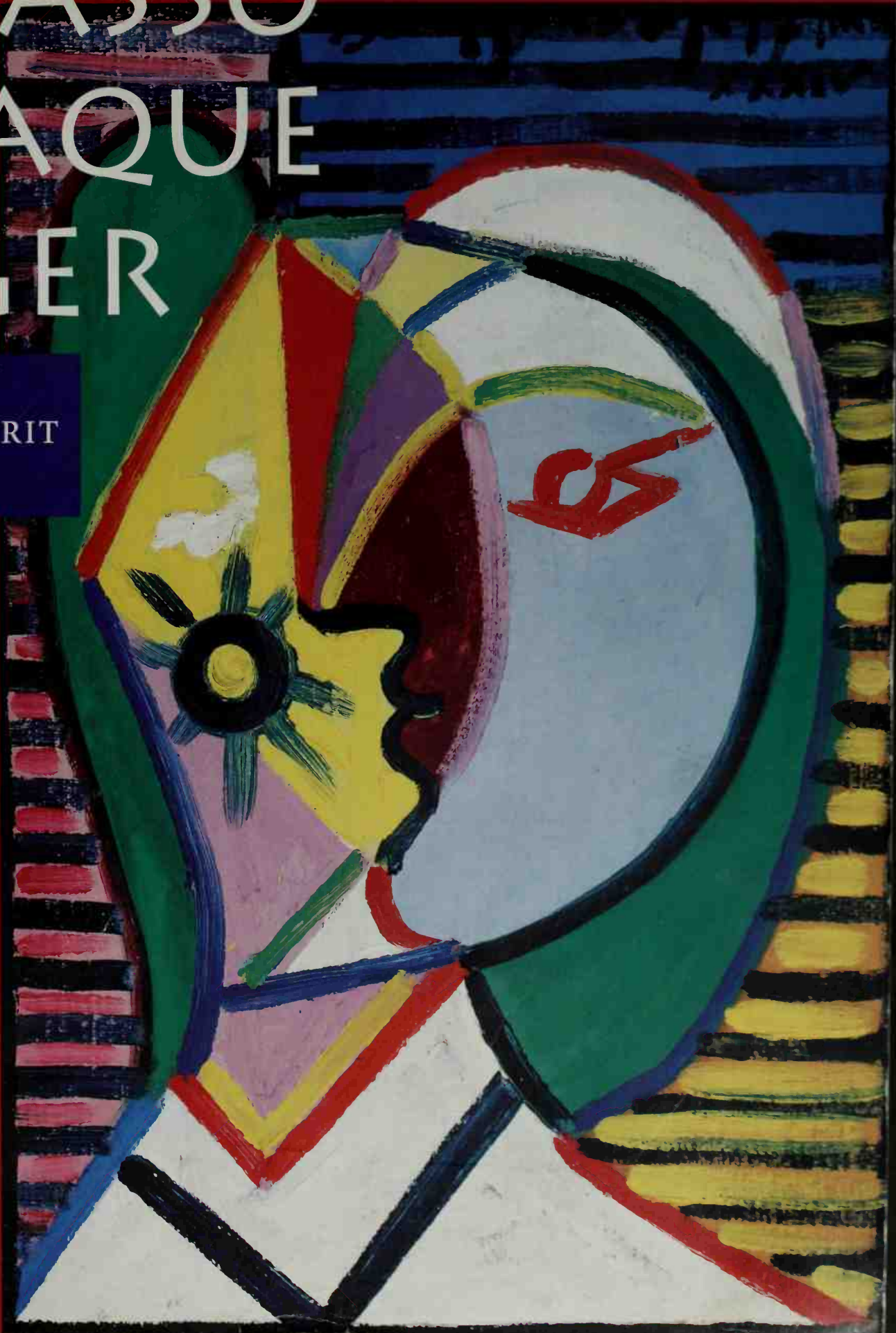


PICASSO BRAQUE LÉGER

AND THE
CUBIST SPIRIT
1919-1939



Published in conjunction with the exhibition "Picasso, Braque, Léger and the Cubist Spirit, 1919-1939" at the Portland Museum of Art, Maine, June 29 - October 20, 1996.

The Portland Museum of Art gratefully acknowledges Scott M. Black whose leadership and generosity made this exhibition possible.



This exhibition is also funded by a major grant from Key Bank with additional support from the Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram and the French Embassy to the United States.

Edited by Susan L. Ransom, Portland, Maine

Designed by Michael Mahan Graphics, Bath, Maine

Printed by J.S. McCarthy Company, Augusta, Maine

Published by the Portland Museum of Art
Seven Congress Square, Portland, Maine 04101

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Distributed by the University of Washington Press,
P.O. Box 50096, Seattle, WA 98145-5096.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 96-068506

ISBN: 0-916857-08-5

See inside back cover for additional notices.

FRONT COVER

Pablo Picasso, *Head of a Woman*
(*Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter*), 1934,
oil on canvas, 21 5/8 x 15 in.,
Scott M. Black Collection.
Photograph courtesy of
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
©1996 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists
Rights Society (ARS), New York.

BACK COVER

Georges Braque, *Still Life with*
Grapes and Clarinet, 1927,
oil on canvas, 21 1/4 x 28 3/4 in.,
The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.
©1996 Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York, NY/ADAGP, Paris.

PICASSO
BRAQUE
LÉGER

AND THE
CUBIST SPIRIT
1919-1939

KENNETH WAYNE

WITH AN ESSAY BY
CHRISTOPHER GREEN

PORTLAND MUSEUM OF ART
PORTLAND, MAINE
1996



Preface

PICASSO, BRAQUE, LÉGER AND THE CUBIST SPIRIT, 1919-1939 is devoted to art and design in France between the wars, in an effort to dispel the perception that Cubism was only a pre-World War I phenomenon. After the war, cubist painting became more varied, colorful, and accessible, and began to affect other media such as furniture, fashion, cinema and architecture. What had begun as a rarified pictorial style became a popular language. The first essay addresses Picasso's abundant and varied cubist painting. The second essay treats the art of three major Cubists—Picasso, Braque, and Léger—in the context of the various cubist idioms that developed. The third essay, also broad in scope, examines the significant relationship between Cubism and the decorative arts in France.

The Portland Museum of Art is deeply grateful to the lenders of the exhibition, whose names are noted in the checklist and on page 64, and most especially to Marina Picasso, the artist's granddaughter. We also would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance: Brigitte Adams, Neal Benezra, Emmanuel Benador, Robert J. Boardingham, Peter Boris, Sophie Bowness, William Camfield, Elaine Lustig Cohen, James Cuno, Christian Delacampagne, Carol Eliel, Hilarie Faberman, Gail Feingarten, Evelyne Ferlay, Judith Fox, Judi Freeman, Audrey Friedman, Barry Friedman, Denis Gallion, Ivan Gaskell, Deanna M. Griffin, Jonathan Hallam, Anne Coffin Hanson, Anne d'Harnoncourt, Melissa Ho, Laura Ingrassia, Joseph Ketner, Sarah Kianovsky, Billy Klüver, Jan Krugier, Marina Mangubi, Haim Manishevitz, Julie Martin, John McDonald, Charles Moffett, Jack Mognaz, Steven Nash, Kelly Pask, Christopher Pearson, Earl Powell III, Marla Prather, Richard Rand, Daniel Rosenfeld, Eliza Rathbone, Mark Rosenthal, Malcolm Rogers, Rona Roob, Cora Rosavear, David Ryan, Joellen Secondo, W. Michael Sheeche, Gary Snyder, Ann Temkin, Pamela Trimpe, Nancy J. Troy, Elizabeth Hutton Turner, Kirk Varnedoe, Susan Vogel, Eva White, Jake Wien, and Judith Zilcher.

I am particularly grateful to our distinguished guest contributor, Professor Christopher Green of the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, for his participation. My wife, Olivia Mattis, provided invaluable assistance with the catalogue.

Here at the Portland Museum of Art, I would like to extend my warm thanks to the following colleagues for their considerable support with the exhibition organization and installation, as well as the catalogue preparation: Michele Butterfield, Lorena Coffin, Aprile Gallant, Stuart Hunter, Jessica Nicoll, Beverly Parsons, Barbara Sherburne, and Gregory Welch. I am especially grateful to Daniel O'Leary, Director, and the Board of Trustees, whose complete commitment assured the success of this project.

Finally, I would like to express my profound gratitude to the exhibition's sponsors: Key Bank, the Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram, and the French Embassy to the United States. Scott M. Black, ever loyal to our institution, provided a major grant, and shared his extensive knowledge of French art and artists.

Kenneth Wayne, Joan Whitney Payson Curator

LEFT

Fig. 1 Fernand Léger

Two Women, 1922

oil on canvas

35 3/4 x 23 in.

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Gift (partial) of Richard S. Zeisler.

Sponsor's Statement

MY EARLIEST EXPOSURE TO FRENCH PAINTINGS occurred during my childhood. My mother accompanied me at the age of five to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston where I distinctly recollect that the upstairs rotunda was filled with Monet's paintings of haystacks and the Rouen Cathedral. I remember the bright colors and playful light of Monsieur Monet. In our home, my mother had hung notable reproductions ranging from Renoir's *Madame Charpentier and her Children* to Picasso's *Lovers*. Given my economic background, I never expected to own paintings by these French masters.

In 1984, I attended my first evening auction and surprisingly discovered that good quality Impressionist works were affordable. Naturally, as an admirer of Monet, I vigorously pursued the purchase of a dazzling landscape. In 1986, my dream was fulfilled with the acquisition of the *Vue de Cap Martin* of 1884, a resplendent image at the Côte d'Azur. As the Japanese bid the Impressionists to dizzying heights, my focus shifted toward affordable works of the twentieth century. Having visited the Musée Léger in Biot frequently, I was particularly fond of Léger's bold colors and compositions. My *Still Life* of 1929 incorporates elements of tubular Cubism and Léger's fascination with the movie projector. While Léger's paintings of 1913 celebrate the contrast of forms, my painting highlights the contrast of colors.


