

THESIS: PART 4

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Monstrous/Perfect Cannibal

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Appendix 3:

Glossary of Terms

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Introduction to the Glossary of Terms

- 1 – Paint Slide**
- 2 – Appropriate**
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- 6 – Wobble**
- 7 – Decoy**
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- 9 - Rictus**

This collection of terms has developed out of the attempt to describe the experience of particular aspects of motion in a painting - from the clearly visible, physical act of moving paint across a surface, to fugitive, barely perceptible movements. The terms emerged out of the process of writing in tandem with the process of painting, which is evidenced in the FedEx and Hitch/Op Notebooks. Obviously the two processes are not precisely simultaneous but are conducted as parallel activities, close to each other in time, each influencing and responding to the other.

During this process I developed a series of terms which came to stand for complex events in the process, which were elected spontaneously as what might be described as 'placeholders' - holding open a particular space in thought. Through reiteration they came to have established meanings for me, not fully consistent with the standard definition of the word. In some instances, my use of a word constitutes a significant *détournement* or effacement of the word's common or specific usage.

The terms and their definition are important because they have been a means of mapping thinking from painting onto writing and as such they have facilitated a movement of thought between the implicit knowledge of the paintings and notebooks and the explicit knowledge of the theoretical and historical aspects of the thesis.

While most of the terms emerged at the same time as the paintings and the thesis, two of the terms, *quasi anamorphosis* and *rictus*, were developed, concurrently with the process of writing the theoretical framework within Chapter 2, and as such they include and employ reference to the theoretical arguments set out in that chapter.



Fig. 37 A single paint slide made with oil paint on primed canvas

1. PAINT SLIDE

I use the term *paint slide* to refer to a painting method of sliding a flat 'tool', such as a plank wood or a plasterer's hawk¹, on which I have previously applied paint, over an area of the paintings surface. I use this action to physically extend the material of the paint across the painting's surface. I place blobs or 'lines' of paint on part or all of the flat surface, directly from the tube so that any mixing of paint colours does so as a result of compression between tool and the painting's surface. I may add paint medium on top of the paint to increase fluidity, reduce friction and increase the duration and speed of the action, sliding the tool once or repeatedly over the initial *paint slide* area to amplify or reduce certain marks and colours.

I use the *paint slide* as a way of making multiple marks in a single action, which I think of as a heterogeneous gesture (multiple marks made in a single gesture). The marks made by this action often have a reprographic quality - a level of detail, sharpness to their edges, and smallness of scale difficult to achieve by hand (see *Figs. 37, 38 & 40*). I first used this method, making the painting 'Hitch' (p.25), as a practical response to the need to scale up marks made through pressure exerted by hand and finger. However, I began to think of the method as a particular activity with particular qualities during the making of the 'FedEx' painting. (Initially I described this method as a *pull* of paint², but changed it to *paint slide*³, in order to describe, more exactly, the action as one of sliding over and along the paint surface.

(Paint Slide: *FedEx Notebook* p.11, 12, 13, 15, 19, 21, 23, 25, 31, 41, 52 and *Hitch/Op Notebook* p.41.)

¹ A plasterer's *hawk* is a square surface, with a perpendicular handle fixed centrally on the reverse, on which the mixed plaster is placed (or in this case paint). See *FedEx Notebook* p.3 for a sketch.

² *FedEx Notebook*, p.3 and 10.

³ *FedEx Notebook*, p.11.



Fig. 38 'FedEx' painting – cadmium orange/yellow paint slide



(a)



(b)

Fig 39 'FedEx' painting - (a) cadmium red paint slide, (b) detail



Fig. 40 'Hitch' painting, cadmium orange paint slide

2. APPROPRIATE

This has a commonplace definition of taking something for one's own but it also has a specific meaning within art to take possession under the terms of authorship, to re-contextualise or liberate what is appropriated in order to create a new work. I use this term to talk about a particular motion between material elements in a painting, which act on each other in such a way as to create the semblance of a further quality. The dictionary definition of the word *appropriate* is to take possession for one's own purposes without consent, which implies that it is also an action of dispossession. Unlike the dictionary definition my use of the word *appropriate* does not entail removal or dispossession, nor a mixing of elements, rather the word is used to describe a mutual movement of acting on and usage of qualities *between* the elements, resulting in the production of a further singularity.

This motion was identified through observing the interaction between two layers of paint, a cadmium yellow and orange *paint slide* overlaying an earlier monochrome area of paint¹ (see *Fig. 38*). Observing the paint slide in detail revealed small “clean edged” areas where the previous layer showed through, creating an impression of decay and corrosion of the paint (see also *Figs. 39 & 40*). Despite being technically under, the monochrome layer appeared to “extrude” or “bulge” through the upper layer like minute explosions of grey smoke, so that the paint slide appeared to take on a three dimensionality out of which its “inner stuffing” extruded. The two layers appeared to *appropriate* one another's qualities of surface, resulting in the appearance of a disintegrating, corroding image and an optical illusion of three-dimensionality.

(*Appropriate: FedEx Notebook p. 19, 31, 52 and Hitch/Op Notebook p. 18, 33, 40, 42, 44, 49.*)

¹ FedEx Notebook, p.19.

