

Today Years Ago: Fragments from western art history, 1906 to 1991

- 1906> The counter-pole to the need for empathy is the urge to abstraction—
- 1906> Returning the individual thing to its arbitrariness and seeming fortuitousness.
- 1908> The telegraph hammers all over Europe, but tells hardly a word of the glory of Messina—
- 1910> Movement and light.

- 1913> The world, a monstrous, fantastic, perpetually moving machine.
- 1914> Painting sets before us that which a person could and should see—
- 1915> The movement of red, green and blue,
- 1915> Constructed on the basis of weight, speed, and the direction of movement.

- 1912> Not the situation of objects, but the situation of a spectator—
- 1912> An internal strength whose radiance shines all around.
- 1913> Superfluous development of sentimental and popular subject matter—
- 1913> This is that.

- 1913> The fascination of the visible, the charm of the spectacle—
- 1917> The charm and force of limited means.
- 1918> Industrious cobblers and noisy fools
- 1919> Disrupted by ecstatic rotations of colour.

- 1920> The genital apparatus
- 1917> Performing the action for the ten thousandth time—
- 1917> Habituation devours the fear of war.
- 1917> Make objects unfamiliar.

- 1917> A special device for prolonging attention—
- 1917> Attenuated, tortuous speech,
- 1920> A theory of velocity...
- 1920> The structure of an instant's velocity.

- 1925> Give the poem an orbit.
- 1932> The picture swings.
- 1924> Leave your lathe.
- 1928> Things that I have already seen.

- 1937> Seductive shop windows—
- 1937> Poetry's last great refuge.
- 1935> Destroy the thing, do it over several times.
- 1935> Our interest is Cezanne's anxiety.

- 1935> Temporary and accidental qualities,
- 1936> Colours and shapes are disengaged from objects.
- 1936> Pictures' planes are shuffled and disarrayed—
- 1936> A thoroughly animated, yet rigorous whole.

- 1936> Numerous complicated things are brought together in apparent meaningful connection—
- 1936> An orchid in the land of technology.
- 1936> The surgeon is the polar opposite of the magician;
- 1936> Multiple fragments are assembled under a new law.

- 1936> Effects which the public today seeks in the film—
- 1936> Changes of place and focus assail the spectator.
- 1936> My thoughts have been replaced by moving images.
- 1939> If the masses were to ask for avant-garde art?

- 1940> Always imprisoned by the gravitation of the community,
- 1940> Sheets of time and space picked from history like cards.
- 1940> Art's instinct of what is good and bad for art—
- 1940> Attempt to escape from literature.

- 1952> Rather than a space in which to reproduce, redesign, analyze or express an object,
- 1952> A vocabulary of action—inception, duration, direction.
- 1952> Exercise a constant “No”
- 1946> Instead of being a moss, or a fungus or a cauliflower.

- 1946> To choose between this or that,
- 1946> Facing away from the end result,
- 1946> Exploitation of these favourable accidents—
- 1947> Angles of vision upsetting spectral conformity.

- 1947> Even external nature cannot maintain the same gravitation,
- 1947> Surrounded by formidable suction—
- 1948> Too much coexistence of parts in juxtaposition.
- 1948> He shows us men and women already seen.

- 1949> Going a little further along a dreary road
- 1950> In which imagination and nature participate equally,
- 1951> The shoemaker without Shakespeare is absorbed—
- 1951> The procedure of beauty is the procedure of rebellion.

- 1961> Our lips kiss the canvas as we carry our colour ordeal.
- 1963> Keep the vitality of the accident and yet preserve a continuity;
- 1963> The story talks louder than the paint—
- 1957> The concrete potentiality of a particular individual.

- 1957> There is no law that forbids talking about things:
- 1958> A technique of transient passage through varied ambiances,
- 1960> Absolutely colourless or neutral—
- 1961> Forms of human energy.

- 1961> Patterns,
- 1961> Structure of feeling,
- 1961> Listening even when I am looking—
- 1961> No tendency toward gesture or arrangement.

1961> I am for art that is flipped on and off with a switch.

1961> I am for the blinking arts, lighting up the night.

1964> "The War of 1870 need never have been fought had people read my Sentimental Education," said Gustave Flaubert.

1967> Apart from one's experience of it, there is nothing to be known about art.

1967> The center of the center of gravity—

1967> We recognize ourselves at the center of our own sensations;

1970> The juxtaposition of disparate or borrowed elements

1970> Talk of the surface being used.

1967> An object in a situation includes the beholder.

1967> Certain modes of seriousness are closed.

1967> The constant on-rush of the road...

1967> The endlessness of the on-rush.

1967> Endlessness deeply excites.

1967> Presentness is grace.

1969> Because he painted on loose canvas horizontally to the floor—

1969> The state of things beyond physics.

1970> Repetition is the ineluctable means of legibility—

1969> The work of gravity.

1979> "What difference does it make who is speaking"

1971> On the side of a valley?

1971> Untraceable, and yet already read,

1971> But I cannot rewrite them.

1972> The lower edge of the picture plan gravitates to where we place our feet—

1972> The same gravitational force to which we are subject.

1974> Under what conditions does it remain a blind alley?

1973> In what ways does the unconscious structure ways of seeing?

1973> Film scale, space, and stories are anthropomorphic—

1973> I forgot who I am and where I was.

1979> Clouds of narrative language elements,

1979> Clouds of sociality,

1979> A certain level of terror,

1979> Refines our sensitivity to differences.

1981> Clear contours in the work of Baudelaire,

1982> Let us be witnesses to the unrepresentable—

1980> Raymond Roussel's parrot—

1980> For wars to come.

1976> The pure gaze.

1976> Always already.

1980> The instantaneous state of rest and the extra-rapid exposure,

1981> Always already divided and multiple.

- 1982> Simple ineffectiveness, ineptitude, or incompetence,
- 1982> Unintended consequences of speed, of work, of wandering.
- 1983> Is the world of surfaces more seductive than the spaces of regimentation?
- 1984> Most glorious materialization of pure colour...

- 1984> A strange compensatory decorative exhilaration—
- 1984> The waning of affect.
- 1984> Pain vibrates.
- 1984> Buried alive.

- 1981> The authenticity of the artist's experience of his own body—
- 1983> We cannot stop moving.
- 1985> The problem of seeing, the failures of vision, already taken place...
- 1985> The joy of the text!

- 1986> The innocent eye is blind—
- 1991> Interested in the results of paint tossing.

John Shipman, 2009-10

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