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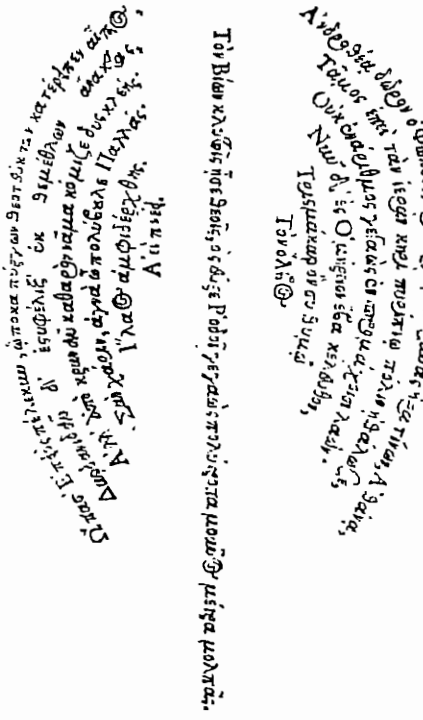
THE SCHWITTERS LEGACY:
LANGUAGE AND ART IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Will Hill

Relationships between image and language have informed many of the significant developments of twentieth century visual art. Tensions between linguistic and pictorial description have provided a dynamic basis for experimentation across the previously distinct and autonomous fields of literary and visual practice.

The contradictions that exist between words and images, and thus between description and representation, energised artistic production and critical debate in successive decades of the century. Writers have used visual strategies to extend and disrupt the communicative values of words, while painters have used language to interrogate the conventions of representation. The collapsing of distinctions between these activities was a common characteristic of the early twentieth century avant-garde, a cultural territory populated by painter-writers and poet-printers, notable for a spirit of cross-disciplinarity which served to debate the very nature and boundaries of creative activity.



SIMMIAS OF RHODES, *Axe*, fourth century BC

For Modernist poets, visual and graphic form developed as a means of exploring the relationship between language and its subject, extending or redefining the expressive scope of the written word. It is significant that increasing use of the typewriter served to narrow the distinction between the act of writing and the mechanics of print: the work of Emily Dickinson, TS Eliot and Ezra Pound shows a development of typographic structure as an integral element of the poem and the act of writing. Virginia Woolf hand-set some of her own poems in metal type. The jobbing type of Wyndham Lewis' Vorticist manifesto *Blast* in 1915 reflects a direct integration of writing and typographic expression. William Carlos Williams said of his 1923 poem "Spring and All" that "it was written when all the world was going crazy about typographic form".[1] Throughout the period between the First and Second World Wars, Kurt Schwitters traversed the disparate disciplines of painting, typography, collage and writing. His work during this period prefigured the emergence of sound poetry, performance and site-specific installation as major tendencies of avant-garde practice in the latter half of the century.

The development of these preoccupations in the visual arts can be traced to three major influences: the French symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé's "*Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*" ("A Throw of Dice Will Never Abolish Chance"), 1914, the Italian Futurist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's 1909 "Futurist Manifesto" and the principles of *parole-in-libertà* (words-in-freedom) exemplified in his *Zang Tumb Tuum* of 1914, and the *Calligrammes* of Guillaume Apollinaire, published in 1918. Mallarmé's "*Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*" is significant not only as a landmark in typographic form, but also for its underlying concern for random process and intervention—a characteristic which links this Symbolist work with the emerging twentieth century avant-garde, from the Dadaists to John Cage and William Burroughs. Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* are pictorial poems; texts which by line or profile mimic the visual appearance of their subject. These simple graphic objects serve to embody and articulate a recurrent concern of twentieth century artistic practice: the ambiguous relationship between descriptive and representational codes.

The pictographic text or poem has a history longer than type itself, which informs an active tradition of avant-garde practice through the twentieth century, from Apollinaire into the present. The first Western examples are generally recognised in the work of Simmias of Rhodes from the fourth century BC. Later examples include the work of Venantius Fortunatus in the sixth century, figured poems by the English seventeenth century poets George Herbert and Robert Herrick, and Lewis Carroll's "The Mouse's Tale" or "A Long Tale" of 1865. Sometimes described as the first concrete poem, Carroll's poem is a visual and linguistic joke on at least two levels: as a figured poem set to the shape of a mouse's tail, and the pun in the title which makes use of the homophonic relationship of the two words, as in the mouse's appendage 'tail', and 'tale' as in narrative. The homophone serves to highlight the inconsistencies of the relationship between sound and written language, presenting identical sounds that can signify two or more different meanings differentiated only in the spelling of the word. This has been the subject of recurrent visual exploration by twentieth century artists from Kurt Schwitters to Ian Hamilton Finlay and Tom Phillips. In writing about the *Calligrammes*, Stefan Themerson has said:

images, pictures. Words.
They all represent something. But
do they need to } resemble the thing they represent?[2]
is it an awful crime if they }

Themerson deftly brings together two areas of debate: the expectation of 'representation' in art, and the question of resemblance in the visual form of the poem. Previously seen as merely a visual conceit, word game or device, the medium of the figured poem was introduced into the twentieth century avant-garde in the *Calligrammes*. Themerson has said that Apollinaire was "perhaps the first poet who succeeded in replacing some of the sound qualities of a sign by its visual qualities".[3] Adopting Bertrand Russell's use of the term "sign", from *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, 1940, Themerson goes on to say:

Language is one species of the genus sign and
Pictorial representations are another species of the same genus
These two species can be wedded to one another.
They can be wedded either politely and conformably
(as when an illustration is wedded to a text or a caption to a drawing)
or they can start an illicit liaison,
so intimately integrated
that one doesn't know any more
who is the bride and who is the bridegroom [4]

To give a text a pictorial form reveals complex contradictions between visual representation and linguistic description, and reminds us that language is a fragile and illogical construct, bound to its subject by cultural compact alone. While we take for granted the equivalence between the word and its subject, they are not linked by any actual resemblance, but only by the shared perception of meaning inherent in language.

For the Futurists, typographic form was less an extension of the expressive capacity of words than a tool for attacking language itself. In the work of the movement's founder Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, disrupting the linear order of the written word was a metaphor for a larger and more radical agenda: the wholesale overthrow of accepted cultural and political norms and conventions. With the declared aim of destroying tradition, his work and that of fellow Futurists including Giacomo Balla, Gino Severini, Fortunato Depero and Umberto Boccioni celebrated what they saw to be the destructive energy of the machine age and proposed a graphic language in which visual and linguistic values would be combined, and language liberated from the constraints of linear syntax: *parole-in-libertà*. As a war correspondent for a French newspaper, Marinetti witnessed first-hand the events of the Italo-Turkish war, and his poem *Zang Tumb Tuum* was designed to reflect in typographic form the sights and sounds of his experience of the siege of Adrianopolis in Tripoli. Marinetti's "Futurist Manifesto" was published in 1909 on the front page of *Le Figaro*. This use of the newspaper page was as significant as the inflammatory language of its content, signalling a new relationship between artistic practice and the mass media. This strategy marked a break from the rarefied contexts in which art and design ideologies had previously been expressed, contrasting radically with the values of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement. Whereas Morris had developed a design philosophy articulated through hand production, Marinetti's medium was an industrially produced and ephemeral artefact, and the Manifesto was a political statement utilising popular media and graphic form.