Only in the past three years has my eye gravitated toward the work of Georges Braque. Throughout his life, from the Fauve period to the late Atelier series, Braque was a true genius. With the advent of Cubism in 1908, Braque radically altered the manner in which we view the world. The application to painting of such everyday activities as stenciling and *papier collé* were the inventions of his fertile mind.

My acquisition of the 1934 *Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter* by Pablo Picasso was a monumental coup. Quite simply, I consider Picasso the greatest master of this century. This double portrait synthesizes elements of Cubism and Surrealism with the colorful palette of his 1930s tableaux. While small in size, my *Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter* exudes a strong presence in a museum gallery.

As a native son of Portland, I am extremely pleased to help sponsor this wonderful cubist exhibition, for great art should be exhibited in Maine. Cubism represents a major breakthrough in the evolution of art. Like Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo, who have come before them, Picasso, Braque, and Léger will stand the test of time.

Scott M. Black

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Picasso's Guiding Spirit

PICASSO WORKED IN THREE MARKEDLY DIFFERENT STYLES between the wars: Cubism, Neo-Classicism, and Surrealism. He did so not consecutively, but often at the same time, and even in the same work. The Cubism of Picasso's interwar art has received relatively little attention compared to the other two "new" styles, even though it played a major role in at least a third of the artist's enormous interwar production, including his most famous works of the period.¹ As the critic E. Tériade wrote in 1929, "Cubism is [Picasso's] guiding spirit.... Picasso never lets go of an idea. He pursues it on several levels at once, he experiments with it in different 'contexts' and devotes his full creative energy to it."² Between 1919 and 1939, Picasso combined Cubism by turns with high-pitched emotion, dramatic variations of scale, a broad range of subject matter, and dazzling colors. In 1936, Alfred Barr, director of the Museum of Modern Art, described Picasso's recent use of Cubism as being of "extreme variety."³ More than any other artist, Picasso took Cubism to new expressive heights between the wars.

LEFT
Fig. 2 Pablo Picasso
Harlequin Musician, 1924
oil on canvas
51 1/2 x 38 1/4 in.
National Gallery of Art,
Washington, D.C. Given in
loving memory of her
husband, Taft Schreiber,
by Rita Schreiber, 1989.31.2.

RIGHT
Fig. 3 Pablo Picasso
Composition with Glass, 1923
oil on plywood
8 5/8 x 13 1/8 in.
Marina Picasso Collection
(Inv. 12320). Courtesy of Jan
Krugier Gallery, New York.





ABOVE
Fig. 4 Pablo Picasso
*Still Life with a Guitar
and a Compo*
(*The Mandolin*), 1923
oil on canvas
31 3/4 x 39 7/16 in.
Philadelphia Museum of
Art. A.E. Gallatin
Collection, 52-61-98.

This period of Picasso's art falls into three distinct segments. From 1919 to 1925, synthetic Cubism, which renders subjects through overlapping planes that reaffirm the flatness of the picture surface, dominated his art. Still lifes and entertainers were his primary subjects, culminating in the *Three Dancers* of 1925. From 1925 to 1932, Picasso focused his energies on exploring Surrealism, concerning himself with the subconscious and the dream state. From 1932 to the Second World War, he reintegrated synthetic Cubism into his oeuvre, as well as analytic Cubism, with its fractured planes and depiction of the subject from many viewpoints at once. The artist even added new cubist devices to his repertoire, namely the use of profiles and silhouettes. Portraits of women, weeping or unemotional, dominated the 1930s. The climactic work of this period was *Guernica* of 1937 (fig. 9), a complex painting filled with emotion.

Picasso's move toward several styles, as well as great variety within the cubist idiom, could be related to his increased isolation from his peers. As his dealer

Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler recalled, "Picasso [told] me that everything that was done in the years from 1907 to 1917 could only have been done through teamwork."⁴ He noted that it was when Picasso was no longer part of a group that his art started to move in several directions at once: "Being isolated, being alone, must have upset him enormously, and it was then that there was this change."⁵ Between the wars, Picasso *was* alone as an artist. In 1918, he married Olga Koklova, a ballet dancer, and moved to the Right Bank far from his old friends in Montparnasse.⁶ Moreover, a new dimension and direction to his life were occasioned by the birth of a son, Paulo, in 1921. No longer part of a cohesive group, Picasso pursued individualistic expressions, cubist and otherwise.

Cubism is often considered an anti-naturalistic phenomenon. On that subject, Picasso remarked, "[People] speak of naturalism in opposition to modern painting. I would like to know if anyone has ever seen a natural work of art. Nature and art, being two different things, cannot be the same thing. Through art we express our conception of what nature is not."⁷ Picasso credited photography with freeing the artist from his obligation to produce naturalistic scenes:

Why should the artist persist in treating subjects that can be established so clearly with the lens of a camera? It would be absurd, wouldn't it? Photography has arrived at a point where it is capable of liberating painting from all literature, from the anecdote, and even from the subject.... So shouldn't painters profit from their newly acquired liberty, and make use of it to do other things?⁸

Picasso was promoting the idea of using one's imagination, rather than nature, as the starting point for art.

Still life is the sole subject that Picasso consistently rendered in a cubist manner.⁹ In 1919, he painted an interesting group of cubist still lifes before an open window, with the ocean and sky as backdrops. In a self-conscious cubist manner, the artist draws attention to the existence of two worlds: the man-made and the natural. This juxtaposition of subjects presages his mixture of styles. Picasso's game-playing, an ever-present aspect of his work, is in full evidence. In his essay in the present catalogue, Christopher Green discusses the importance of the theater and theatricality to Picasso—who was involved in making set designs around this time—and the fact that the open-window paintings have an artificial stage-like setting. For Picasso, and his fellow Cubists, the still life was an "unnatural" man-made construction.

Picasso's still lifes of the early 1920s share a pronounced decorative quality—bright colors and patterns, simple pleasing shapes—and were created in two sizes. There are large, monumental compositions with several elements, which exude luxury and abundance, and usually feature a musical instrument on a fancy tablecloth, e.g. *Still Life with a Guitar and a Compote (The Mandolin)* of 1923 (fig. 4). Within this group is an even more abstract and decorative type,

such as *Still Life* of 1922 (fig. 5). Beautiful planes of color dominate, with rows of stripes adding an attractive flourish. The second category is comprised of very small paintings that usually feature only one or two objects, as in *Composition with Glass* of 1923 (fig. 3). The glass, weightless and massless, is depicted by merely an outline and a few internal lines. The overlapping planes make these works prime examples of synthetic Cubism.

The two sizes of still lifes are a reflection of Picasso's private and public lives. Several observers have commented on the autobiographical nature of Picasso's art.¹⁰ Picasso himself encouraged such a reading by declaring, "I put all the things I like into my pictures."¹¹ The grand still life reflects his new luxurious domestic situation: he was financially secure (even rich), and upon his marriage to Olga, he began to frequent the aristocracy. His new residence on the Right Bank was on the fashionable rue de la Boétie, where he eventually acquired a fancy Hispano-Suiza car and a driver. The small works, usually featuring a single drinking glass, reflect café culture. Indeed, the shape of these smaller pieces is often round or oval, like a café table, as seen in *Composition with Glass*.

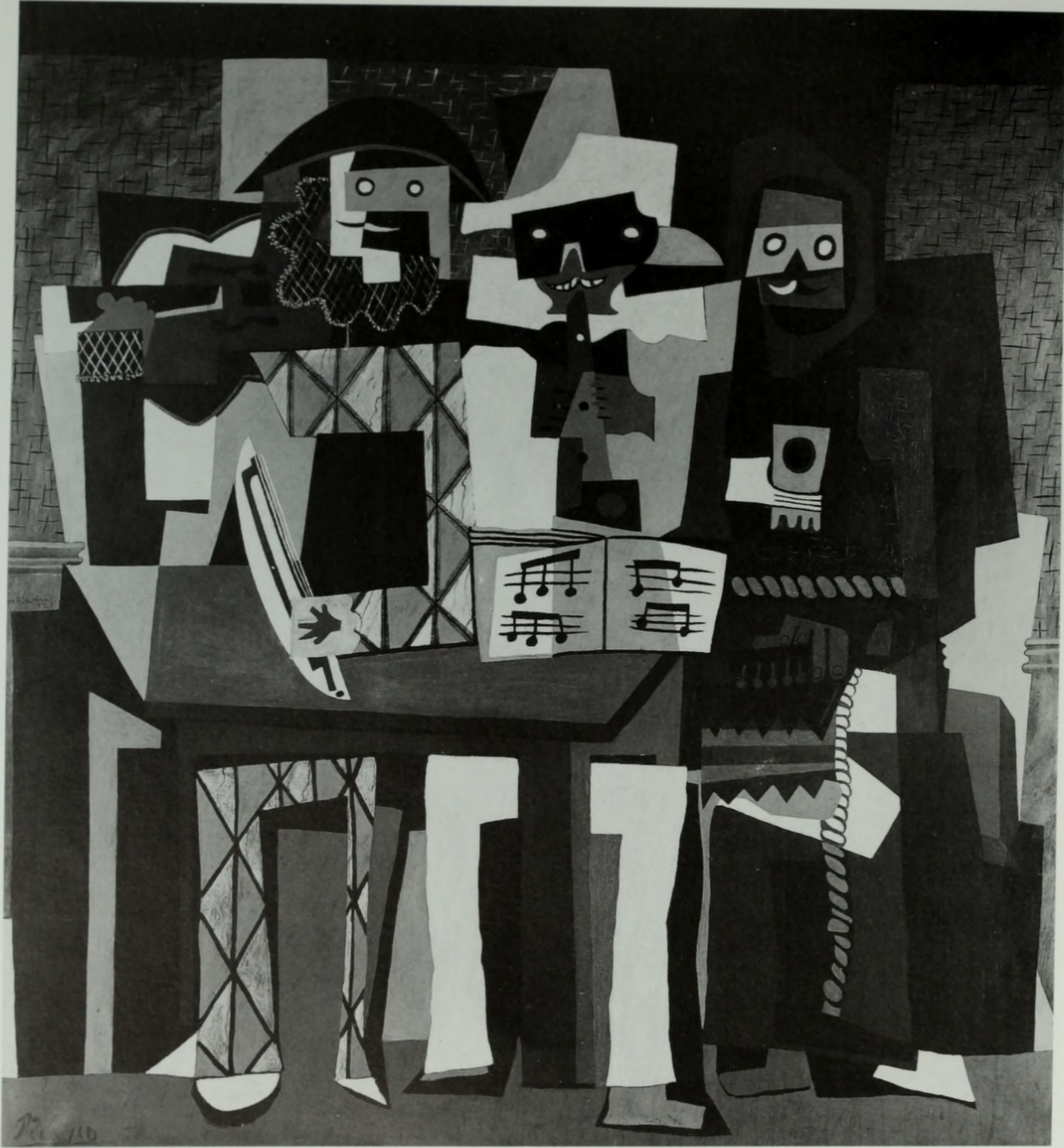
Synthetic Cubism also dominates his famous *Three Musicians* of 1921. There are two versions of this enormous painting, one in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art (fig. 6), and the other at the Museum of Modern Art. Theodore Reff postulates that the masked figures represent Picasso, Guillaume Apollinaire, and Max Jacob, and that the paintings are symbolic and nostalgic elegies to Picasso's friends and his bohemian youth.¹² In these paintings, the figures have no sense of dimensionality, but are composed instead of flat overlapping planes and patterns. The figures resemble paper cutouts that have been pasted down in collage fashion.