3. SEEING ELSE

I use the term to describe a particular experience of seeing, where the actual and the virtual are brought together to occupy the visual fields simultaneously. The word *else* is commonly used to mean ‘in addition’, or to refer in a vague way to another person, place, thing or something other or different. It seems to me, that the lack of clarity as to what *else* refers to, is an essential part of the word – it is the thing that is wanted and is not there and not fully known. In the term *seeing else* I take the conventional usage of *else* and attach it to the activity of seeing, in order to describe a perceptual movement where the activity of seeing what is materially there is interrupted by what is not there - a stretching of the field of vision to include the virtual.

The term *seeing else* emerged out of the making of ‘FedEx’ (p.27), where I noted the experience of ‘interrupted’ seeing¹. I had decided my involvement in the making process had come to an end, since the painting was not to be finished by me but was to be on going: “Normally there is pleasure to be had in a completed painting, or at least there is scrutiny. Maybe something achieved. But in this case I look at the painting – but I disavow[e] it - I see it else”². The experience was of seeing and not seeing, of perceptually bringing into the actual painting the possibility of a future painting, at the same time.

I consider a further example of the motion of *seeing else* to be active when working with a fold, a hitching up, such as in the painting ‘Hitch’ (p.25), or lip in the painting’s surface, which withdraws part of it from view, either because the canvas extends over another area of canvas or because the ‘lip’ casts a shadow – a sort of visual ‘other’. Both reduce or prevent “exposure to light and the order of vision”³. My action of withdrawing part of the surface of the painting from view is potentially accompanied by a virtual hitching up or folding down, created through the desire to see the hidden aspect, a perceptual movement that accompanies the act of looking in real time.

(*FedEx Notebook p. 27*)

¹ FedEx Notebook, p.27.

² FedEx Notebook, p.27.

³ FedEx Notebook, p.4.



Fig. 41 Detail from 'Head 2'

4. SWITCH

Conventionally a switch is a device for making and breaking an electrical circuitry or an act of changing from one thing to another. I use the term *switch* in order to talk about a surface event that leads to a perception change or shift in the apparent materiality of the paint. *Switch* is borrowed from the definition of 'switch' given by Norman Bateson in his book 'Mind and Nature'¹, as a particular motion which is "not except at the moments of its change of setting, and...thus [has a] special relationship to *time*"². A switch, he says, is not a physical thing but an action, related to the notion of change rather than object. He gives an example of sense organs as being analogous to a *switch* as they are turned on for a single moment to admit information in response to external change/movement.

I use the term *switch* to describe a change in the 'state' of the paint. This does not mean that the paint actually changes into another kind of material, but that I, the viewer, consciously perceive a change in the material appearance of part or all of the painting. As I note in FedEx p.48 - the action of *switch* on the material of paint is to "activate it [,] to connect it to [new] information" in the mind.

Switch points are not known things; I find them through the putting on, moving around and removal of paint. Once a point of *switch* is there, it becomes apparent that it is *wanted* "because it is active in the painting or creates activity. It is not wanted before except as the anticipation of it 'happening'. The painting does not continue along a linear path of expected (known) points but rather anticipated [hoped for] 'sparking off' points (batteries/cells)"³.

In the 'Head' paintings (p.23), I attempt to find and mediate points of *switch* by moving the paint around until I find an edge where it seems to me that the paint becomes simultaneously paint mark, and the possibility of becoming something (see fig. 5), but that something is not fixed and remains mutable.

(FedEx Notebook p.43, 44, 48 and Hitch/Op Notebook p. 9, 11, 35, 40, 61.

¹ Bateson, G., *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*, paperback edn., (first published 1979), Flamingo/Fontana, 1985.

² Bateson, p.121.

³ Hitch/Op Notebook, p.9

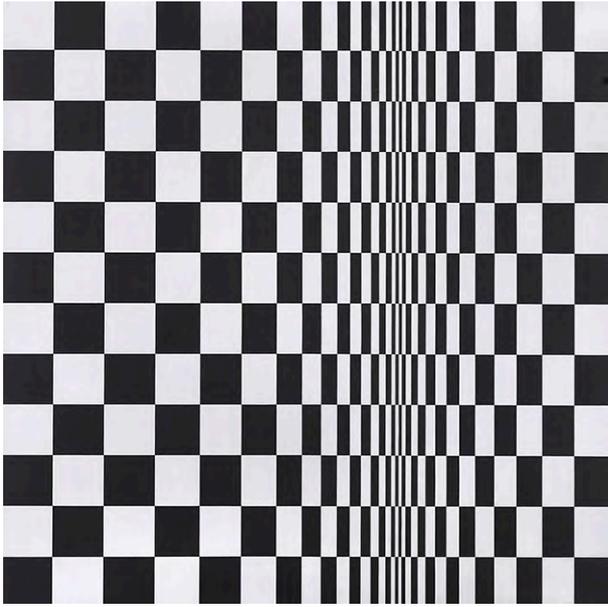


Fig. 42 Bridget Riley, "Movement In Squares", tempera on board, 122 x 122 cm, 1961[†]

© Bridget Riley 2013. All rights reserved, courtesy Karsten Schubert, London[†]