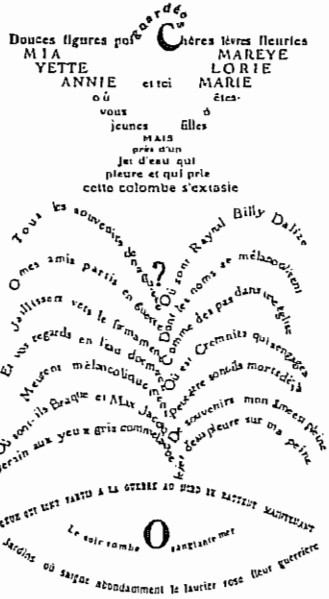
The printed word had become emblematic of modernity, progress and the machine age through the late nineteenth century, as developments in print technology had answered the needs of an emerging consumer society in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. The industrialisation of print enabled the development of both a popular press and a graphic culture of advertising and promotion. Newspapers, playbills, advertising and mass-market newspapers became a significant feature of the urban landscape. The introduction of fragments of newspaper and other printed material into the still-life canvasses of Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque and Juan Gris became a key characteristic of Synthetic Cubism. Their presence within a canvas was provocative at multiple levels.

FILIPPO TOMMASO MARINETTI, *Parole in libertà (Words in Freedom)*, 1915

The *papier collé* introduced contemporary subject matter, the ephemera of an industrial age, against the conventions of the still-life genre. Introducing an essentially two-dimensional form into the illusionistic space of the canvas, the collage fragment creates a deliberate rupture in the accepted distinctions between two opposed modes of representation, exposing the fragile convention by which we interpret two-dimensional marks as representing three-dimensional space. Graphic 'perspective'

is revealed as a relative notion to be manipulated and reconfigured; a cultural construct rather than a perceptual fact. The introduction of printed language served as a device to open up this question through the argumentative relationship of word and image within the canvas. As an important critical writer on Cubism, Apollinaire was to recognise the significance of these *papiers collés* in his book *Cubist Painters*, 1913, and to make significant distinctions between the different sub-genres within the movement.

Advertisements and billboards function as a signifier of modernity and the machine age across early twentieth century painting. The words within the cityscapes of Fernand Léger, Francis Picabia, and Robert Delaunay reflect the increasing presence of the printed word in the urban environment and a developing culture of advertising and publicity. These elements were in turn to play a crucial role in the search for a graphic language to express the modern condition of the USA, as can be seen in the work of painters including Stuart Davis, Charles Demuth and John Marin. The introduction of ephemeral or banal material was not only a reflection of the changing urban environment but an implied attack upon the orthodoxies of traditional art media and subject matter. These were defining preoccupations in the work of Marcel Duchamp, expressed most controversially in his *Fountain*, 1917, in which a urinal is given the title "Fountain" and the signature of a fictitious artist. Duchamp's strategy marks a significant shift in the basis of cultural value; a move away from a concern with the representation of recognised subjects, through recognised skills, and towards an art of appropriation and recontextualisation—values which were to inform much of the development of late twentieth century art.



The avant-gardes of the inter-war period are characterised by cross-disciplinary activity. Visual artists such as Picabia and Duchamp were as much poets as painters, and writers including Wyndham Lewis and Marinetti became increasingly involved in visual practice as artists and typographers. The Dada movement, originating in Zurich in 1916

JUAN GRIS, *La Jalousie (The Sunblind)*, 1914
Gouache, collage, chalk and charcoal on canvas, 92 x 72.5 cm
Courtesy Zeno.org

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE, "La colombe poignardée et le jet d'eau", *Calligrammes*, 1918

under Tristan Tzara and including Hugo Ball, Emmy Hennings, Hans Arp, Marcel Janco, Hans Richter and Richard Huelsenbeck, was based in radical literary or dramatic activity, developing anarchic performance and intervention as a means to the disruption of the order and convention of literary practice. The later Berlin Dada founded by Huelsenbeck in 1918 included Raoul Hausmann, George Grosz, Hannah Hoch, John Heartfield and others. More aggressively political than its Zurich forebear, the Berlin Dadaists were also to develop the visual manifestations of Dada activity through photomontage, found objects and typography. Dada was by nature a transitory or auto-destructive movement, perhaps as significant for the possibilities it proposed as for any concrete outcomes. The dislocation of reason and the recognition of random or unconscious method was to become a defining feature of Surrealism.

Apollinaire was to originate the term "Surrealist", which denoted as much a literary or theoretical movement as a specifically visual one. The Surrealist principles of "psychic automatism"—the term used by André Breton to define Surrealism through the practice of automatic writing and drawing—and the provocative juxtaposition of symbolic images were to remain potent devices across visual practice through the century. Surrealism attempted to disrupt rational logic through unexpected relationships between word and image, representation and actuality, as a means to a non-linear, dream-like perception, exposing the contradictions and paradoxes of linear thought and linguistic order. In René Magritte's *The Treachery of Images*, 1928–1929, the words *"Ceci n'est pas une pipe"* expose the limits of language, and establish the autonomy of the image itself. The pipe is an image, and Magritte demonstrates that not only is the canvas not a pipe, but the word "pipe" is not a pipe either. In writing about Apollinaire's calligrams, Themerson posed questions which test the limits of equivalence between the word and its subject:

How much deity in a holy picture?
How much table in a table?
A table has four legs
A 'table' has five letters[5]

In these examples we see a convergence of practice which was to continue through the twentieth century. Poets like Apollinaire incorporated visual form into the practice of writing, while visual designers like Theo van Doesburg and Fortunato Depero developed a typography based in an experimental engagement with language. While Apollinaire's calligrams explore the space between the domains of visual representation and linguistic description, the visual artists of De Stijl, Constructivism, Dada and Surrealism would explore the same interstitial territory using different tools.

RENÉ MAGRITTE, *The Treachery of Images: 'Ceci n'est pas une pipe'*, 1929
Oil on canvas
Courtesy Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA, USA/Lauros/Giraudon/ The Bridgeman Art Library
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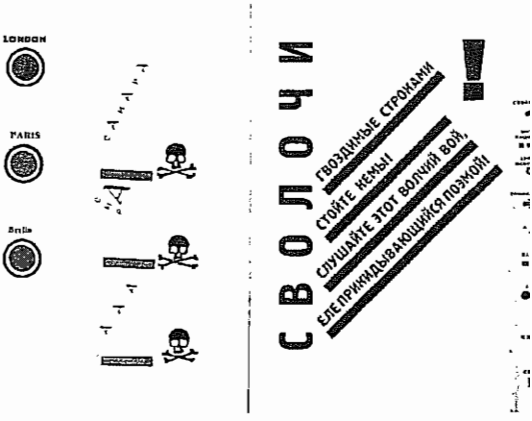

The use of typographic materials for visual and representational means was a strategy common to the work of El Lissitzky and Vladimir Mayakowsky, and to that of the Dutch artist-printer HN Werkman. El Lissitzky's collaboration with Mayakowsky, *Dlia Golosa*, 1923, variously translated as "For Reading Aloud" or "For the Voice", comprised a series of images made entirely from typographic elements—using the component parts of language for figurative description. The experimental letterpress work of HN Werkman also used pre-existing industrial