Picasso uses synthetic Cubism in other depictions of entertainers, specifically the harlequin, of which *Harlequin Musician* of 1924 (fig. 2) is an example. It too is composed of flat overlapping planes. The bright colors, presented in the checkerboard pattern, add to the visual discontinuity. Many writers have suggested that Picasso identified with the harlequin, which was a steady theme in his art from the Blue Period onward.¹³ Picasso may have considered himself to be, like the harlequin, an entertainer or trickster, from the margins of society. Perhaps the National Gallery's *Harlequin Musician* is in fact a self-portrait.

Picasso's abiding interest in Cubism is all the more impressive given the great financial disincentive: the price of cubist paintings had dropped dramatically. During the First World War, the property of all Germans in France was confiscated, including the stock of the dealer/collector Wilhelm Uhde and of the leading dealer of cubist art, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler. This property was sold by the French government in a series of auction sales between 1921 and 1923, flooding

RIGHT
Fig. 5 Pablo Picasso
Still Life, 1922
oil on canvas
51 1/4 x 39 in.
Marina Picasso Collection
(Inv. 12307).
Courtesy of Galerie
Jan Krugier, Geneva,
Switzerland.





the market with cubist art.¹⁴ There were 381 cubist paintings—as well as many drawings and collages—by Picasso, Braque, Gris, and Léger, of which 132 were by Picasso.¹⁵ As Kahnweiler later explained, “No market in the world is capable of withstanding such an avalanche. What happened, of course, is that after the first sale the prices steadily dropped.”¹⁶

Picasso demonstrated his continued commitment to the cubist idiom by participating in the third *Section d'Or* exhibition in January 1925, his sole appearance in the series.¹⁷ The original exhibition took place in October of 1912, and has been called “the most important of all cubist manifestations in France.... It marked the public consecration of the movement.”¹⁸ The second exhibition, which took place in March 1920, and the third one in 1925, were meant to show the continued vitality of Cubism after the war.¹⁹ Reviewers of the 1925 exhibition remarked that each participant contributed at least one new work to show alongside older ones.²⁰ The *Section d'Or*, or Golden Section, an ancient Greek ratio used in the design of the Parthenon among other buildings, was applied by cubist artists in their paintings and sculptures.

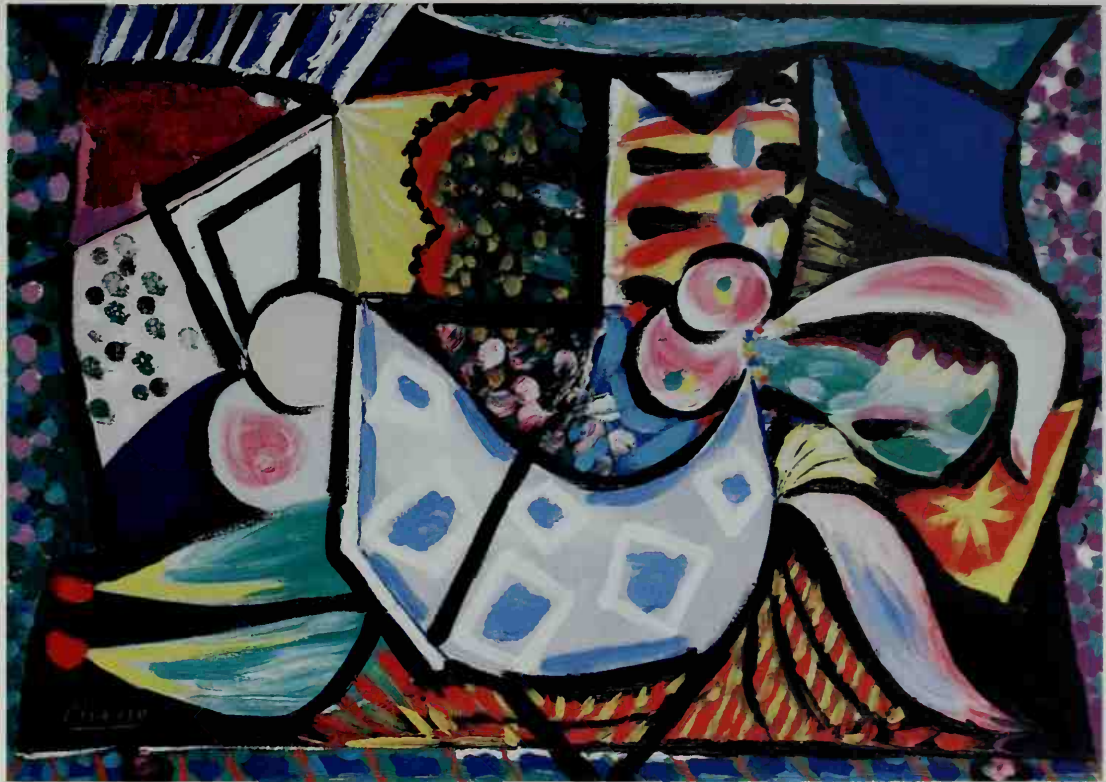
Picasso's steadfast commitment to Cubism expressed itself most grandly not through exhibiting but in his art: in the complex painting *Three Dancers* of 1925 (Tate Gallery), which was considered by Alfred Barr to be “a turning point in Picasso's art almost as radical as was the proto-cubist ‘*Demoiselles d'Avignon*.’”²¹ Overlapping planes are joined by a host of other synthetic cubist elements: the play of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines in it combined with a great variety of colors and textures, and the wallpaper pattern, contribute to that painting's collage-like feel.²² The work presents an early example of the profile silhouette which will be discussed later in this essay. The presence of three figures adds a neo-classical element, while the fanciful tone of the painting introduces Surrealism, further enriching the meanings of this painting.

After a seven-year foray into Surrealism, Picasso then painted a series of seated women deep in reverie holding a book or musical instrument, typified by *Young Woman with Mandolin* of 1932 (fig. 7). With its organic, undulating forms and evocation of the subconscious dream state, it too is quite surrealist in character. Indeed, the woman's head appears to be in a cloud. Nonetheless, *Young Woman with Mandolin* is dependent on cubist elements for its expressiveness, as are other works in the series. A strong emphasis on flat planes of color and patterns dominate the composition. The chair, woman, and mandolin are all completely two-dimensional. Planes and forms interpenetrate. In addition, the back of the seat does not extend straight across, as the left part tilts down in an unnatural and curious manner. In related works, a mirror is used to give a different perspective, thereby introducing the cubist notion of simultaneity. A salient example of Picasso's playful use of the mirror is *Girl Before a Mirror* of 1932 (Museum of Modern Art).

LEFT
Fig. 6 Pablo Picasso
Three Musicians, 1921
oil on canvas
80 1/2 x 74 1/8 in.
Philadelphia Museum
of Art. A.E. Gallatin
Collection, 52-61-96.

Picasso





At about the same time, Picasso painted a series of reclining cubist women, as seen in *Reclining Figure* of 1934 (fig. 8). The artist has flattened and twisted the woman's body, showing us a frontal view of the breasts, a profile of the head, and even a look at her derriere. The composition contains numerous bright colors, which are pleasant individually, yet cacophonous when juxtaposed in such numbers and restricted space. The myriad cubist characteristics introduce an element of intensity, indeed aggression, rarely found in Picasso's work. The same contorted figure reappears in scenes of rape in the famous Volland Suite of etchings.

From January to November 1937, Picasso executed a fascinating series of nearly 60 cubist paintings depicting weeping women.²³ Along with *Guernica* (fig. 9), also painted in 1937, these works represent an intense and rare foray by Picasso into the world of emotion. Part of their appeal lies in the fact that they can be read on two levels: as both political commentary on the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War, and as a reflection of Picasso's own complicated and often tormented love life.²⁴ Picasso had separated from Olga. His longtime mistress, Marie-Thérèse Walter, gave birth to their child, Maya, in 1935. The photographer Dora Maar became an important part of his life in 1936.

ABOVE
Fig. 8 Pablo Picasso
Reclining Figure 1934
oil on canvas
18 1/4 x 25 3/4 in.
The Phillips Collection,
Washington, D. C.
Gift of The Carey Walker
Foundation, 1994.

LEFT
Fig. 7 Pablo Picasso
*Young Woman with
Mandolin*, 1932
oil on board
25 1/16 x 18 5/16 in.
University of Michigan
Museum of Art, Gift of
The Carey Walker
Foundation.