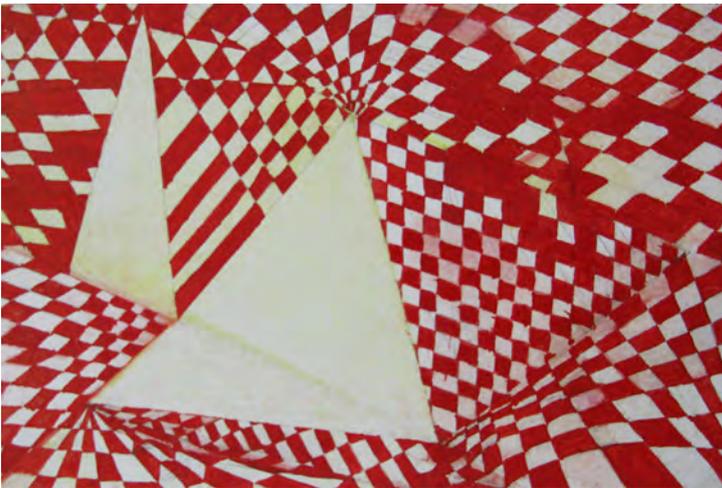


Fig. 43 Panel 4 - 'Red Square Painting', oil on panel, 12 x 18.5 cm, 2010

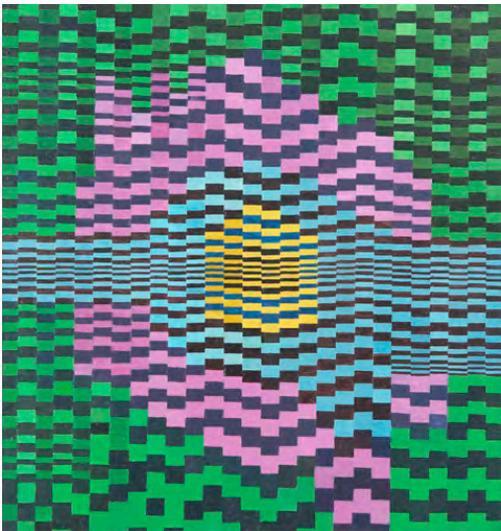


Fig. 44 'Switch', oil on board, 57 x 52 cm, 2010.

[†] Image provided by the Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London

5. DISSONANCE

Conventionally the word dissonance means lack of harmony or a tension or clash between inharmonious elements¹, however my use of the term *dissonance* has an ‘expanded’ meaning,² used to describe a particular motion of the material of the paint, when I am close to the surface of the painting, one which impairs the physical mechanics of the eye, and its ability to focus and work effectively.

My use of the term *dissonance* is a combination of the words dissonance, dissonant and interference. I use it, both in the conventional sense to mean a ‘tension’ resulting from a combination of disharmonious or discordant elements combination, and having a further aspect of the *repel* of the ‘dissonant’, someone who clashes or argues against. The elements within a motion of *dissonance* are not neutral to each other, or gently disharmonious, but actively putting ‘pressure’ on and affecting one another, hence to ‘argue’ or ‘clash against’. My use of *dissonance* leans very close to the word ‘interference’, the word interfere originally coming from the old French word *s’entreferir* meaning to ‘strike each other’.

The term *dissonance* refers to particular optical illusions, close to the surface of a painting, which have a strongly visceral effect and result in perceptual and optical confusion. I refer to two examples of this motion in the Hitch/Op Notebook. The first being the result of a vibrating or “fizzing” motion between the materialisation and dematerialisation of the surface created through perceptual confusion of figure/ground such as is associated with certain Op Art paintings, like Bridget Riley’s ‘Movement in Squares’ (1961) (*Fig. 42*) and experienced when I made ‘Panel 5 – Red Squares Painting’³(*Fig. 43*) and ‘Switch’⁴(*Fig. 44*). The second motion of *dissonance* referred to in the notebooks being the production of after-images in the field of vision created through the optical colour mixing of the paint on the surface, as noted during the making of ‘Torque’.⁵(p. 29).

¹ Pearsall, J., (ed), *The New Oxford Dictionary of English*, pub. Oxford University Press, Uk. Dissonance, p. 535.

² Hitch/Op Notebook p.54.

³ Hitch/Op Notebook, pp.13-4.

⁴ Hitch/Op Notebook, pp.31-2.

⁵ Hitch/Op Notebook, pp.43-5.

My experience of this type of surface *dissonance* is that it results in the break down of the eye as a reliable organ of sight and a loss of its ability to focus and to judge depth, resulting in optical and perceptual confusion, and ever increasing eye-strain. I note in the Hitch/Op Notebook¹, a confusion of my visual powers whilst working on the small-scale test panel of red and white rectangles and triangle (*Fig. 43*), and how “it [was] almost impossible to focus on my brush”. I was conscious of the lens of my eye “focusing unfocusing, moving unfocused opening closed ... At times the brush moved without my focused eye - ... beyond the blurred grey focus”. Where as during the painting of ‘Torque’ I note the experience of after images thrown up where contrasting colours were situated next to each other, producing blocks of ‘untrue’ colour floating in my field of vision: “intense cyclamen pink electro-raspberry” colour hovering “along the line between lemon yellow and the deep pink”². I write of the resulting confusion as to what the ‘true’ colour was, and where to place the brush to continue, and how the effort of “trying to see through the mirage of a colour shape” made me “blink repeatedly”³.