EL LISSITZKY, page spread from *Dlia Golosa (For The Voice)*, a collection of poems by Vladimir Mayakovsky, 1923
Courtesy Private Collection/ The Bridgeman Art Library
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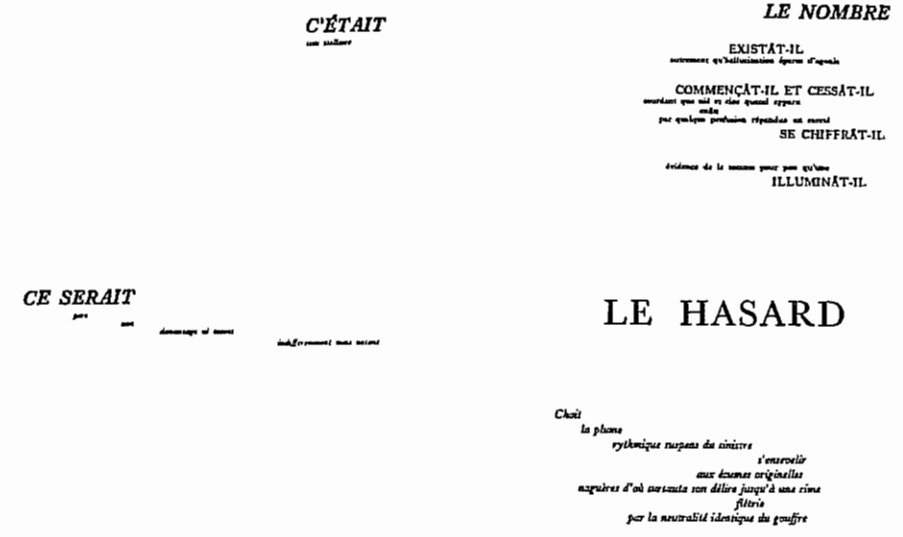
forms—the letters of his own printing works—to create representational or figurative compositions. Werkman's prints made using letterpress type were described by him as "Druksels"; there were also "Tiksels", visual poems made using the typewriter, a method which can be related back to Apollinaire but which also anticipates the sound poems and concrete poetry of the 1960s. In each of these instances the components of the type-case are used as a figurative palette rather than a descriptive medium, testing and refiguring the idea of the 'sign'. A parallel tendency can be read within twentieth century abstract painting, in the incorporation of autographic gesture—forms and marks which evoke or resemble the actions of writing without forming readable words—a lineage which can be drawn through Surrealist automatism, the calligraphic abstraction of Mark Tobey and the gestural work of Cy Twombly. Jean-Paul Sartre said of the painter Paul Klee: "It was both his greatness and error to want to paint a picture at once object and sign."[8]

The repositioning of typographic signs was to be creatively explored and developed in the work of Kurt Schwitters, and can be seen emerging in his collaboration with Van Doesburg and Kate Steinitz in the children's book *Die Scheuche (The Scarecrow)*, 1925. Schwitters' work prefigures many subsequent developments in the use of text in art. His collages and assemblages—the 'Merz' pictures—re-evaluate art through the use of non-art materials, a development with links both to Cubist collage and the recontextualisation of banal objects, such as in Duchamp's urinal. Schwitters' practice crossed the traditional boundaries of fine art and applied graphics: as a dynamic and innovative typographer with links to



STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ, page spread from *"Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard"* ("A Throw of Dice Will Never Abolish Chance"), 1914

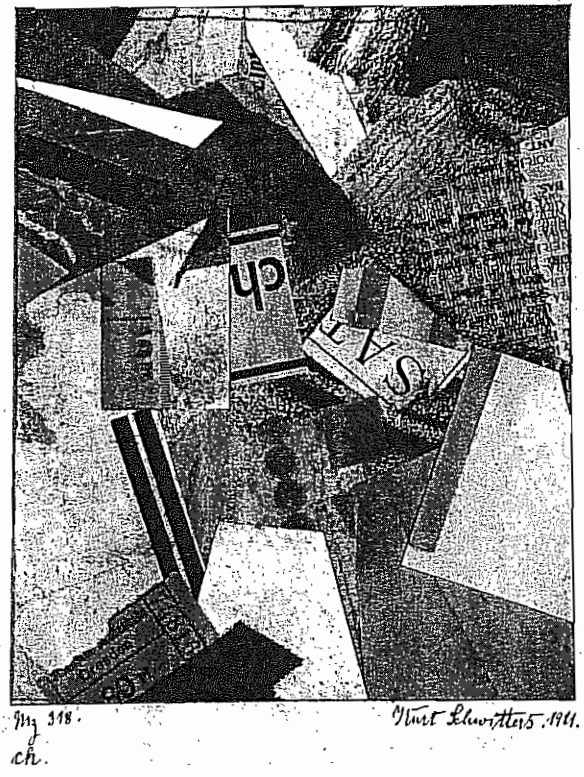
De Stijl and the Bauhaus, he published his *Merz* journal that appeared irregularly from 1923–1932, and founded what was to become a successful advertising agency in 1924. His work also encompassed environments and architectural installations: in the period 1923–1936 he worked on the *Merzbau*, a sculptural project originally titled the *Cathedral of Erotic Misery*, which eventually spread to eight rooms of his house in Hanover. In addition to major developments in collage, his radical experiments in abstract drama and poetry, cabaret, typography, music, photography and architecture anticipate the concept of multimedia or cross-media practice. Schwitters was allied with many aspects of the European avant-garde, including De Stijl, the Bauhaus and Constructivism, and is most commonly associated with the early phases of the Dada movement. His relationship to the Dadaists was, however, an ambiguous and troubled one, characterised by the fact that while much Dada output was deliberately temporal or destructive, Schwitters' work refigures and extends an object-based practice rather than dismissing the art object entirely. In the inevitable rift between Schwitters and the Dadaists, Richard Huelsenbeck referred to Schwitters' work as "Biedermeier Dada"—dismissing as conventional and bourgeois his concern for the creation of permanent art-objects.[7]

El Lissitzky's collaboration on issue 8–9 of Schwitters' journal *Merz* in 1924 promised an alliance of Constructivist and Dadaist ideas, but this also remained unresolved, confirming Schwitters' work as essentially apolitical and outside the scope of any single defining manifesto or ideology. His work was satirical, absurdist and anti-social rather than analytical; set against conformity, expressionism and sentiment rather than political order. Developing a working aesthetic across differing areas of experimental practice including typography, collage and performance, Schwitters took the extended art-school party of Dada and developed out of that deliberately ephemeral and auto-destructive movement an austere and rigorous personal practice that anticipated and stimulated several major strands of post-war artistic experiment. It included performance pieces and poems which take the form of graphic scores, exploring ambiguities in the relationship of sound to written language and the tension between name and object. This was a contradiction fundamental to the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) and the discipline of Structural Linguistics which developed out of Saussure's work during the inter-war years. In Abbott Miller and Ellen Lupton's *A Natural History of Typography*, 1994, the

KURT SCHWITTERS (ed.), cover of the magazine *Merz* issue 1-2, 1923
Lithograph
Courtesy Private Collection/
The Stapleton Collection/
The Bridgeman Art Library

authors note that Saussure "destroyed the ordinary assumption that language exists to represent ideas".[8]

For Saussure, the most troublesome feature of the linguistic sign was its arbitrariness: there is no resemblance between a sound such as 'horse' and the concept of 'domesticated quadruped'. No natural link binds the material, phonic aspect of the sign (the signifier) to the mental concept (the signified). Only a social agreement appears to hold the two sides together.[9]



Schwitters' relationship to the printed word is an antagonistic one characterised by recontextualisation and invention, using found texts and wordless sounds to reflect the quirks and anomalies of accepted constructs, to in turn satirise the faith we place in name, sign and the linear logic of linguistic syntax. His poems and collages reflect a playful and complex response to the contradictions of language; the ambiguous relationships between sound and word, sign and object, materiality and description.

KURT SCHWITTERS, *MZ 318 CH.*, 1921
Collage

Schwitters' work reflects two key preoccupations of the pre-war avant-garde: the interrogation and systematic disruption of language, and the recontextualisation of banal materials. These in turn open up crucial questions over the status of the art object, and the nature of the relationship between description and external reality. As we have seen, early avant-garde activity was characterised by cross-disciplinary practices and the dissolution of boundaries between forms and senses; a concern for the visual expression of sound-values and the disruption of formal order within both written and visual domains. The representation of sound formed an important narrative in the avant-garde typography of the twentieth century. Schwitters' work highlights the fact that spoken language is made of sound, yet the relationship of speech to written language is ambiguous and inconsistent. These inconsistencies have prompted attempts at orthographic reform and alternative typographic alphabets—including Schwitters' own phonetic alphabet—the *Systemschrift*, and have also prompted a continuum of sound-based works across literary and visual practice. Sound is evoked as the expression of violent transformation in the work of Marinetti, and the vocabularies of visual sound poetry were developed further in the work of Theo van Doesburg, Paul van Ostaijen and HN Werkman. In each case typography is rendered abstract by its revised function in representing sound values rather than words, and becomes an instrument for exploring the ambiguous relationship between sound and language. Schwitters developed this line of enquiry into sound performances, and into poems that were the visual and phonetic representations of wordless sound. In *Wand*, 1922, the repetition of a single word over 12 lines opens up a trance or mantra-like abstraction of language. In the *Usonate*, composed between 1923–1932, he created a work that functioned simultaneously as poem, performance and typographic score, presenting sound as autonomous fact rather than code or equivalence; as presentation rather than representation.