Head of a Woman (Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter) of 1934 (fig. 11) and *Head of a Woman with Hat* of 1938 (fig. 10), also of Marie-Thérèse, are examples of two of the many unemotional—and decidedly cubist—portraits Picasso made as staid counterparts to the series of weeping women. Each work can be read as both a frontal view and side view: in the earlier painting, one can discern the outline of a figure, with a full head of hair, wearing a v-neck sweater, onto which a profile view is superimposed. In *Head of a Woman with Hat* one finds both a frontal and side view of the eyes and nose thereby introducing cubist simultaneity, which can be found throughout the series.

Although certain physical characteristics of Marie-Thérèse are present in these paintings—her strong prominent chin, soft smooth skin, and enchanting eyes—Picasso was not trying to paint naturalistic portraits. In 1932, he gave his views on portraiture:

It's not important to me to know whether a certain portrait is a good likeness or not. Years, centuries pass, and it is not important if the physiognomical traits are exactly those of the person portrayed. The artist loses himself in a futile effort if he wants to be realistic. The work can be beautiful even if it doesn't have a conventional likeness.²⁵

He was using a natural form, not to record it, but rather as an inspiration to make something new. Moreover, Picasso did not want a form to be so natural that the viewer did not notice it. As he once explained to a friend, "I had to make the nose crooked so they would see it was a nose."²⁶

Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter and *Head of a Woman with Hat* provide two examples of Picasso's abundant use of profiles in the interwar period. Many portraits of Dora Maar and Marie-Thérèse Walter employ the profile, as does *Young Woman with Mandolin* (fig. 7). The appeal is clear enough: the profile emphasizes the two-dimensionality of the picture surface.²⁷ Picasso used a related category, the silhouette profile, in *Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter* and *The Three Dancers*. It reaffirms the flatness of the picture plane and moves away from naturalism. It is, in a sense, a symbol of a person, not a description. With the use of both profiles and silhouettes, Picasso had extended his range of cubist devices.

Picasso's bright colors distinguish his interwar cubist paintings from the earlier ones. Indeed, the dazzling colors in *Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter* demonstrate Picasso's considerable abilities as a colorist. The pink, blue, and golden yellow stripes of this work add a degree of richness that evokes the work of Henri Matisse. Having firmly established his reputation, Picasso could allow himself to revel in color without appearing to be one of Matisse's many followers. Nor would he be seen as a direct descendant of Impressionism, a movement against which Cubism initially rebelled. Picasso uses color in a lyrical, erotic, and aggressive manner.

Picasso's major statement of the 1930s, however, is a monochromatic work, *Guernica* of 1937 (fig. 9), which is wholly indebted to both analytic and synthetic



Cubism. In analytic cubist fashion, there are splintered planes, reinforced by a play of light and shadows, that make it difficult to distinguish individual forms. The monochromatic palette of the painting, characteristic of analytic Cubism, helps imbue the scene with pathos. The use of simultaneity in *Guernica*—the eyes of the animal and human forms are presented from both the side and front—adds to the drama. From synthetic Cubism comes the flatness of the heads, which appear to be pasted as in a collage. The horse's body hair is composed of rows of vertical lines, similar to the newsprint so favored in synthetic cubist collages. The very shallow sense of space is likewise indebted to both types of Cubism. *Guernica* can be read as a giant cubist still life: the electric light near the center of the composition tells us that this drama is taking place inside, not out-of-doors as one would expect. The political commentary implicit in this painting—Picasso painted it as a protest to the bombing of a small Basque town, Guernica, by Nazi planes supporting the Fascist pro-Franco forces in the Spanish Civil War—is new within Picasso's oeuvre. The shrill emotion created by the screaming upturned heads is unprecedented in his large works. Although recent commentators have been reluctant to declare this a cubist painting, critics closer to the time had no problem in doing so.²⁸

Picasso worked in different styles and with great variety because he did not favor one linear path or stylistic "evolution." In a 1923 statement, Picasso asserted, "Different motives inevitably require different methods of expression. This does not imply either evolution or progress, but an adaptation of the idea one wants to express and the means to express that idea."²⁹ Picasso demonstrated that painting was for him a self-conscious activity rather than an intuitive one. Among his different methods of expression, Picasso chose Cubism as his "guiding spirit."

ABOVE
Fig. 9 Pablo Picasso
Guernica, May/June 1937
oil on canvas
137 3/8 x 305 7/8 in.
Museo Nacional Centro de
Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid.
On permanent loan from
the Prado Museum.



ABOVE
Fig. 10 Pablo Picasso
Head of a Woman with Hat,
September 1938
pencil and oil wash
on canvas
18 1/4 x 13 in.
Courtesy of Pace
Wildenstein, New York.

RIGHT
Fig. 11 Pablo Picasso
*Head of a Woman (Portrait of
Marie-Thérèse Walter)*, 1934
oil on canvas
21 5/8 x 15 in.
Scott M. Black Collection.



Notes

- 1 Historians prefer to focus on dramatic changes, and the neo-classical and surrealist works may have seemed more newsworthy in that respect. On Picasso and Surrealism, see John Golding, "Picasso and Surrealism" in Roland Penrose and John Golding, *Picasso in Retrospect*, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1980, pp.49-77; Lydia Gasman, "Mystery, Magic, and Love in Picasso 1925-1938: Picasso and the Surrealist Poets," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1981; and Elizabeth Cowling, "'Proudly we claim him as one of us': Breton, Picasso and the Surrealist Movement," *Art History*, 8, no.1, (March 1985): 82-104. On Picasso and Neo-Classicism, see Kenneth E. Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-1925*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989; and Elizabeth Cowling and Jennifer Mundy, eds., *On Classic Ground: Picasso, Léger, de Chirico and the New Classicism 1910-1930*, London: Tate Gallery, 1990, pp.200-23. For a discussion of Picasso's cubist work until 1928 see Christopher Green, *Cubism and Its Enemies: Modern Movements and Reaction in French Art, 1916-1928*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1987.
- 2 "Pour lui le cubisme est une 'constance' spirituelle... Picasso n'abandonne jamais une idée. Il la poursuit sur plusieurs plans, il l'expérimente sur plusieurs 'situations.'" E. Tériade, "Documents sur la Jeune Peinture, II. L'avènement classique du Cubisme," *Cahiers d'Art*, no.10, 4th year, (1929): 447-55.
- 3 Alfred H. Barr, *Cubism and Abstract Art*, New York: Museum of Art, 1974 (1936), p.96.
- 4 Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler with Francis Crémieux, *My Galleries and Painters*, New York: Viking Press, 1971, p.54.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 Brassai, *The Artists of My Life*, translated by Richard Miller, London: Thames and Hudson, 1982, pp.158-64. Brassai suggests that Picasso's Neo-Classicism was a concession to high society tastes. The best comprehensive, one-volume biography of Picasso is Pierre Daix, *Picasso, Life and Art*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1994.
- 7 Pablo Picasso, "Picasso Speaks," *The Arts*, New York, May 1923 in Dore Ashton, ed. *Picasso on Art: A Selection of Views*, New York: Da Capo Press, 1972, pp. 3-6.
- 8 Picasso quoted in Brassai, *Picasso and Company*, New York: Doubleday, 1966, pp.46-7.
- 9 Picasso's portraits of friends, family members, and lovers exist in neo-classical, surrealist, and cubist styles.
- 10 According to one such observer, Kahnweiler: "Picasso's *sujets* are his loves. He's never painted an object with which he didn't have an affectionate relationship—and certainly not only on aesthetic grounds. Didn't he tell me many years ago, 'I find it monstrous that a woman should paint a pipe because she doesn't smoke it.'" Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, "Le Sujet chez Picasso," *Verve*, (Paris), nos.25-6, (1951): 1-21, in Ashton, p.35. See also Mary Mathews Gedo, *Picasso: Art as Autobiography*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- 11 Pablo Picasso with Christian Zervos, "Conversations avec Picasso," *Cahiers d'Art*, 1935 in Ashton, pp.7-13.
- 12 Theodore Reff, "Picasso's Three Musicians: Maskers, Artists and Friends," *Art in America*, (December 1980): 124-42.
- 13 See, *ibid.*, p.131. Reff argues that in the 1921 pictures, *Three Musicians*, the harlequin figure represents Picasso. He cites many examples of Picasso's early identification with the harlequin, noting that Picasso's physical characteristics appear in the early portrayals.
- 14 For a full account of these sales see Malcolm Gee, *Dealers, Critics, and Collectors of Modern Painting: Aspects of the Parisian Art Market between 1910 and 1930*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1981. For contemporary documents concerning the sales see Isabelle Monod-Fontaine, et. al., *Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, marchand, éditeur, écrivain*, Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1984, pp.130-38. See also Pierre Assouline, *A Biography of D.H.*

Kahnweiler, 1884-1979, translated by Charles Ruas, New York: Grove Wiedefeld, 1990, especially the section "Forgetting Drouot," pp.155-189. For Picasso and the general art market see Michael C. FitzGerald, *Making Modernism: Picasso and the Creation of the Market for Twentieth-Century Art*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995.

15 Roland Penrose, *Picasso: His Life and Work*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981, 3rd edition, p.242.

16 Kahnweiler with Crémieux, pp.67-70.

17 I am very grateful to Professor William Camfield for providing me with information on this exhibition. For more details about the exhibition see the Chronology in this catalogue, p.62.

18 Edward Fry, *Cubism*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1978, p.100; see Maurice Raynal's review of the exhibition reproduced in Fry, pp.97-100. For Guillaume Apollinaire's text in the exhibition catalogue and his review of the exhibition, see Guillaume Apollinaire, *Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews, 1902-1918*, Leroy C. Breunig, ed., New York: Da Capo Press, 1987, pp.252-55.

19 For more on the second exhibition, see Green, *Cubism and Its Enemies*.

20 Louis-Léon Martin, "Les Expositions," *Journal Littéraire*, Paris, no.40, (January 24, 1925): 11. I am indebted to William Camfield for this information.