For me the experience of trying to paint whilst experiencing these phenomena seemed to bring with it an increased awareness of the eye as a physical organ through the sensation of optical confusion and discomfort, focusing and unfocusing. There was a battle between the experience of the *dissonance*, which debilitated, and my desire to make the painting. The activity of seeing became the physical effort of consciously trying to focus, accompanied by a clear sense of awareness of the activity of painting as acting on matter and simultaneously matter acting on vision.

(*Hitch/Op Notebook*, p. 13, 16, 17, 18, 39, 40, 43, 46, 47, 49, 54.)

¹ Hitch/Op Notebook, p. 32.

² Hitch/Op Notebook, p. 45.

³ Hitch/Op Notebook, p. 45



Fig. 45 'Switch' at a distance and close to the surface



Fig. 46 'Switch' close to the surface

6. WOBBLE

A wobble is an uncertain or irregular movement from side to side or a tremor. My use of the term *wobble* also describes an irregular movement from side to side, but the term *wobble* is also an explicit marker of the en fleshed body, for example a *wobble* in a otherwise straight hand-painted line suggests to me the pulse of the body, or a lapse in concentration or control over the brush as a sign of human fallibility.

The term also implies a potential element of *stretch* between the poles of the *wobble*; a *wobble* between perceptual entrapment and breaking free of an optical illusion; a *wobble* between a known structure and one that undermines, it through the ‘*wobble*’ of the flesh.

I note in the Hitch/Op Notebook how an irregularity in a line, used to create a geometric optical illusion, “slides the illusion to one side” and how I would “will the illusion to hold” and “close over the surface again”, it being a struggle of “belief or suspension of disbelief. It wobbles in and out”¹. The illusion “takes you for a nanosecond on a ride across the surface then perception cuts across or credibility is stretched as far as it will...and it snaps back. The motion[,] a stretching of the band and a snapping back”².

The painting ‘Switch’ (*Fig. 45*) is a quasi Op Art painting, which uses *wobble* to break the surface dissonance of the optical illusion. It differs significantly from a traditional Op Art painting in that, within ‘Op Art’ the body and the gesture was to be eradicated as a critical point of difference from abstract expressionism. In ‘Switch’ the body is reinstated in the clearly handmade quality of the painting (wobbly lines, evident brush marks). What appears a robust painting from a distance breaks down at closer proximity, through the irregularity of the edges, which undermines the structure of the optical illusion, to reveal a thin, friable surface (*Fig. 46*).

(*Hitch/Op Notebook p. 21, 35.*)

¹ Hitch/Op Notebook, p. 21.

² Hitch/Op Notebook, pp. 33-34.

7. DECOY

My term *decoy* makes use of the conventional understanding of the word as a lure and an enticement; however, it differs in not being an object, but a movement. Typically a decoy uses perceptual confusion to lure the subject into a certain type of behaviour and whilst distracting attention away from some aspect of itself. It feigns the appearance of something else leading, to perceptual confusion, and the experience in the observer of *is* and *is not*, or, *there* and *not there*.

I use the term *decoy* to think about a motion in painting which might be understood as the *there* and *not there* of optical illusion and semblance, and the illusion of perceptual movement (temporality) in a painting despite being static. A decoy is *that which is not* and I use the term to ask what a fraudulent or feigned motion in a painting might be.

Decoy arose out of the questions raised through thinking in the Hitch/Op Notebook about the illusion of surface movement and fragmentation in the early black and white Op Art paintings of Bridget Riley and the optical confusion of figure ground (see *dissonance* 3.11). Also the way in which this activity generated a visceral response of fascination and pleasure but also a sense of bodily faculties being manipulated, interfered with, and ‘jerked’ about, demanding a physical reaction, which is only partially voluntary.

In the painting ‘Switch’ (p.31), I worked with the notion of a feigned motion by combining two optical illusions to create the structure of the painting, taking elements of Riley’s painting ‘Movement in Squares’ (*Fig. 42*) (the point of disappearance and emergence by the regular narrowing and widening of squares) and an optical illusion from the internet¹. At a distance this created the optical illusion of linear ‘wobble’ and surface *dissonance* so that the lines of rectangles, which are in fact fairly² straight, appeared to rhythmically narrow and widen. I think of this as an Op Art parody of gesture; a mimicking of the movement of an expressive gesture, played out repetitively through an illusion created by a geometric organising structure, which breaks down close to the surface of the painting through the hand painted nature of the edges (see *wobble* 3.15).

(*Hitch/Op Notebook* p. 16, 22.)

¹ Ava7 – Optical Illusions accessed 4/5/11. <http://ava7.com/2006/11/double-optical-illusion.html>

² Not absolutely straight, as I explain later, due to the hand painted quality to the edges.