Schwitters died in relative obscurity in 1948 and while his significance as a visual artist was only partially recognised, he had a major influence upon experimental writing and linguistic experimentation. His example was crucial to the emergence of many 'underground' art movements of the 1960s, in particular the development of concrete poetry, as seen in the work of Bob Cobbing, Dom Sylvester Houédard and Ian Hamilton Finlay in the UK, sound poet Henri Chopin in France, Emmet Williams and the 'intermedia' artist Dick Higgins in the USA. Houédard described the movement in these terms: "Concrete poetry begins by being aware of graphic space as its structural agent. A printed concrete poem is ambiguously both typographic-poetry and poetic-typography—not just a poem in this layout, but a poem that is its own type arrangement."[10] This reflects both the opposing qualities Sartre attributes to Klee and the complex 'liaison' which Themerson proposes between the two species of signs. Much cross-disciplinary practice in the post-war underground developed from literary beginnings towards visual outcomes, a tendency exemplified by the work of Ian Hamilton Finlay. Originally working in the medium of poetry and fiction, Finlay's work from the late 1960s onwards took on increasingly sculptural and

environmental form, culminating in his garden, Little Sparta, in Scotland.

In his "Manchester Poem" from the late 1960s the Liverpool poet Adrian Henri wrote: "Kurt Schwitters smiles as he picks up the two pink bus tickets we have just thrown away."[11] Schwitters had been dead for almost 20 years, but his imagined presence in Henri's Manchester reflects his continued significance in the cultural landscape. The impact of his work was probably more profoundly felt among writers than visual artists; in the section "On being a painter and a poet" in his "Notes on Painting and Poetry", 1968, Henri identifies the importance of Schwitters' 'Merz' as encompassing a spectrum of activities including poetry and performance. He relates this to the work of contemporary 'intermedia' artists including Dick Higgins, Robert Morris, Allen Kaprow and LaMonte Young, artists working across multiple disciplines whom he describes as "in a direct line of descent from the Dada/Surrealist tradition".[12] Young, Higgins and Morris were key members of the Fluxus movement, centred around George Maciunas, which was sometimes described as 'neo-Dadaist' and was characterised by ephemeral, confrontational productions and activities, occupying a playful intermediate space between visual art, performance and publication. The activities of the Fluxus artists popularised the term 'conceptual' art, which was to consolidate the principle of art as idea, exemplied by the "Statements" of Sol LeWitt. The elevation of 'concept' continues the cultural shift initiated by Duchamp, positioning the cultural value of art not in the activity of making but in the idea; a point underlined by his use of 'readymades', the recontextualisation of familiar objects and the progressive distancing of the artist from artistic production.

Contemporary with the Fluxus movement were the 'cut-up' experiments, scrapbooks and collages created by Brion Gysin and William Burroughs in the late 1950s and 1960s. A writer whose work was characterised by a profound distrust of language, Burroughs employed disruptive visual strategies of collage and 'cut-up', creating texts by the random interpolation of multiple sources to disrupt or reconfigure the author's original narrative or commentary. Cut-ups were a device to counter the confines of syntax, emblematic for him of authority and repression. Reflecting the critical interrogation of language also proposed by Saussure, Burroughs' work developed the idea of language as a control system; questioning the assumption that language functions as a neutral instrument for the communication of thought, he took the view that thought and its expression are mediated and therefore compromised by the strictures of language. Rather than being a medium for the expression of ideas, Burroughs argued that language constrains and directs thought into linear routes and conventions determined by the condition of language itself. For Burroughs, language was "a virus", an oppressive form, predisposed towards linear thinking and either/or logic.[13] By contrast, Burroughs argued for a simultaneous, fluid and non-linear model of experience. The expression of these ideas took multiple forms, often through collaboration with other writers and artists. In Burroughs' scrapbooks with Brion Gysin the principle of collage is applied simultaneously to both images and texts. *The Ticket that Exploded* is a novel entirely composed from cut-ups; *Nova Express* includes cut-up text fragments from William Shakespeare, Arthur Rimbaud and James Joyce. Robert Sobieszek has said: "The liberation he proposes is a total unshackling from all authority; the tyranny of governmental and social constrictions, the limiting controls of language and logic, and even the evolutionary constraints of gravity and time."[14]

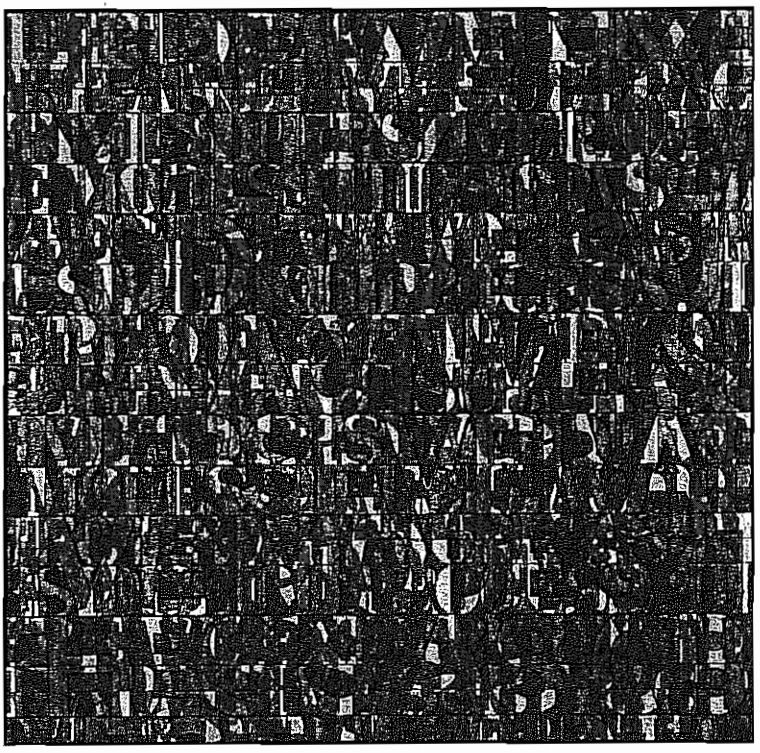
The pluralism and inclusiveness of Burroughs' approach to his materials, appropriated from across both high culture and popular or ephemeral sources, is characteristically postmodern, countering the assumptions of linear progression associated with Modernist thinking. In Burroughs' work, chance and random operations are used as a focused and incisive device against the tyranny of reason. While his attacks on the restrictions of language paralleled contemporary developments in critical theory, his use of random processes can be related back to Mallarmé, while his use of ephemeral sources and found language has clear precedent in Pound and Eliot. Burroughs' work has been particularly influential within the apparently distinct areas of film and music. His deliberate disruption of the linear structure of language is echoed in the editing methods of film makers including Anthony Balch and Nicholas Roeg, as well as in the work of writers like Jeff Nuttall and multimedia artists including Laurie Anderson and Brian Eno. Eno's work as a music producer exemplifies the extent to which Burroughs' principles of random intervention and cut-up have permeated the production of music in the era of digital audio technology.

