworld is their primarily utilitarian context rather than aesthetic context. In other words, their primary conventions are different than that of the Artworld. However, as we have seen, these worlds share some secondary conventions with the Artworld and at times intersect the Artworld. In this way, a particular medium like film can function both in the Artworld and in the worlds of entertainment, commercialism, and documentation. Those films which function in the Artworld are classified as art films and are described by an hauteur theory. Films like *Persona* or *8½* represent the art film. On the other hand, the large percentage of commercial releases represent both the commercial and entertainment worlds. Films like *Raiders of the Lost Ark, Halloween,* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* represent the commercial film. These films have a body of criticism which reflects some of the secondary conventions of the art film, for example, the handling of the visual elements, the actors' performance, and the director's ability to form a unified product. But there is an additional element, that of the utilitarian context. In

this way, the reviews of a movie like *Raiders of the Lost Ark* include the entertainment value of the film. This is not to say that commercial films cannot be appreciated on an aesthetic level; they can, but aesthetic appreciation is only one facet of appreciation and not the primary one.

It should be noted that the classificatory sense of a work of art, which Dickie has described and which is operant in the Artworld, is not operant in the worlds of entertainment, commercialism or documentation. There is an immediate evaluative sense to these products which is based on their utilitarian context. In no sense does the question of a product being a product arise. A movie is a movie, a television program is a television program, an advertisement is an advertisement, a spoon is a spoon. But the evaluation of the product as good or bad does come into question. This type of evaluation is based to a great extent upon the utilitarian context of the product. In this way, the entertainment value of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* becomes an integral part of its evaluation. In the same way, the entertainment value of a television series becomes an important part of its evaluation because commercial television is thought to be an entertainment medium. An advertisement is evaluated not only on its visual imagery but on its ability to sell the product. The kind of evaluation usually involved in these products may be described as a combination of aesthetic and utilitarian factors, using "aesthetic" to describe the way in which the visual elements of a product are used. For example, a spoon may be examined in the light of its aesthetic and utilitarian factors. It should be aesthetically pleasing, that is, be visually

well designed; at the same time, it should be functional, that is, easy to use, easy to handle, and able to contain a liquid. Both the spoon's form and function are equally important factors and both weigh equally in the spoon's evaluation.

In some cases, the balance between form and function are not maintained and the utilitarian context becomes the only criteria for judging the value of a product. For example, the function of a television commercial is to sell the product. Functional requirements like the length of commercial time, the necessity of seeing the product, and the need for viewer identification are all important factors which contribute to the commercial. However, some advertisers have subordinated the form of the commercial to the functional requirements. The result is the type of commercial which is remembered for its poor form, that is, a strident or negative presentation which is not pleasing. The justification for commercials of this type is based on the functional factor -- product recognition and retention. The same may be said of print advertisements, commercial television programming, movies, or mass produced products. The balance between the form and function has been disrupted.

It would seem that a course of study based on an analysis of both form and function in the media described above and in mass produced objects would provide a basis for visual literacy. By visual literacy I mean a learned response to the visual elements which surround us daily. An evaluation of these media and products would be appropriate in light of their nature and because an analytical approach must include such evaluation. It should be noted that this type of study

would have to be systematic, to begin at the elementary level and to continue through the secondary grades. It should also be noted that the mere addition of video, filmmaking, advertising, graphic and product design to an art curriculum would fulfill the conditions I have in mind. Rather, my suggestion would be that these studies would be approached from the context of the worlds of entertainment, commercialism and documentation. One major benefit of such a program may be found in its relationship to everyday life. The Artworld may be viewed as remote and inaccessible to many students. However, the products of these other worlds surround these students and are present in their everyday life. Moreover, a study of this type might conceivably lead back into the Artworld because the conventions of these worlds and the Artworld are shared in some ways. The student would have a foundation upon which to explore the Artworld, not as an alien territory but one that has characteristics in common with everyday life.

With either art education or visual education programs, the major problem remains: the lack of qualified and knowledgeable teachers, particularly on the elementary level. For a visual education program, a familiarity with the worlds of commercialism and entertainment do not guarantee good instruction. The teacher must be aware of the conventions that are operant, and must be able to explain them. The training of teachers who are capable of this kind of teaching is not easy. Increased requirement for certification, or for in-service training, must be based on what is perceived as practical grounds. A visual education program might be justified on the basis that it could create educated consumers, but I am not sure that this would be considered a

totally practical justification.

In the final analysis, as long as the Artworld remains separate from everyday life, art education will face a basic dichotomy in its approach and function. On the other hand, a visual education program would be based upon the quotidian aspects of the student's life. Either approach that I have suggested -- a reorganized art education program with greater stress on all of the secondary conventions or a visual education program -- would be difficult to implement. The justification of either program ultimately rests on the importance of understanding of the visual elements which man creates.

Notes:

[1] John Dewey, *Art As Experience* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958).

[2] Viktor Lowenfeld, *Creative and Mental Growth* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 393.

[3] Kenneth M. Lansing, *Art, Artists, and Art Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., n.d.), p. 268.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Suzanne M. Harding has been read and approved by the following committee:

Fr. Walter P. Krolikowski, S.J., Director
Professor, Foundations of Education, Loyola

Dr. Patricia H. Werhane
Assistant Professor, Philosophy, Loyola

Dr. John M. Wozniak
Professor, Foundations of Education, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

December 10, 1981
Date

W P Krolikowski
Director's Signature