21 Alfred H. Barr, *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1946, p.143. On the *Three Dancers*, see Ronald Alley, *Picasso: The Three Dancers*, London: Tate Gallery, 1986.

22 In the same year that Picasso made the *Three Musicians*, he painted *Three Women at the Spring* (1921), a counterpart, in a bold, readable neo-classical style. Picasso maintained similar large canvas dimensions and a neo-classical composition of three figures of the same gender, as in the *Three Graces*.

23 See Judi Freeman, *Picasso and the Weeping Women: The Years of Marie-Thérèse Walter and Dora Maar*, New York and Los Angeles: Rizzoli International, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1994.

24 Ibid.

25 Felipe Cossio Del Pomar, *Con las Buscadores del Camino*, Madrid: Ediciones Ulises, 1932 in Ashton, p.110.

26 Picasso quoted in Kahnweiler with Crémieux, p.59.

27 Picasso was not the only Cubist to paint in profile in this period: Léger did so as well. The profile could be related to a specific form of Cubism, known as Purism (1918-1925), which stressed crisp, clear outlines. The Rayographs that photographer Man Ray produced in the early 1920s also display an interest in bold outlines. Many of Man Ray's interwar photographic portraits—like glamorous Hollywood publicity photographs—employed a similar profile.

28 See, for example, Herschel B. Chipp, *Picasso's Guernica: History, Transformations, Meanings*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988. For an early account, see Vernon Clark, "The Guernica Mural—Picasso and Social Protest," *Science and Society*, 5, no.1, (Winter 1941): 72-8 reprinted in Gert Schiff, *Picasso in Perspective*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1976, pp.97-103.

29 Picasso 1923 in Ashton, pp.4-5.



KLEGER 23

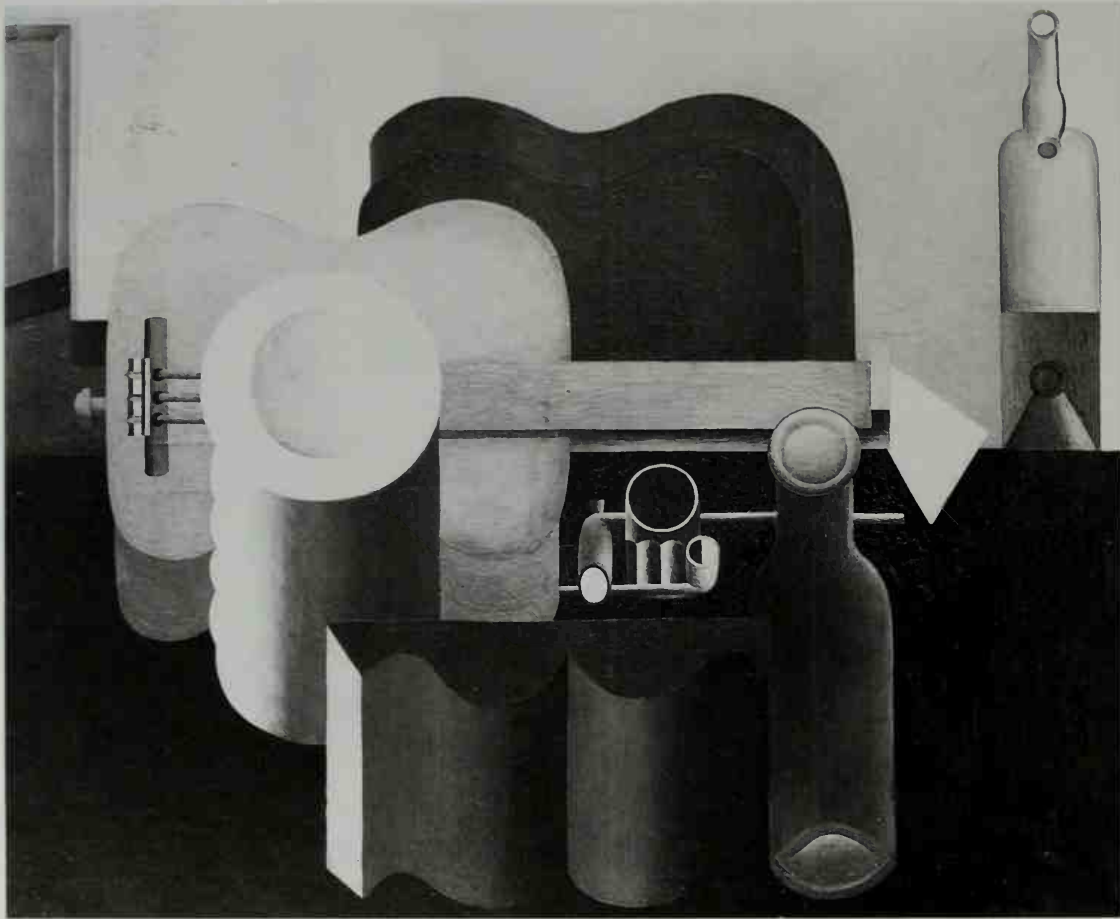
Late Cubism(s)

IN THE SUMMER OF 1918, just before the Armistice ended World War I, the influential critic Louis Vauxcelles confidently predicted the end of Cubism as well.¹ Despite his prediction, throughout the early 1920s he was repeatedly to confirm Cubism's survival by writing against it and by inviting others to do so. In 1921, as editor of the glossy art magazine *L'Amour de l'art*, he published an article with the title "Réagir" by one Jacques Blot. It was against Cubism that Blot "reacted." For Blot, Cubism involved exclusively the "organization of colored elements in geometric or arbitrary forms, paying no attention to the objects that appear to our senses." As such, Cubism replaced the appearances of nature with the inventions of the artist, and, most serious of all, replaced the fully "human" with the merely intellectual. "It offers the painter," he wrote, ". . . an ingenious exercise rather than the plastic expression of a truly human sensation."²

LEFT
Fig. 12 Fernand Léger
Still Life, 1929
oil on canvas
36 x 25 3/4 in.
Scott M. Black Collection.

RIGHT
Fig. 13 Fernand Léger
The Bunch of Grapes, 1928
oil on canvas
31 7/8 x 51 1/8 in.
Scott M. Black Collection.





ABOVE
Fig. 14 Le Corbusier
(Charles-Edouard
Jeanneret)
Still Life, 1920
oil on canvas
31 7/8 x 39 1/4 in.
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York. Van Gogh
Purchase Fund, 1937.

I start with Jacques Blot's idea of Cubism in 1921 because the "humanity" or "inhumanity" of Cubism was to be a key problem for most who took Cubism seriously during the 1920s and the early 1930s, at least in France; and, as Blot argued, its relationship with "nature" or "the world" was central to that problem. By 1930, it had become possible to approach the problem from two absolutely distinct directions.

On the negative side was Waldemar George, who took over from Vauxcelles as editor of *L'Amour de l'art* in 1922, and in 1930 founded his own art periodical, *Formes*. In the early 1920s, George had been the friend of many Cubists, especially Juan Gris; by 1930 he had become critical of Cubism as he developed a deeply conservative eurocentric polemic in favor of a new "Humanism."

On the positive side was Carl Einstein, German revolutionary Communist and friend of the Cubists' dealer D-H. Kahnweiler. In 1929-30, Einstein was a regular contributor to the periodical *Documents*, which developed a deeply subversive polemic against the order of European society and culture, against, that is to say, all the certainties for which George stood.

Waldemar George's treatment of Cubism in *Formes* cannot be disentangled from his treatment of Picasso: in 1931, George sees Picasso as the most extreme artistic product of a materialist, individualist world, which has lost faith in the wholeness of experience, and which has put "optimism" in technological progress above all else. Picasso and Cubism have turned the world into a "still life," the object of nothing more than "progressive" games with formal relationships. Cubism has made, George writes in 1932, "a *tabula rasa* of visual experience. . . . It is a victory of the creator conscious of his . . . all powerful [will]." Indeed, "within the limits of Occidental [Western] order which represents a state of harmony and of profound accord between man and the universe (between our interior and exterior life) Cubism constitutes a crisis in man and a crisis in culture. That experiment . . . has therefore the negative character of a suicide, which is to say of a divorce between man and the world."³

There is a surprising amount of common ground between Waldemar George and Carl Einstein. When, in 1929, Einstein published his "Notes sur le cubisme" in *Documents*, he concentrated on earlier Cubism ("analytic Cubism"), but still what he "noted" above all was that, in Cubism, the artist's "vision" had taken control of the world.⁴ Writing in 1930 on Picasso, he, like George, can characterize art as the outcome of a dialectical conflict between the internal—the human—and the external—appearance: the living and the dead. Specifically, he sees Picasso's work as "at the heart of a violent conflict" between the "structure" of the human, which is living, and "external appearance," which is "dead."⁵

Yet, the way Einstein understands "man" and the world—internal and external—is very different from the way George understands it. In his "Notes" on Cubism, he introduces Cubism by remarking on the loss of faith in the human body as the sole measure for art. By placing the emphasis on the fragmentary nature of individual experience, the Cubists shattered, he says, any sense of the human body as a whole. Where for George, Cubism had failed by losing any sense of the wholeness of the relationship between man and the world, for Einstein the *positive* significance of Cubism lay in its representation of the very fragmentariness of man's experience of the world, including the human body itself. For George, Cubism had destroyed the world, including the human body, and at the same time failed to retain any sense of the essential completeness of human experience; for Einstein, Cubism had destroyed the human body and by doing so promised a new immediacy in the representation of each individual artist's human experience of the world.