Fig. 48 'The Ambassadors' by Hans Holbein,
oil on oak, 207 x 209.5 cm, 1533. National Gallery, London †



Fig. 49 The anamorphic image of the skull †

† Images provided by the National Gallery Picture Library

Terms appearing subsequent to the notebooks:

8. QUASI ANAMORPHOSIS

Although anamorphosis was first discussed in the Hitch/Op Notebook p.17¹ in relation to the work 'Hitch' and the sideways gaze, the term *quasi anamorphosis* developed out of the thinking leading on from the notebooks.

Conventional perspectival anamorphosis is a technique used in painting and drawing through a subversion of linear perspective. From the front the image is unreadable but from a skewed angle the image is foreshortened and reverts to normal proportions - projecting out of itself it becomes 'visible'. A famous example of this is the image of the skull in Holbein's *The Ambassadors*' (1533)² (see Figs 48 & 49).

I use the term *quasi anamorphosis* to describe an abstract model of anamorphosis, one in which there is no recognisable projected image or physical change of viewing position. Here the painted 'splodge' or 'blot' is regarded as a form of anamorphosis in itself, in the sense that it invites the spectator's imaginative involvement to create the picture³.

Quasi anamorphosis incorporates a motion of *virtual* 'stretch'. Although traditional anamorphosis is associated with a movement of either there (projected image), or not there (unreadable splodge), in fact there is a hidden stage of stretch in the image's preparation, where the form is drawn on a distorted rectangular grid (Fig. 47).

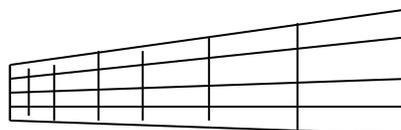


Fig. 47 The distorted grid used to make a perspectival anamorphic image

¹ References to anamorphosis in the Hitch/Op Notebook on pages 14, 17, 22, 36, 39 & 49.

² The first definitive example of this technique is attributed to Leonardo da Vinci in the 15th century. The 16th century painter Arcimboldo also made use of this technique, as did the 17th century artist Van Hoogstraten in his 'peepshow' boxes. In more recent times, the technique has been used by artists such as Duchamp and Dali.

³ This view of anamorphosis is mentioned by David R. Castillo in his essay '(A)wry Views: Anamorphosis, Cervantes, and the Early Picaresque' p.31 quoting from José Antonio Maravall's book 'The Culture of the Baroque' 2nd ed. Barcelona: Ariel, 1980. Maravall argues that painted splodges can be regarded as a form of anamorphosis in that they invite the viewer to complete the picture. He gives Velasquez's "unfinished" technique and 'splodges' as examples of this kind of anamorphosis. (Essay by Castillo accessed online 19/4/11: docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003... - United States).

In *quasi anamorphosis* this aspect of 'stretch' is not literal but temporal and virtual. There is the play of there and not there of traditional perspectival anamorphosis except the 'splodge' remains a 'splodge'. The movement is not that of a physical change of position and angle of view but a perceptual shift in the imagination to allow *there*, and *not there*, in the same place, vibrating. In this way the 'splodge' is paradoxically both the distorted image of undifferentiated matter i.e. almost *nothing*, and simultaneously potentially *something*, though not necessarily completely recognizable.



Fig 50 (a) 'Hitch' – central hitching up of the surface



(b) Close to the hitch



(c) 'Hitch' – black stippled 'blot' of marks

9. RICTUS

The *rictus* of a painting is the attempt to find a word that acknowledges the motion of *there* and *not there* of a painting, and the anxiety that seems to shadow this motion; a motion which is partly located outside the visual field, but generated by, and tethered to, the materiality of the painted surface.

In the 'Head' paintings (p23), the marks emerged out of a stippled mat. An implement or finger tip, dragged through this stippled mat caused each minute point to stretch and elongate, a forcing of what I think of as anamorphic 'grinning' or 'leer' from the mat of marks, but still it was a mat of marks. A *rictus* is a fixed grin associated with insanity and death. It is a grotesque simulation of a smile where its extended presence signals that it does not 'mean' what it looks¹. The *rictus* is the interruption of meaning - the thing is there but the meaning is not. According to Lessing, the *rictus* is the illegitimate thing, an extension of an instant into a duration², bringing with it the danger of contamination and corruption.

The central hitching up of the canvas in the painting 'Hitch' (p.25) and the horizontal 'pulling' at both ends of the hitch, produced a kind of literal 'rictus' across the canvas, projecting part of the canvas into three dimensions and as a result, becoming not quite a painting. The *rictus*, removes a portion of the painting's surface from the visual field, potentially stimulating a virtual opening and closing of the surface (*seeing else*). In this way the *rictus*, as a stretching out of the 'mouth' of the canvas, is also a stretching out of temporality. The 'hitch' may be seen as an act of withdrawal or withholding by the painting or the artist, or possibly a manipulative joke.

The *quasi anamorphic* decomposed, is a splodge, a mess, a mat. The drag of the finger through it elongates, distorts, (as in the deforming of perspective) but it is still *no thing*. It may create a smear that may be like something and images may be formed in the imagination, but it is still a smear of paint, it doubles back it feigns something, but it is not. This is a particular type of *decoy* behaviour, a kind of playing dead, which I think of as the painting's *rictus*.