It has been a characteristic of twentieth century art to examine and interrogate its own methods and representational codes, and language has been used as both an instrument and exemplar of this process. Painters have used language to break open codes of pictorial representation, and poets have developed the visual form of their work to explore relationships between language and external reality—positing the text as a map of sound, a diagram of rhythmic and sonic structure. In some significant instances, language itself has become the subject matter of visual art. Placing words within pictorial space immediately creates a rift in cultural codes. David Hockney described the baffled reaction of his Royal College of Art tutors to the introduction of words into his early paintings. Larry Rivers' *Parts of the Face*, 1961, articulates the tensions and contradictions between naming and visual description, while his use of the stencilled letter (also seen in the work of Jim Dine and Jasper Johns) prefigured the finely articulated dialogue between word and image in the work of Tom Phillips.

Exposing the workings of artifice within art and design has been a key preoccupation of twentieth century creative exploration. Externalising hidden mechanisms and structures within the finished work is a defining feature of postmodern practice. Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers' Pompidou Centre reversed architectural convention by placing the utilitarian service ducts and other features on the outside, substituting for the traditional skeletal principles of architecture an exoskeleton, designed to free up uninterrupted spans within. The radical Antwerp fashion designers Martin Margiela and the Antwerp Six group exposed

the artifices of fashion production by turning seams outwards and making a deliberate statement of the hidden underside of the garment. Barney Bubbles' record sleeve for Elvis Costello's single *Accidents will Happen*, 1979, was deliberately printed inside out, exposing the printers' marks and concealing the graphics on the inside. These diverse examples share a common deconstructive intent: acknowledging and incorporating their own artifice into their visible form. This exposure of artifice has been enabled by the dialogues between art and language, a dynamic which can be traced back to Braque and Picasso.

of Eliot and Pound, and the canvasses of Braque and Schwitters. As communications media converge in the transition from a reading culture into an image-driven one, the dialogues become progressively more complex, the ambiguities more illuminating. As definitions of the domain of 'art' expand to engage with a developing range of public languages, the integration of word, sign and representation continues to provoke critical debate and energise the dynamics of visual practice.



Tensions between image and word, description and representation, have informed and redefined the practice of visual art throughout the twentieth century. The early decades of the century saw the emergence of poetry concerned with graphic form, as Modernist poets explored the capacity of a poem's visual structure to denote auditory and performative values. Concurrent with this, artists incorporated textual material into visual form. Both painting and poetry appropriated public language; reported speech and printed ephemera are interposed into the poems

TOM PHILLIPS, *Here We Exemplify*, c. 1970
Oil on canvas, 76 x 76 cm

1 Williams, William Carlos, *I Wanted to Write a Poem*, 1958.

2 Themerson, Stefan, "Ideogrammes lyriques", first published in *Typographica* 'New Series', December 1966.

3 Themerson, "Ideogrammes lyriques".

4 Russell states: "Signs depend as a rule upon habits learnt by experience. A is a sign of B if it promotes behaviour that B would promote, but that has no appropriateness to A alone.... Language is a species of the genus sign." Bertrand Russell, *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, 1940.

5 Themerson, "Ideogrammes lyriques".

6 Sartre, Jean-Paul, *What Is Literature?*, Bernard Frechtman trans., New York: Philosophical Library, 1949, p. 35, note 1.

7 Foster, Hal, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois and Benjamin Buchloh, *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*, London: Thames and Hudson, 2004.

8 Lupton, Ellen, and J Abbott Miller, "A Natural History of Typography", *Looking Closer: Critical Writings on Graphic Design*, Michael Bierut, William Drenttel, Steven Heller and DK Holland eds., New York: Allworth Press, 1994.

9 Lupton and Miller, "A Natural History of Typography".

10 Houedard, Dom Sylvester, "Concrete Poetry and Ian Hamilton Finlay", *Typographica* no. 8, 1963.

11 Henri, Adrian, "Notes on Painting and Poetry", *Tonight at Noon*, London, 1968.

12 Henri, "Notes on Painting and Poetry".

13 Knickerbocker, C, "Interview with William Burroughs", *Paris Review*, 1965. Later published in William S Burroughs and Brion Gysin, *The Third Mind*, New York: Viking, 1978.

14 Sobieszek, Robert, *Ports of Entry: William S Burroughs and the Arts*, Los Angeles, 1996.

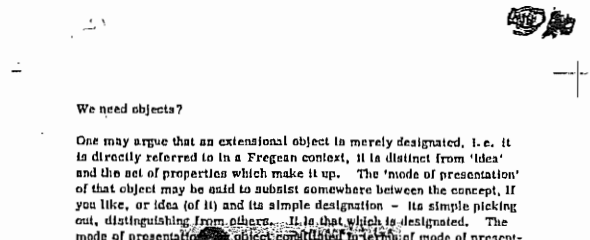
THINK AGAIN

Charles Harrison

In November 1970 I published an article in the journal *Studio International* under the title "A Very Abstract Context". It was intended to argue the virtues of the work of Joseph Kosuth, Victor Burgin and Art & Language—artistic work that then took a largely textual form (the last of these was then represented by Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, David Bainbridge and Harold Hurrell). The nonsensical title—borrowed from Kosuth—gives some indication of the confusions to follow.[1] Re-reading the article now, it is very clear that I had little understanding of the work I was writing about, and that I was in no position to mount a coherent argument in its support. The question a re-reading of this article now encourages me to consider is this: having got the judgement more or less right—for I believe I was correct in my estimation of the importance of the Conceptual art movement, and of these as its central figures at the time—why was it that I had got the accounting for the work so very wrong?

In the light of long hindsight it seems clear that the problem lay largely in a misunderstanding of the relationship that early Conceptual art bore to the modernist art and criticism it appeared to supplant. I can at least console myself with the fact that that misunderstanding was widespread at the time. The end of the 1960s had seen the establishment of a new international avant-garde, surveyed in such large exhibitions as 'Op Losse Schroeven' in Amsterdam, 'When Attitudes Become Form' at the Kunsthalle Bern and London ICA, and 'Information' at MOMA in New York. As critics and curators scratched around for appropriate labels by which the work might be categorised, one thing seemed clear: whatever this art was, it was not compatible with modernism. On the part of all those interested in this new work there was an extraordinary impatience to see modernism as overthrown and dispensed with—as though an entire historical ethos and culture of art could properly be identified not only with the briefly established authority of Clement Greenberg's criticism and with the relatively restricted stable of American abstract painters and English sculptors to which his support was given, but with the conduct of the war in Vietnam, with racism, and with privilege in general. Whatever was to be offered in explanation of the new work, the state of modernism itself was not. Rather, an alternative line to the modernist mainstream was drawn through Dada, Duchamp, neo-Dada and Fluxus. There was indeed Conceptual art of a kind for which this represented an adequate genesis, but the work I was interested in had pretensions to be mainstream rather than 'alternative'—to be 'serious' as modernism was serious.

And what is clear now is that it was precisely the crisis of late modernism, both as theory and as practice, that that work was actually responding to. That was the problem. Writing about Conceptual art without an adequate understanding of that crisis made as much sense as explaining an angry retort with no awareness of the insult that had provoked it. In my case this involved treating Conceptual art not as a legacy from Dada but as a kind of upping-of-the-stakes of abstract art—which I took at the time as the major tendency in twentieth century art—when the effective exhaustion of abstract art's limited and contingent potential for development was actually both a symptom and a cause of the apparent exhaustion of modernism itself. Given

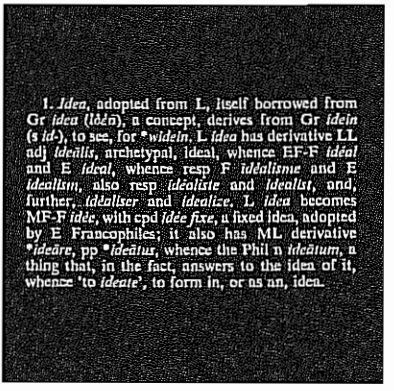


We need objects?