Recent responses to "late Cubism" have tended to agree with Waldemar George, dismissing it as no more than a formalists' game detached from any direct experience of the world.⁶ It is easy to take, say, Picasso's *Still Life with a Vase, a Pipe, and a Package of Tobacco* (no. 53), Braque's *Pipe and Basket* (fig. 15), and Lipchitz's *Pierrot with Clarinet* (fig. 17), all of 1919, or Gris's *Painter's Window* of

1925 (no. 22), and Léger's *Still Life* of 1929 (fig. 12) and analyze them in simple formal terms, before dismissing them as more or less complex formal exercises. Where in such obvious demonstrations of the capacity of artists to transform and manipulate their subject matter is the intensity of experience of which Einstein writes? It is there, I believe, in that very play of form. And it is there in the surfaces, the materials, and the spaces of such works as we experience them, and in the shifting relationships that (always provisionally) give their forms the function of signs from which we can build things we know or can imagine. My argument here will be on the side of Einstein; my aim ultimately is to open "late Cubism" up to responses that accept its engagement with a world directly and compulsively experienced.

It is necessary, however, to close things down first of all by asking the simple questions, what was "late Cubism" and when exactly were its beginning and its end? In France, it is possible to say that Cubism as something perceived to be "living" and "advanced"—a real stimulus for debate—remained significant until at least 1925.⁷ And yet it has to be acknowledged that several of those who had made their names as Cubists, including Picasso, Braque, and Léger, continued to produce strong, recognizably cubist work well beyond 1925 or even 1930, and that artists outside France took up cubist theories and practices in significant new ways beyond those dates as well, most impressively Ben Nicholson in England and Stuart Davis in America (fig. 16).

The questions of what "late Cubism" was, and when it began, are less straightforward. A starting point for an answer is offered by the influential painter-critic





of the post-1918 decade, André Lhote, who pinpointed what he saw as a major change during the First World War. Interviewed in 1926, Lhote spoke of a “second” Cubism, a “Cubism born between 1914 and 1917, invented by Picasso. . . , a Spanish Cubism reduced to formulas by Juan Gris and Diego Rivera.”⁸ And there can be no doubt that, especially from 1916-17, significant new developments can be observed in Cubism, although they were not exclusively driven by the Spaniards Picasso and Gris, and the Mexican Rivera’s contribution was short-lived.

First, between 1916 and 1918 many of the Cubists signed contracts with Léonce Rosenberg, the dealer who had replaced Kahnweiler. (As a German, Kahnweiler was kept out of France during the war.) Second, apparently independently of one another, the leading Cubists who were not in uniform moved towards more structured and more lucid versions of “synthetic Cubism,” while Picasso and Gris both dropped the use of “collage” to concentrate on an increasingly solid and homogeneous use of oil paint to build surfaces. Third, between 1917 and 1919—with Rivera now in opposition—a concerted attempt was made to arrive at a coherent theory of Cubism, an attempt that involved the poets Pierre Reverdy and Paul Dermée, the artists Juan Gris, Gino Severini, Jean Metzinger, and Georges Braque, and Rosenberg himself.⁹ Where the “synthetic Cubism” of 1912-14 had been disparate, sometimes *ad hoc*, and always uncoordinated, that of 1916-19 was increasingly controlled and promoted in a highly coordinated way by Rosenberg as a unified movement. December 1918 and the first six months of 1919 saw Rosenberg re-launch Cubism for the post-war era with a carefully planned sequence of seven solo exhibitions featuring in succession Laurens,

ABOVE
Fig. 15 Georges Braque
Pipe and Basket, 1919
oil and sand on canvas
14 x 25 1/2 in.
Scott M. Black Collection

LEFT
Fig. 16 Stuart Davis
New York - Paris No. 2,
February 1931
oil on canvas
30 1/4 x 40 1/4 in.
Portland Museum of Art,
Maine. Hamilton Easter
Field Art Foundation
Collection, Gift of Barn
Gallery Associates, Inc.,
Ogunquit, Maine,
1979.13.10.

Metzinger, Léger, Braque, Gris, Severini, and Picasso.¹⁰ I would place the beginning of “late Cubism” here, between 1916 and 1919, with what was inevitably perhaps a failed attempt to unify and codify Cubism, the first and the last.¹¹

This attempt to codify Cubism is the reason for the seemingly straightforward image of “late Cubism” that was constructed both in the period and more recently, the highly abstract, formalist image attacked in 1921 by Jacques Blot. It was, in fact, André Lhote who first gave that image a clear shape. He did so as art critic of the widely read literary review, the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, in his response to the coordinated showing of the Cubists at the Salon des Indépendants of 1920. Here Lhote distinguished between two kinds of Cubism. One he called *a posteriori*; it was a continuing version of the “analytic Cubism” of 1912 and earlier, and it was based on the direct observation and analysis of things. He called himself an *a posteriori* Cubist, and might perhaps have called a work like the 1920 *Still Life* (fig. 14) by Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret) an *a posteriori* cubist work, if it had been shown at the Indépendants.¹²

The other kind of Cubism he called *a priori*; it was the “second Cubism” developed and codified after 1914. *A priori* Cubism was based, he argued, on the manipulation of abstract shapes, which only late in the process of composing were inflected to signify things.¹³ By 1920, he could have found it in the work of Picasso, Braque, Léger, Metzinger, Gleizes, Lipchitz, and Laurens, but most definitively in that of Juan Gris, who a year later was to single out the *a priori* method as the key to the “purity” of cubist painting.¹⁴ Lhote’s distinction, of course, is the conventional one between “analytic” and “synthetic” Cubism, but it is expressed in the unqualified language of the early post-war years, and typically for the time highlights the distance between the “second Cubism,” *a priori* Cubism, and the world presented to the senses. “Pure Cubism” became Lhote’s term for *a priori* Cubism. This was a new, formulaic Cubism, and it had shut out the world once and for all. Many agreed.

When one actually looks at the cubist work produced by Lhote’s “pure Cubists” after 1920, the simplicity of this picture of “late Cubism” becomes unacceptable. To begin with, it was immensely diverse, as this exhibition demonstrates; so diverse that it cannot be called formulaic. If Léger is set aside, one can certainly establish in the period 1916-20 a stylistic cohesion that could place the Cubism of Gris, Metzinger, Severini, Laurens, Lipchitz, and even Picasso and Braque within the same stylistic category. The term “crystal Cubism” has often been applied to their work of this period, and it has proved easy to identify its well-

RIGHT
Fig. 17 Jacques Lipchitz
Pierrot with Clarinet, 1919
stone
28 3/4 x 9 3/4 x 9 1/2 in.
Private Collection.

BELOW
Fig. 18 Henri Laurens
Woman with a Fan, 1919
bronze
23 1/2 in. (length)
Robert and Maurine
Rothschild Collection.



ordered lucidity with the “Call to Order” that pervaded French society and culture as a complement to the *union sacrée* of the First World War and to the years of reconstruction that followed the Armistice.¹⁵

But what are we to make of Gris’s *Seated Harlequin* of 1923, or Picasso’s *Harlequin Musician* of 1924 (fig. 2) in relation to each other, and in relation to “crystal Cubism”; and what are we to make of them in relation to Gleizes’s near-abstract paintings of the early-to-mid-1920s or Léger’s *The Bunch of Grapes* of 1928 (fig. 13) and *Still Life* of 1929 (fig. 12)? Lhote would have called all these works “pure cubist.” If they can be so termed, they reveal an immense capacity for change and for range of individual expression under that heading. Writing of post-1912 Cubism, Carl Einstein referred to many different cubist “syntheses,” and indeed that is what we find. It can be said that we have as many late Cubisms as there were late Cubists. Cubism was a way of making art that opened things up for Stuart Davis when he made his Parisian visit in 1928; it did not close things down. With works like *New York—Paris, No. 2* of 1931 (fig. 16), he added another “late Cubism” to the many he found.

The one Cubist whose work unequivocally substantiated the image of late Cubism as a denial of nature was Albert Gleizes (fig. 19).¹⁶ Gleizes was, however, the exception, and even hostile critics had to acknowledge an apparently decisive move *back* to nature in the work of Braque and Gris. In 1922 Braque was given the accolade of a special exhibition at the Salon d’Automne. Among the eighteen canvases he showed were two pictures of a new kind: classically draped nudes whose massive torsos and limbs were spread out flat across dark grounds in irregular but still naturally shaped patches of earth brown and ochre (Musée national d’Art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou). A tempering of his Cubism was widely remarked on, and one critic hostile to Cubism’s post-war “purity,” Roger Allard, even claimed that he had left Cubism behind, and with it what he called “the abstractors of the quintessence.”¹⁷

The following year, in 1923, D-H. Kahnweiler’s Galerie Simon organized a solo exhibition of Gris. It included such recent works as *Seated Harlequin* of 1923 (University of Michigan Museum of Art) and *Open Window with Hills* of 1923 (Telefónica de España), works in which everything depicted is instantly recognizable, and in which the angular does not necessarily take over from the organic curve in the representation of the human and the natural. As in the case of Braque, a tempering of cubist anti-naturalism was widely remarked on, and the most energetic of Cubism’s enemies, Louis Vauxcelles, claimed that whatever Gris said, his painting now was plainly rooted in the experience of nature, not in the manipulation of form.¹⁸







In Gris's case, this development of a Cubism more open to the "natural" was at least partly a response to a campaign mounted during the early 1920s by Waldemar George for a more chromatically rich and "human" Cubism.¹⁹ In the context of George's later "Humanist" rejection of the fragmentation of experience in Cubism, it can seem that Gris and Braque, in works like these, have indeed replaced cubist abstraction and fragmentation with an acceptance of wholeness as an aspiration in their representation of the world. In fact, both continue to dismember and reinvent the elements of the things they paint in terms of formal and chromatic vocabularies distinctly personal to them, an effect heightened in Gris's *Seated Harlequin* by the patched contrasts of grey, white, and a distinctly artificial purple that break apart the figure. And by 1925, in a painting like *The Black Guitar* (fig. 20), Gris would be stressing once again the arbitrariness and artificiality of his pictorial sign-making. Braque's and Gris's flirtation with the look of naturalism was no more than a provisional aspect of their work, but it does bring out the openness of late Cubism to what even Waldemar George would have recognized as "humanization."