Roger Caillois writes that the mantis 'mimes' the inanimate, and 'simulates' death, "a fake cadaverous immobility" which even when decapitated performs "a hideously

¹ The opposite of Greenberg's modernist painting which was to "*look what they do*" - see Chapter 2, p.43.

² See Lessing, Section 3 p.2.

robotic dance of life”¹. I consider the painting in respect of the action of the mantis. The painting is ‘dead’ matter, but perhaps like the mantis, it is ‘doubly’ dead, because it also plays dead. The anamorphic *rictus* is a doubling or stretching of time in an involuntary spasm (the grin) a kind of grotesque motion of ‘refraction’ between painting and subject. Refraction as a process of distortion (such as light waves passing through water), in which time is distorted, producing a particular experience of an extended temporality.

Krauss² writes that for Greenberg, when the material fact of a painting is realised, the “aesthetic fact”, “drains out of the situation”, so that “the picture... simply returns the look, merely gazing “blankly” back at you”. The materiality of a painting is understood to be dumb matter, a dead thing, merely object. It seems to me that the painting, like the praying mantis that Caillois describes, although dead can still play dead; its ‘blankness’ is perhaps a doubling, a double ‘turn’ in the instant, which does not suspend temporality.

The action of mimicry, says Caillois, is not the movement from figure to ground through camouflage, but a dissolving of the boundaries between inside and out so that “the individual breaks the boundaries of his skin and occupies the other side of his senses”³. It is the motion of this doubling, of no longer being “subject” but “picture” that in “this sense the double stands at the border between life and death, not as a barrier...but as the most porous membranes, allowing one side to contaminate the other”.⁴

I question if it is through the *rictus* (that after all may be a contamination) that painting opens out to view its internal workings, its underbelly. An ‘unnatural’ holding open of time (Lessing), which allows a particular relationship where elements (viewer and viewed) can ‘regard’ and ‘refract’ each other; where the one ‘grins’ and the other is jerked into involuntary spasms? And if, at the root of the repel of the grotesque is the only partly perceived experience of ‘exchange’ with the inanimate, which is the painting.

¹ Krauss, R.E., *The Optical Unconscious*, 5th edn. (first published 1993), The MIT Press, Massachusetts, USA, 1998, p.171. Krauss refers to Roger Caillois essay, ‘La mante religieuse’ (The Praying Mantis), pub. in *Minotaure* no.5 (May 1934).

² Krauss, p. 98.

³ Krauss, p.156. Krauss refers to Roger Caillois on mimicry *Mimétisme et Psychasthénie Légendaire* (Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia) published in *Minotaure*, no. 7 (June 1935).

⁴ Krauss, pp. 171-172. Krauss refers to Roger Caillois essay, ‘La mante religieuse’ (The Praying Mantis), pub. in *Minotaure* no.5 (May 1934).

Appendix 4:

Additional Images

Appendix 4.1: The Laocoön

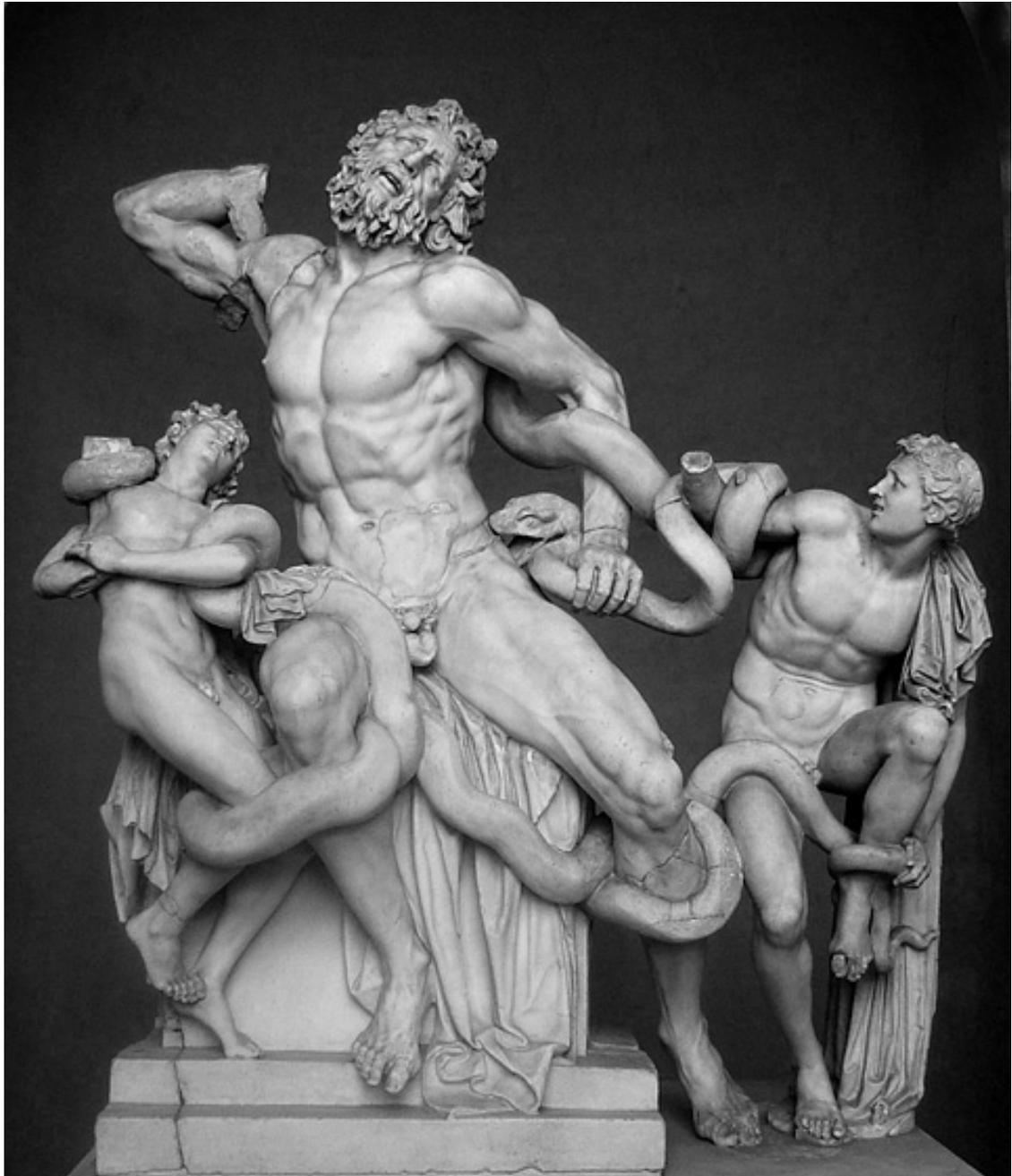


Fig. 51 The statue of 'Laocoön and his sons', created 40-20 BC, by Athanadoros, Hagesander, and Polydoros. Made in Parian marble, height 208 cm; width 163 cm; depth 112 cm. Stands in the Vatican Museums, Rome. †

† Image: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Laocoön_and_His_Sons.jpg

Appendix 4.2: 'Alphabeast' Series (2003)

Alphabeasts 1 – 7 (there is no 6), are painted with oil paints on an mdf panel (each 30 x 40 cm) with a chamfered edge giving the appearance of a floating panel, primed back and front. The central stippled image painted directly onto the primed surface which is off white and smooth. 'Alphabeast 7' is referred to as a 'glove' in the FedEx Notebook (p.31) and the Hitch/Op Notebook (p.69).



Fig. 52

Appendix 4.3: 'Ravennakamp' (2004)

The painting comprises an mdf sheet attached to a wood frame, 151 x 204 cm, primed back and front and the painting made using oil paints.



(a)

Fig. 53 (a) 'Ravennakamp'
(b) detail (c) Hoxton Art Gallery,
London 2011. †



(b)



(c)

Appendix 4.4: 'Head 3', (2009)

The painting comprises a board, 57 x 54 cm, attached to a wooden frame, primed back and front and the painting made with oil paints.

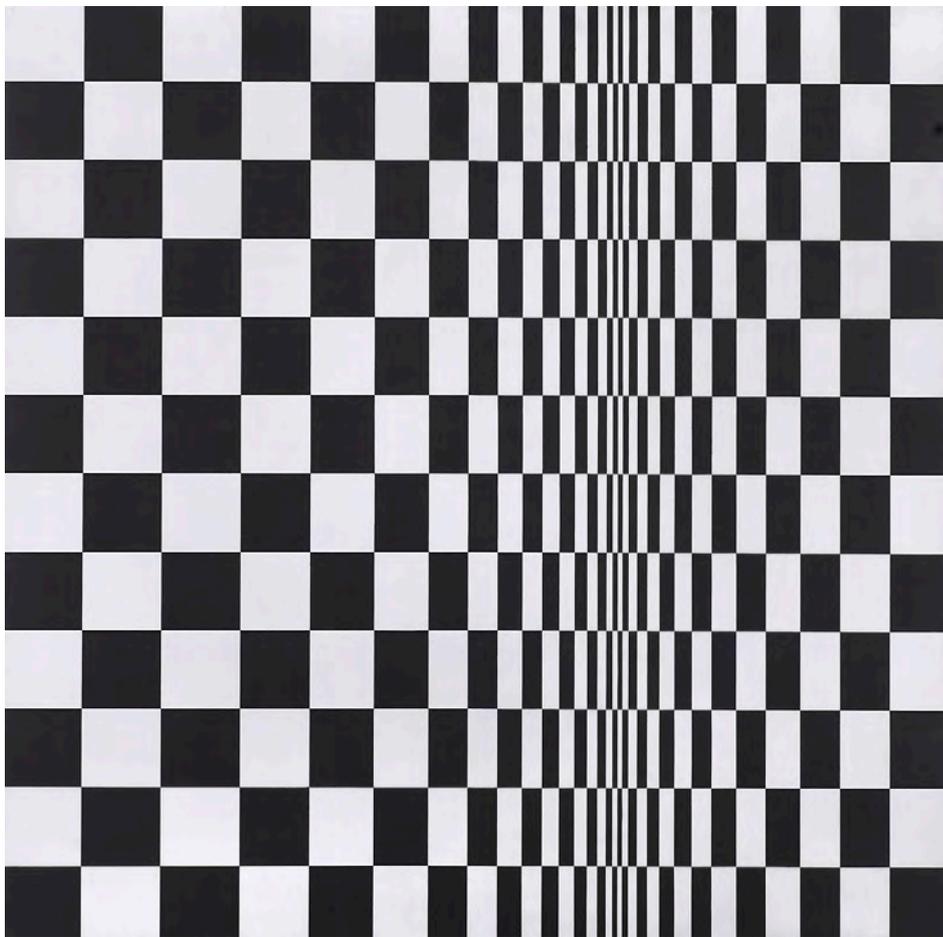


Fig. 54

Appendix 4.5: Bridget Riley, 'Movement in Squares' (1961)