One may argue that an extensional object is merely designated, i. e. it is directly referred to in a Fregean context, it is distinct from 'idea' and the set of properties which make it up. The 'mode of presentation' of that object may be said to subsist somewhere between the concept, if you like, or idea (of it) and its simple designation – its simple picking out, distinguishing from others. It is that which is designated. The mode of presentation of the object constituted in terms of mode of presentation is not the object of this extensional sense, nor is it anything entirely 'subjective' or, if you like, incommunicable only in a private experiential or identical domain in the Leopard system one can effectively compare the 'objects' the 'mode of presentation'. I associate object and the identical one with the table, the cube – the cube as a relational entity presented sensorily in a certain way, and the retinal image of each individual spectator.

Intention as 'the object in a certain mode of presentation'. For reasons of antipsychologism, Frege wanted to make sure that the object, in the extensional sense should neither be confused with its mode of presentation nor the idea of it.

ART & LANGUAGE, *38 Paintings: No 12*, 1966
Photostat, dimensions variable
Courtesy the artist and
Lisson Gallery



1. *Idea*, adopted from L, itself borrowed from Gr *idea* (*ἰδέα*), a concept, derives from Gr *ídein* (s *id-*), to see, for •*wídein*. L *idea* has derivative LL adj *ideālis*, archetypal, ideal, whence EF-F *idéal* and E *ideal*, whence resp F *idéalisme* and E *idealism*, also resp *idéaliste* and *idealist*, and, further, *idéaliser* and *idealize*. L *idea* becomes MF-F *idée*, with cpd *idée fixe*, a fixed idea, adopted by E Francophiles; it also has ML derivative •*ideāre*, pp •*ideātus*, whence the Phil n *ideātum*, a thing that, in the fact, answers to the idea of it, whence 'to *ideate*', to form in, or as an, idea.

JOSEPH KOSUTH, 'Titled (Art as Idea as Idea)' [Idea], 1966
Joseph H Hirshorn Purchase Fund, 2007
The Panza Collection
Courtesy the artist and
Sean Kelly Gallery

the binding identification of modernism with abstract art that had been effected in American modernist criticism (say from Greenberg's "Towards a Newer Laocoon" of 1940 to Michael Fried's *Three American Painters* of 1965), an argument for Conceptual art that represented it both as postmodernist and as hyper-abstract was clearly doomed to incoherence from the start. That was the mess I had got myself into.

> Now to revisit the crisis of modernism is to be availed of a better understanding of the various factors by which that crisis had been generated, and of the problems that it entailed—problems in part made of the very conditions that modernism positively embraced in its critique of tradition. Among the factors in question were the long-term consequences of that loss of value in artistic techniques developed for assuring naturalistic likenesses to which both the development of photography and the rise of avant-gardism contributed—a loss that threatened diminution in the depth and intensity of intellectual content associated with purposeful specialisation.

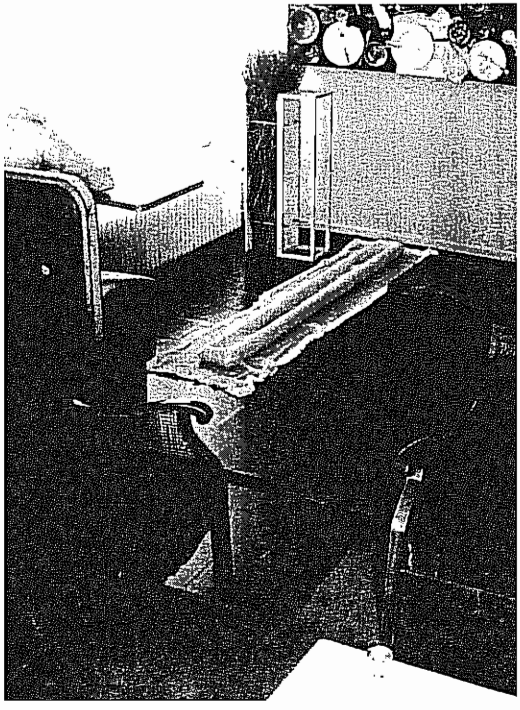
It could be said that the development of Cubism and the emergence of abstract art each in their way constituted a kind of distraction from the full implications of this loss, the one by providing a constraining pictorial armature relatively independent of the appearances of the world, the other by providing a potentially autonomous field of development for painting and to a lesser extent for sculpture. But as a resource for generating new pictorial structures, Cubism had played itself out by the 1940s—as Greenberg observed at the time—while the end of the potential for significant development in abstract painting was signalled by the blank canvases of the late 1950s.[2] There remained some exploitable potential in the 'three-dimensional work' canvassed by Don Judd in 1965, but not much.[3] Such expedients apart, by the early 1960s those concerned to maintain the possibility of art as a modern practice were faced with two principal alternatives: the first was to engage in a kind of recomplication of painting, usually involving the importation of culturally topical material by recourse or reference to photographic techniques, sometimes involving assemblage and extension into three dimensions; the second was to replay the avant-garde moment of the early twentieth century, when Marcel Duchamp had sought to short-circuit both Cubism and abstract art by suggesting a different kind of solution to the loss of art's commitment to naturalism: just select a ready-made bit of the world as art.

> The first alternative, largely pursued under the umbrella of Pop Art, had its big moment in Andy Warhol's silk-screened canvases of 1962–1964. What followed mostly entailed repetition, or a shift into the media of photography and film, or both. It was the second alternative, and its extension into the practice of nomination—rather than any fascination with readymades as objects—that engaged a new avant-garde around 1965–1968, or that fraction of the avant-garde, at least, that was more attracted to the quasi-philosophical problems thrown up by the crisis of modernism than by the potential for recomplication associated with Pop Art and its legacy. The extreme prospect faced by the artists concerned was neither a kind of ultra-abstract painting, nor a further extension of three-dimensional work—though there were plenty of both on offer at the time—it was an art altogether without objects, a kind of *tabula rasa*.

0
ANY MOMENT PREVIOUS TO THE PRESENT MOMENT
1
THE PRESENT MOMENT AND ONLY THE PRESENT MOMENT
2
ALL APPARENTLY INDIVIDUAL OBJECTS DIRECTLY EXPERIENCED BY YOU AT 1
3
ALL OF YOUR RECOLLECTION AT 1 OF APPARENTLY INDIVIDUAL OBJECTS DIRECTLY EXPERIENCED BY YOU AT 0 AND KNOWN TO BE IDENTICAL WITH 2
4
ALL CRITERIA BY WHICH YOU MIGHT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN MEMBERS OF 3 AND 2
5
ALL OF YOUR EXTRAPOLATION FROM 2 AND 3 CONCERNING THE DISPOSITION OF 2 AT 0
6
ALL ASPECTS OF THE DISPOSITION OF YOUR OWN BODY AT 1 WHICH YOU CONSIDER IN WHOLE OR IN PART STRUCTURALLY ANALOGOUS WITH THE DISPOSITION OF 2
7
ALL OF YOUR INTENTIONAL BODILY ACTS PERFORMED UPON ANY MEMBER OF 2
8
ALL OF YOUR BODILY SENSATIONS WHICH YOU CONSIDER CONTINGENT UPON YOUR BODILY CONTACT WITH ANY MEMBER OF 2
9
ALL EMOTIONS DIRECTLY EXPERIENCED BY YOU AT 1
10
ALL OF YOUR BODILY SENSATIONS WHICH YOU CONSIDER CONTINGENT UPON ANY MEMBER OF 9
11
ALL CRITERIA BY WHICH YOU MIGHT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN MEMBERS OF 10 AND OF 8
12
ALL OF YOUR RECOLLECTION AT 1 OTHER THAN 3
13
ALL ASPECTS OF 12 UPON WHICH YOU CONSIDER ANY MEMBER OF 9 TO BE CONTINGENT