There were others, too, once identified with Léonce Rosenberg's campaign for a post-war cubist revival, who were attracted to "humanized" styles in the early 1920s, notably Auguste Herbin and Jean Metzinger, and they more uncompromisingly

ABOVE
Fig. 20 Juan Gris
The Black Guitar, 1926
oil on canvas
19 3/4 x 28 5/8 in.
The University of Iowa
Museum of Art, Gift of
Owen and Leone Elliott,
1968, 20.

LEFT
Fig. 19 Albert Gleizes
Abstract Composition, 1921
oil on canvas
32 x 26 1/4 in.
Private Collection.

rejected the flatness and abstractness of cubist idiom. At the same time, they widened the range of their subject matter, in Herbin's case taking on rural landscape motifs and portraiture; the portrait in particular had actually been prohibited as a proper cubist subject by Pierre Reverdy in 1917.²⁰ Braque found room for the nude, generally avoided in cubist painting (though not in sculpture), but Gris continued throughout the mid-1920s to keep almost exclusively to a restricted range of still life and figure subjects. Of the Cubists whom Lhote would have called "pure," Lipchitz and Laurens as sculptors kept to a restricted range of subjects comparable to Gris's. It was only Léger who widened the range of cubist subject matter and made a point of it.

In 1919, Léger's exhibition at Léonce Rosenberg's Galerie de l'Effort Moderne stood out as an exception; its use of gun-metal grey "machine elements," of fragmentary poster lettering, and of brightly colored disks was a throwback to the pre-war celebration of modernity in Futurism, in his own painting, and in that of Sonia and Robert Delaunay. In 1919-20, his determination to engage with the intensity of urban experience led to the showing of an enormous canvas called *The City* at the 1920 Indépendants. He too painted nudes (from 1920), but, like Picasso, he detached the painting of the nude from his cubist practice, developing alongside it a mechanized variant on Picasso's Neo-Classicism. As a Cubist, he painted the modern mass-produced object, the machine, as in *Mechanical Element I* of 1924 (fig. 22), the city, and the semi-urbanized fringes of the city. Léger, above all, was the artist whose "late Cubism" Stuart Davis responded to in 1928, and Davis's *New York—Paris, No. 2* (fig. 16) can be taken as a late, individual extrapolation from the flat planimetric style Léger used to such effect in *Mechanical Element I*.

The individuality of Léger's idiom and his commitment to the urban and the industrialized as subject matter would have set him clearly apart from anything Waldemar George might have described as "human." But there is, nonetheless, in the explicitness and directness of Léger's and Davis's encounter with their urban subject matter, something that could be called a return to the "real." Léger's rhetoric certainly claimed as much.²¹ At the same time, however, Davis's *New York—Paris, No. 2* makes an unmistakable allusion to the flats of a stage set. And Léger often used items in his still lifes of the later 1920s that underlined their distance from the "natural": cheap images from labels recur, and in *The Bunch of Grapes* of 1928 (fig. 13) there is a mask, while the bunch of grapes itself can easily be read as a wig.

Manifest artificiality and above all theatricality are major features of much "late cubist" painting and sculpture. The theatrical is found especially in the work of Picasso, Gris, and Lipchitz. Picasso and Gris were both active as stage and costume designers for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, Picasso from 1917, Gris in 1922-24. The work of these artists is, of course, at its most obviously theatrical when its subject matter is from the *commedia dell'arte*; the portrait is replaced by the masked and

BELOW
Fig. 21 Jacques Lipchitz
Bather, 1924
coarsely crystalline
banded limestone
27 in. (height)
Fogg Art Museum,
Harvard University Art
Museums. Gift of
Lois Orswell.



costumed performer, almost always Pierrot or Harlequin. The artifice of disguise replaces recognizable identities; it is significant that Picasso reserved his own variant on Ingres's portrait style for portraiture as such. Still life, however, is also given a plainly theatrical look in both Picasso's and Gris's work of the 1920s. The framing of the table-top, and especially the use of window architraves in the open-window still lifes introduce obvious allusions to the stage and proscenium, so that the objects become performers too. In this exhibition, the most telling case is Gris's *The Painter's Window* of 1925 (no. 22).

Semioticians of the theatre have noted how the stage de-naturalizes everything placed upon it.²² A table laden with food becomes, on stage, no longer a laden table, but a sign that represents something in the drama: the social status and tastes, perhaps, of the "characters" who will use it. There are no "characters" in *The Painter's Window*, but the palette and brushes patently have become signs for the painter in what can be read as a displaced self-portrait. Both Picasso's and Gris's signs for things are manifestly arbitrary: they can be changed in fundamental ways without losing their power to refer to, say, a fruit bowl. A fruit bowl can be angular or curved or both; and the configuration of shapes that denote it can be almost identical to one that denotes a head, say, in another pictorial context. The heterogeneous idioms of their pre-war work had exposed this arbitrariness of the pictorial sign for all to see; the more cohesive idioms of their late cubist work do not. Its theatricality very often does the job instead; no one can miss the artifice involved, nor the point that painting works like language and can have many idioms.

If late cubist work could be so evidently committed to revealing the arbitrariness of its signs in relation to the things they denoted—so patently artificial—how can I now argue (alongside Carl Einstein) that it represents the world in all its physical immediacy as it is experienced through the senses? Let us return to Léger's claim that his pictures are about the "real," and constitute, indeed, a return to subject matter. Certainly after 1918, he returns to a more straightforward depiction of things, but what he claims for his work is not identity; it is, rather, equivalence. In 1923, he rejects the idea of imitating the perfection of the manufactured object, but advocates instead the making of paintings whose formal and chromatic strength and whose precision of finish can "rival" it.²³ Also in 1923, he accepts the fact that painting does not represent the world out there, an object, but brings together subject and object.²⁴ He anticipates Carl Einstein's notion of cubist painting as the representation of each artist's personal, subjective experience of things—the fusion of subject and object. Parallels with this way of thinking are to be found especially in Juan Gris's theoretical writing of the early-to-mid-1920s.²⁵ With the exception perhaps of Gleizes's near-abstract painting of the 1920s, all late cubist art, sculpture as well as painting, can be approached in these terms. It may reduce things to signs, but at the same time it presents as directly as possible each artist's personal experience of things and of the spaces that contain them.

The shuttling of colored planes and the confrontation of the planimetric and the perspectival gave space an immediately apprehended mobility in most late cubist work, a mobility that is strikingly different in, say, the contrasting cases of Léger, Braque, and Gris. Léger's representation of space as an experience of sudden, staccato shifts and interruptions is distinct from the slow, measured movements encountered in Braque or Gris.

As to "things," in Léger's case, a willingness to engage with the weight and solidity of figures and objects, and to do so using conventional techniques of tonal modelling, goes with the brushing of smooth, even sometimes slick surfaces, conveying a desire to grasp things as physical wholes and at the same time to polish and perfect them. In Gris's, Braque's, and Picasso's cases, a willingness to rob objects of palpable weight and solidity, to render them as insubstantial signs, goes with the increasing activation of the surface to the touch, enhancing the work's own substantiality as a surrogate of figure or object. Thus, Braque was led sometimes to treat the picture surface as if it were a malleable clay—earth—so that the entire work can be experienced as solid and weighty, restoring, as it were, the mass evacuated from his flattened figures or kitchen objects. And in 1926 Picasso brought back a particularly rough kind of collage, using coarse shirt and dish-cloth material with pinning and nailing, to reassert in his own aggressive way the objectness of the work itself. Similarly, both Lipchitz and Laurens combined a willingness to use the most insubstantial of figurative and still life signs with a pursuit of space in sculpture as the counterpart to palpable weight and density, using the tactile materials of terracotta and stone, as well as the rough and smooth of bronze (figs. 17, 18, 21).

Late cubist art is subjective in the sensational as well as the conceptual sense; it reinvents the world intellectually, but does so in such a way that it can be experienced with real physical immediacy. Perhaps the most obvious demonstration of its engagement with the senses is to be found in the sheer appetizing lushness of the fruit in the still lifes of Braque and Gris. By sight, the senses of touch and taste are aroused too; these paintings could even be called "aromatic."

Moreover, the interchangeable nature of cubist configurations as signs—now meaning one thing, now another—opened late Cubism to metamorphosis, the impact of which was often much more than simply "intellectual." Laurens's terracotta *Guitar* of 1920 (Museum of Modern Art) has the swelling mass of a pregnant belly; it is easily compared with the belly of the reclining female of *Woman with a Fan* (fig. 17). While, much more disturbingly, the right eye of Picasso's *Harlequin Musician* (fig. 2) is aligned vertically as if it can double as the sign for the female sex. It could be said that the metamorphic in late Cubism underlines the artist's intellectual control over the motif, the artist's capacity for linguistic as well as formal "play"; but the way it is actually used by Picasso often asks for the most direct of emotional responses, and the way it is actually used by Gris as well as Laurens

RIGHT
Fig. 22 Fernand Léger
Mechanical Element I, 1924
oil on canvas
25 1/2 x 20 in.
Smith College Museum of
Art, Northampton,
Massachusetts.
Purchased with Joseph
Brummer Fund, 1954.



invariably heightens the *physical* impact of the work. In Laurens, the swelling belly of the guitar makes an obviously gendered invitation to touch; in Gris, the use of rhyming forms to connect objects that arouse different senses—musical instruments, fruit, the lips of bowls or glasses—accentuates their physicality.

Cubism between 1911 and 1914, and after 1920, was plural. It was not *a* style; it was many styles. If it did not constitute a style, it amounted instead to a general approach that embraced the relationship of the artist to the art object and to subject matter, one that emphasized the inventive and transformative powers of the artist, but which never set aside the authenticity of each individual artist's

experience of the world. Certainly "late Cubism" destroyed the "wholeness" of human experience as Waldemar George understood it in 1930; but it did so because it was based on a rejection of the very idea of the separation of subject and object, and the need for their reconciliation. It was based on a belief in the absorption of everything into the experience of the subject—the artist.