Bridget Riley, 'Movement in Squares', tempera on board, 122 x 122 cm, 1961. This painting is part of the Arts Council Collection, London. [†]

Fig. 55



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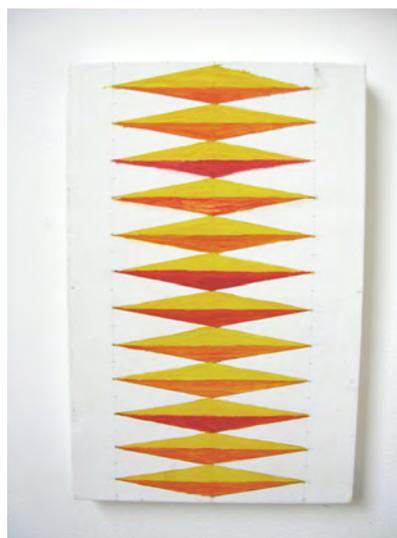
[†] Image provided by the Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London

Appendix 4.6: Panels 1 - 5 (2010)

Panels 1 ('90° x 90°'), 2, 3, 4 ('Red Square Painting') and 5 ('Seeing Red') are painted with oil paints on board panels with a small wood frame (each 18.5 x 12 cm) and primed back and front. Their making is documented in the Hitch/Op Notebook.



1



2



3



4

Fig. 56



5

Appendix 4.7: Fold Painting (2010)

The painting comprises an unsupported sheet of linen, 208 x 160.5 cm, stapled, sized and primed on the wall with a sheet of polythene between support and wall. It was then removed from the wall and put through a process of folding and painting with oil paints.



Fig. 57

Appendix 5:

The Monstrous and the Perfect Cannibal

Appendix 5:

Background to the Monstrous/Perfect Cannibal

The medieval discourse of the monstrous had a significant place in the early stages of my research, which I had come across through a book by David Williams: 'Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Mediaeval Thought and Literature'¹. In it he described the neo-platonist theologian's use of the pre-Christian tradition of philosophical negation, and the related theory of dissimilitude (absence of likeness). What particularly interested me about this discourse, was the extended understanding of matter as being both physical and non-physical. That "form did not contain being", and that logic and rational thought was restrictive and could only go so far in coming closer to the truth, which for them was God.

The image was deformed in ways against logic, to produce monstrous absurd images, which paradoxically became the sign of 'that which is not', the transcendent God as paradox. It was a symbolic or poetic device with which to probe substance, existence and form. I attempted to use certain qualities associated with the monstrous, as a model through which to probe the substance of a painting. My intention was not to do this by painting images of monstrous forms, but by attending to the qualities that seemed to define the monstrous as a particular space.

The monstrous, that Williams described, was a heterogeneous 'space', characterised by absurd configurations, deformation and dislocation, where elements logically apart in time existed in the same space. One type of monster, the perfect cannibal², was of particular interest because it seemed to be a figure of motion rather than a thing. A temporal figure that, rather than eating its own kind, ate itself, the collapse of subject and object, and in doing so regenerated, a return, but not as before. As a poetic concept, it put understanding, language and recognition into motion, through deformation and return, which was the sign of the monstrous.

It was through the model of the Perfect Cannibal that I became alert to the possibility of a particular temporal motion in painting that did not play itself out in the visual field

¹ Williams, D., *Deformed Discourse – the function of the Monster in Mediaeval Thoughts and Literature*, McGill-Queens University Press, Montreal & Kingston, 1999.

² Williams, p.147

alone, and where multiple elements could exist simultaneously in the same place, a motion of the experience in a painting of something being both, *there*, and *not there*. I attempted to engage with this potential movement through the notion of a dissemblant image, one that failed to cohere, that was partially concealed, deferred or virtual, an image simultaneously in formation and refusing formation. Linked to this was the aim to work with the painting as a heterogeneous field, generating novelty rather than repetition through, for example, the introduction of strategies to increase the opportunity for chance and happenstance to play a significant role. Out of this period of painting and thinking, a number of paintings were made, two of which, 'Perfect Cannibal 5' (p. 19) and 'Nine' (p.21), comprise part of the thesis.

There were difficulties in trying to work in this way, for instance, strategies for chance occurrence soon become repeatable technique and heterogeneity, a fragile state which easily dissipated, becoming homogenous. And as the research progressed, the model of the perfect cannibal was superseded by the 'blot' and the anamorphic, and the attempt to work almost pre image, at the root of formation, with a motion between *almost nothing* and *something*, such as with 'Head 1 & 2' (pp. 23-24) and 'Head 3' (appendix 4.4).

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