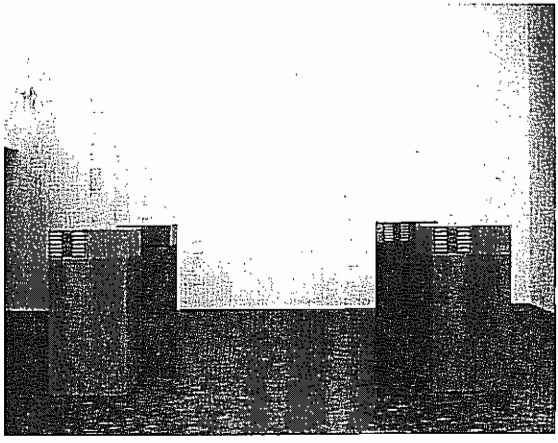
VICTOR BURGIN, *Any Moment*, 1970

Though characteristic works of Conceptual art took linguistic form and tended to raise problems of definition and analysis, it is important to stress that it was not in the margins of literature or of philosophy that the origins of the movement were to be found. Rather, they lay in the tradition of fine art, and in the problems now encountered by anyone who wanted to maintain that tradition—and the possibility of some kind of integrity and self-sufficiency for new works of art—without being forced either into technical conservatism or into the kinds of environmental and theatrical avant-gardism that were vulnerable to what remained trenchant in



modernist criticism. It is often argued that a kind of 'crisis of the object' occurred during the 1960s.[4] But the crisis in question might more appropriately be thought of as a problem in the critical relations between 'art' and 'language'—a crisis brought on by the collapse of those protocols, symbolised in the frame and the pedestal, that had previously served to keep the two apart, and to keep 'artist' and 'critic' clearly demarcated. The resulting instability thus bore upon both the ontological and the social relations affecting artistic practice. It had been an item of faith in modernist criticism that theory was something by which the work of the authentic artist was explained after the fact, rather than a body of ideas that preceded or guided it. That was by no means a secure position even where painting and sculpture were concerned, and it was certainly not sustainable in face of work without fixed physical form. But in 1969, it was altogether untenable. In that year, when Art & Language published the first issue of their journal, *Art-Language*, the editorial proposed that within the framework of Conceptual art, the making of art and the making of theory might now have to be seen as indistinguishable, and thus as subsumed into a single practice.[5] Rather than something primarily to be looked at, the work of art would be conceived of as something to be thought about.

That verbal language should come to be regarded as the primary means of transmission of artistic intention and content was at this point a highly over-determined state



of affairs. I pick out three contributory factors. First, so long as development in modern art had largely been conceived by reference to the changing appearances of painting and sculpture, it had seemed easy enough to distinguish between a given work of art and a body of written or spoken discourse about it. The work on the wall or on the floor was the primary object of attention; an accompanying text might be 'about' the work, but was not to be confused with the work itself. But if a found object or an actual or imagined readymade was to be nominated as a work of art, its status as such could hardly be established by examining its formal and technical characteristics alone, since these were shared with other objects that were not works of art. That status would presumably depend on the validity of a claim implied in some title or description or specification that was thus inseparable from the enterprise itself,

LAWRENCE WEINER, A SQUARE REMOVAL FROM A RUG IN USE, 1969
Language and materials referred to Catalogue #054
Courtesy the artist and Regen Projects, Los Angeles
Copyright Lawrence Weiner

ART & LANGUAGE, *Index 01*, 1972
Eight file cabinets, texts and photostats
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery

and that would necessarily take the form of a linguistic statement. "I nominate—or propose—this as a work of art", is one of the simplest forms such a statement might take. In any critical assessment of the enterprise, that statement would come up for scrutiny. Rather than questions of whether or not arrangements of forms and colours were pleasing to the eye, the business of criticism would be to consider the implications of considering X as a work of art.

Secondly, it had been one of the more persistent critiques of the division of labour in late high modernism that the over-sensitive and immaculate surfaces of the work of such artists as Kenneth Noland and Jules Olitski were actually *made* by the criticism that purported to be written in response; that once the authority of the words was undermined there was effectively nothing left. It followed that one might as well attend to the critical language as a kind of 'primary' material. In 1965 (in *Three American Painters*) Fried had suggested that "criticism that shares the basic premises of Modernist painting finds itself compelled to play a role in its development... potentially only somewhat less important than that of new paintings themselves".[6] That suggestion takes on an ironic cast in the light of hindsight. Younger artists in the late 1960s and early 1970s paid far more attention to the writings of Greenberg and Fried than they did to the post-painterly abstracts and constructed sculptures to which that writing was addressed.

Among these artists there were some who reacted to Fried's critique of theatricality in Minimalist art by taking it as a positive incentive to put themselves bodily in the face of the spectator.[7] But for those who remained averse to theatrical modes of activity, if it were really the case that the exhaustion of abstract art entailed the exhaustion of painting and sculpture, what was left in the practical territory where the art object had maintained its increasingly precarious existence but a kind of demanding absence? And without simply proliferating readymades with an ever-diminishing critical effect, how was that absence to be filled if not by some kind of linguistic assertion or description? So the third and final factor driving recourse to language as an artistic medium—in the eyes of those, at least, who conceived of the tradition of fine art as something worth working to maintain—was that for the moment there was virtually nothing else left to use.

It was their common determination to confront this last issue, and not any implausible move into a higher level of abstraction, that actually united the artists I singled out in 1970. Art & Language's "We need objects?" prefaced the speculative paragraph that was issued in 1967 as an artwork under the rubric *Title Equals Text*. In the same year, Joseph Kosuth's first *Definition* piece proposed that texts might be issued in the place of paintings so as to present individual concepts as kinds of readymade. In 1969 Victor Burgin proposed an art that would take its form "in message rather than materials".[8] His resulting works in textual form were first published in the same year.

In 1969–1970 there were several major exhibitions of new art in which there was little work that could usefully be described as either painting or sculpture, or that fitted comfortably into any established genre. By 1970 a number of critics and curators—myself among them—were staging shows specifically addressed to 'Conceptual art' or 'concept art' or 'idea art'.[9] Certain common features could be observed. There was not much colour and there was not much stuff; no expressive brushwork on the walls, no accumulations of three-dimensional form on the floors. Instead, there were diagrams and texts, the latter varying in length from a few words to many pages. There were objects—books and pamphlets and pieces of paper—

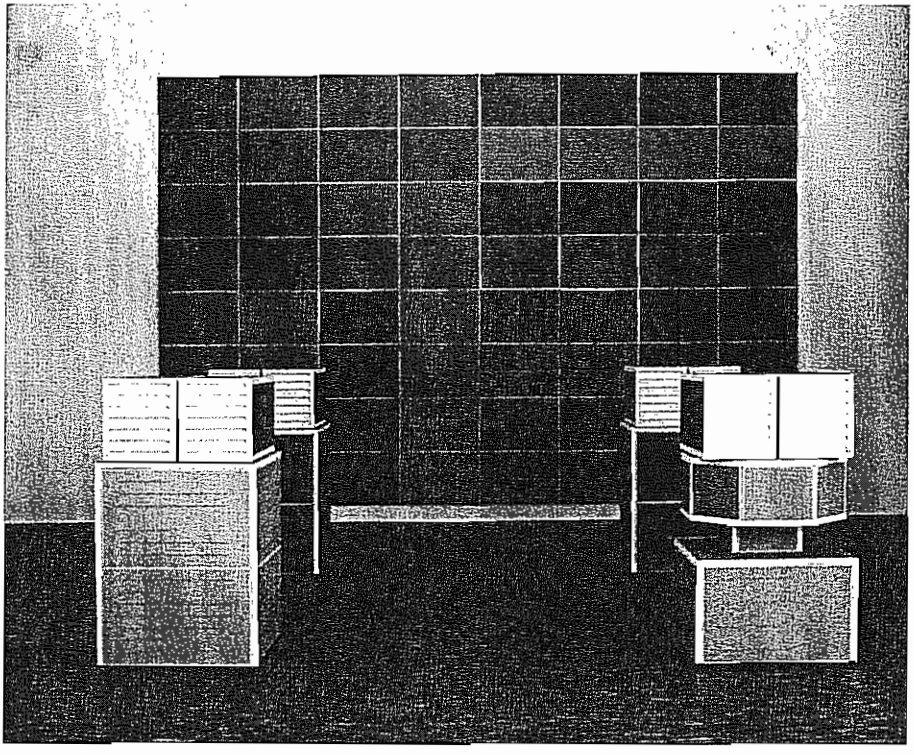
but the typical function of these was not so much to call attention to themselves as 'art', or to dominate the spaces of exhibition, but to invoke the imaginary or theoretical existence of other kinds of objects or processes or events.

Over all such work—and over the various increasingly complex examples of artwork-by-nomination that ensued—there thus hung an interesting question. On what was the new kind of spectator-reader's critical attention to be focussed: on the text itself or on the theoretical object to which the text referred? Was the 'art' to be found in one rather than the other, or was it in some way vested in an indissoluble relationship between them? It could be said that the full critical potential of Conceptual art was realised at the point at which that question assumed a central importance, and when the relationship between text and theoretical object was most efficiently tuned—as it was in Lawrence Weiner's early *Statements* of 1968 at one extreme, and Art & Language's *Index 01* of 1972 at the other. Beyond that point I believe that Conceptual art was bound to follow one or other of two directions: either to become stabilised as the mere authenticating style of self-proclaimed originators, for whom development

ART & LANGUAGE, *100% Abstract*, 1968
Acrylic on canvas, 64 x 64 cm
Courtesy the artist and
Lisson Gallery

could mean little more than the aggrandisement of texts into installations—paradoxically depriving such work of the power it had had as a kind of critique of the modernist institution; or to be consigned to the role of a transitional episode, ceding to whatever new mode of practice in the locale of fine art the development of Conceptual art's theoretical objects might have rendered possible.

As a factor in the decision between these alternatives the character and sheer length of component texts was both symptomatic and decisive. To explain what I mean I need to return to the issue of the abstract art of high modernism, and of the conditions of its exhaustion. Among the particular circumstances that Conceptual art addressed was the antinomy that abstract art and modernist theory had established between artist and critic, between practice and theory, and between art and language. To put the matter in crude terms, in the 1950s and early 1960s, when the highest expectations of fine art were invested in the surfaces of abstract paintings such as those of Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman and Morris Louis, there was no potential component of one of those surfaces that was so literally unimaginable as a piece of text. It was Jasper Johns' notable gambit—in works of the late 1950s and early 1960s—to realise this unimaginable circumstance in practice by incorporating words into his paintings. The critical reach of his work was limited, however, to the extent that it depended upon a painterliness by which the text was always comfortably assimilated to the stylistic and representational character of the pictorial surface. In the later 1960s an ensuing generation of artists adopted various expedients for rendering texts pictorial, or for putting words in place of paintings: Kosuth's Photostat definitions, On Kawara's date and location paintings, Mel Ramsden's *Secret* and *Guarantee* paintings and *100% Abstracts*, Atkinson and Baldwin's works in the series *Title equals Text*; all represent a particular early and relatively consumable phase of Conceptual art.



ART & LANGUAGE, *Index: Wrongs Healed in Official Hope*, 1998–1999
Alogram on canvas over plywood and mixed media
Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery

It is beyond this moment that the pathways diverge, as do the art-historical theorisations that follow. From the point of view that has remained dominant in interpretations of post-1960s art, in breaking with the protocols of high modernism, Conceptual art effected a liberation from constricting concepts of medium-specificity and autonomy and enabled a positive expansion into various modes of postmodernist practice.

In this account, continuing careers in Conceptual art are celebrated alongside those multifarious and often highly spectacular kinds of not-painting and not-sculpture that are popularly gathered under the label of Conceptualism. Works in both categories may include an amount of text, but generally either as the now customary component of a brand or as a kind of filigree added to an avant-garde product.

> There is an alternative view. Once works in textual form had been established as potential works of art—rather than works of literature or philosophy or whatever—what remained to be recovered from the traditions of art was the unique kinds of virtuality, opacity and intellectual repleteness that had once been associated with works in visual form, and particularly with paintings. The real problem was not how to make plausible paintings with words, or how to exploit the freedom that came with conceiving of art as an entirely open concept, but rather how to reinvest fine art with the discursive and essayistic potential that modernism had in the end had to sacrifice in its critique of the academic.

This, as I understand it, has been the demanding project of Art & Language in the period since 1977, when the continuing artistic practice was taken into the hands of Michael Baldwin and Mel Ramsden alone. By then I believe that the critical potential of Conceptual art was as thoroughly exhausted as Cubism's had been in the 1940s and abstraction's in the 1960s, though its lessons could no more be ignored than theirs. The problem Art & Language therefore faced was how to re-establish critical conditions of medium-specificity, but conditions that could be applied to new genres of art in which the assimilation of texts need not be ruled out, genres in which, indeed, there was no limit that could be set in principle to the length of any component text. The resulting body of work stands apart both from the continuing work of Conceptual art's other veterans and from the institutionally supported avant-gardism of the past quarter century. It is not well attuned to the prevailing modes of criticism and publicity. It proposes what might be seen as a new kind of art, though one with strong links both to the modernist art of the twentieth century and to the traditions that Modernism interrupted in the nineteenth. Art & Language's work includes both essay-length texts and paintings and other things with painted surfaces; it also includes painted surfaces that incorporate essay-length texts. In 1979 the philosopher Donald Davidson wrote, "A picture is not worth a thousand words or any other number. Words are the wrong currency to exchange for a picture",to which Art & Language responds, "Yes, but what if the picture is a thousand words?" [10] Had I been able to pose that question for myself back in 1970, I might perhaps have made a better job of justifying the work of whose significance I was then persuaded.

1 "My thinking is always related to a very abstract context which I feel in my time has become the postulate for a sense of the meaning of the word 'art'." Used as an epigraph to my article, this quotation was taken from an interview with Joseph Kosuth published in the catalogue of 'Prospect 69' (Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, October 1969).

2 See Clement Greenberg's essay, "The Decline of Cubism", first published in *Partisan Review* in March 1948.

3 See Donald Judd's essay, "Specific Objects", first published in *Arts Yearbook* 8, New York, 1965.

4 See for instance, the exhibition and catalogue, *Reconsidering the Object of Art 1965-1975*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1995.

5 See "Introduction" to *Art-Language*, vol. 1, no. 1, May 1969.

6 Edited text as reprinted in Charles Harrison and Paul Wood eds., *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2003, p. 791.

7 See particularly Michael Fried's essay "Art and Objecthood", first published in *Artforum*, Summer 1967.

"I read Michael Fried's essay ["Art and Objecthood"]... which was a sort of terribly starchy defence of high Modernism, and he spoke of the problem of art that did not follow these modernist precepts as being 'theater'. And I said 'bingo, that's it, that's right'. The art that's important now is a form of theater, and one thing that means is that it has to be in the same space as the viewer...." Martha Rosler, Interview 24; included in "Art and the Left: The Critique of Power", TV 23, *A316 Modern Art, Practices and Debates*, Milton Keynes: The Open University, 1991.

8 Burgin, Victor, "Situational Aesthetics", first published in *Studio International*, October 1969, as reprinted in Harrison and Wood, 2003, p. 894.

9 I was personally responsible for the exhibitions 'Idea Structures' at the Camden Arts Centre in 1970, for 'Art as Idea from England' at CAYC, Buenos Aires in 1971, and for assembling a collection of Conceptual art for the Victoria and Albert Museum Circulation Department in 1970.

10 Davidson, Donald, "What Metaphors Mean", in *On Metaphor*, Sheldon Sacks ed., Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1979, p. 45.