Late Cubism has been dismissed with faint praise not only, mistakenly, as merely "formalist," but also as lacking in radical force and as weakened by its associations with the politically conservative values of the "Call to Order" in post-1918 France. It cannot be denied that Picasso's, Braque's, Gris's, Lipchitz's, and Laurens's stable and orderly renditions of "traditional" themes—the musical still life, the *commedia dell'arte*—underlined traditionalist associations. But neither can it be denied that late Cubism was open enough to leave room for Léger's progressive rendering of modernity, the product of an artist whose antagonism to the values of the traditionalist Right was vigorous and sustained, and yet who also was drawn to Neo-Classicism. And neither can it be denied that Carl Einstein gave Cubism ("late Cubism" included) a place in the dissident campaign mounted at the end of the 1920s by the periodical *Documents* against all that the "Call to Order" had represented.

Ultimately, I do not believe that late cubist art is to be accepted or rejected for its "radicalism" or its "conservatism," in cultural or political terms. I believe that its value lies, as it did for Einstein around 1930, in the intensity of the visual experiences it offers, and in the imprint those experiences leave of diverse sensibilities, each one distinctive, each one still alive to the extent that we, as spectators, can still respond from our own late twentieth-century worlds.

Notes

1 See Pinturricchio (Louis Vauxcelles), "Les Carnets des ateliers," *Le Carnet de la semaine* (Paris, 9 June 1918); Pinturricchio, "De Profundis," *Le Carnet de la semaine* (Paris, 28 July 1918). I discuss this more fully in: Christopher Green, *Cubism and Its Enemies: Modern Movements and Reaction in French Art, 1916-1928*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1987, pp.7-9.

2 Jacques Blot, "Réagir," *L'Amour de l'art* (Paris, December 1921): 399-401.

3 Waldemar George, "Cinquante ans de Picasso et la mort de la nature-morte," *Formes* 14 (Paris, April 1931): 56; Waldemar George, "Aut César aut nihil, En marge de l'exposition Picasso aux galeries Georges Petit," *Formes* 25 (Paris, May 1932): 268-71.

4 Carl Einstein, "Notes sur le cubisme," *Documents*, 1st Year, no. 3 (Paris, 1929): 146-59.

5 Carl Einstein, "Picasso," *Documents*, 2nd Year, no. 3 (Paris, 1930): 155-7.

6 See, for example, Eunice Lipton, *Picasso Criticism, 1901-1939: The Making of an Artist Hero*, New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1979, pp. 77-8; and Patricia Leighton, "Editor's Statement," *Art Journal* (Winter 1988): 270.

7 I would still argue, as I did in 1987, that the two exhibitions of late 1925, *L'Art d'aujourd'hui* and *La Peinture Surréaliste*, mark the moment when the perception of avant-garde leadership shifted significantly away from the Cubists to the Surrealists and, to a lesser

extent, non-objective artists. See Green 1987, chapter 5 & p.106.

8 André Lhote; in Jacques Guenne, "André Lhote," *L'Art vivant* (Paris, 1 March 1926).

9 Especially important were the following articles and statements: Pierre Reverdy, "Sur le cubisme," *Nord-Sud* 1 (Paris, 15 March 1917); Paul Dermée, "Un prochain age classique," *Nord-Sud* (Paris, January 1918); Gino Severini, "La Peinture d'avant-garde," *Mercure de France* (Paris, 1 June 1917); Georges Braque, "Pensées et réflexions," *Nord-Sud* 10 (Paris, December 1917). Metzinger and Gris are repeatedly referred to as influential thinkers.

10 The dates of the shows were as follows: Laurens, December 1918; Metzinger, January 1919; Léger, February 1919; Braque, March 1919; Gris, April 1919; Severini, May 1919; and Picasso, June 1919.

11 Green 1987, chapter 1.

12 Jeanneret (Le Corbusier), together with Amédée Ozenfant, produced what they called Purist painting. It is indeed based on the analysis of objects, but so freely are these objects used as formal elements in the paintings, especially after 1922, that it is possible to associate them with Lhote's category *a priori* Cubism. For a fuller discussion, see Green 1987, pp.89-91.

13 André Lhote, "Le Cubisme au Grand Palais," *Nouvelle Revue Française* (Paris, 1 March 1920): 467.

14 Juan Gris, "Statement" in "Vauvrecy" (Amédée Ozenfant), untitled, *L'Esprit Nouveau* 5 (Paris, February 1921): 533-4.

15 I myself have consistently applied this term to the Cubism of the "Call to Order." See Christopher Green, *Léger and the Avant-Garde*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1976, 131, and Green 1987, chapter 2. For the "Call to Order," see also Kenneth E. Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-*

1925, Princeton & London: Princeton University Press, 1989.

16 For a fuller treatment of Gleizes's work in this period, see Green 1987, pp.84-9.

17 Roger Allard, "Le Salon d'Automne," *La Revue Universelle* (Paris, October 1922): 486.

18 Pinturricchio (Louis Vauxcelles), "Mort de Quelqu'un," *Le Carnet de la semaine* (Paris, 1 April 1923): 8.

19 For a fuller discussion, see Christopher Green, *Juan Gris*, London: Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1992, chapter 5.

20 Pierre Reverdy, "Sur le Cubisme," *Nord-Sud* 1 (Paris, 15 March 1917).

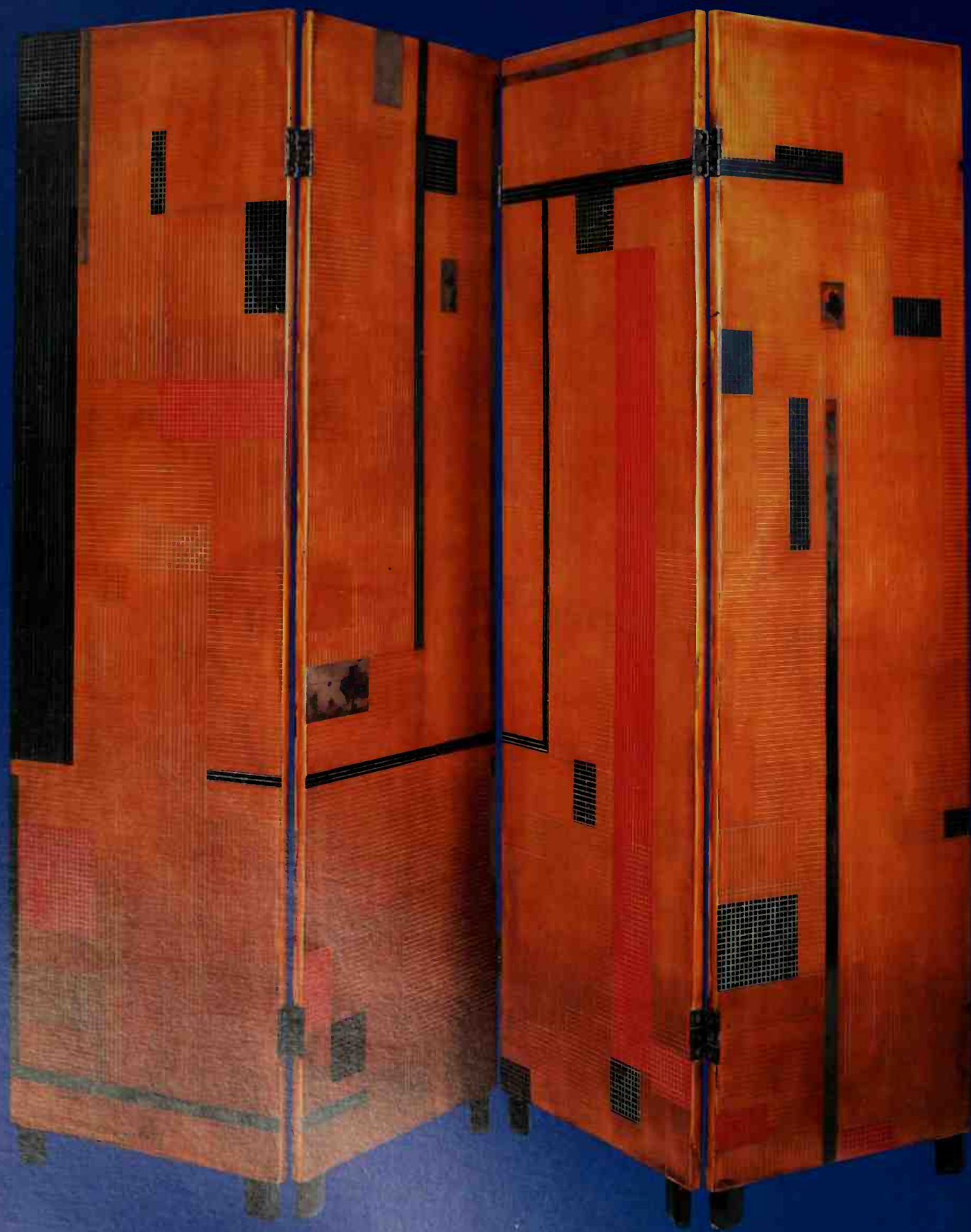
21 See, for example, Fernand Léger, "Correspondance," *Bulletin de l'Effort Moderne* 4 (Paris, April 1924), dated 1922.

22 See Green 1992, pp.157-8. Here I discuss the theories of the four Prague School semi-oticians of the theatre Otaka Zich, Jan Mukarovsky, Petr Bogatyrev, and Jiri Veltrusky, as outlined by Keir Elam in *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, London & New York, 1980.

23 Florent Fels, "Propos d'artistes, Fernand Léger," *Les Nouvelles littéraires* (Paris, Saturday, 30 June 1923): 4.

24 "The objective and the subjective are in constant collision, and thus creation, the issue of their interpenetration, will ever remain a partial enigma to the artist." Fernand Léger. "L'Esthétique de la machine," lecture delivered in June 1923, *Bulletin de l'Effort Moderne* 1 & 2 (Paris, January 1924).

25 For a full discussion of the question of the subjective in Gris, see Green 1992, chapter 4.



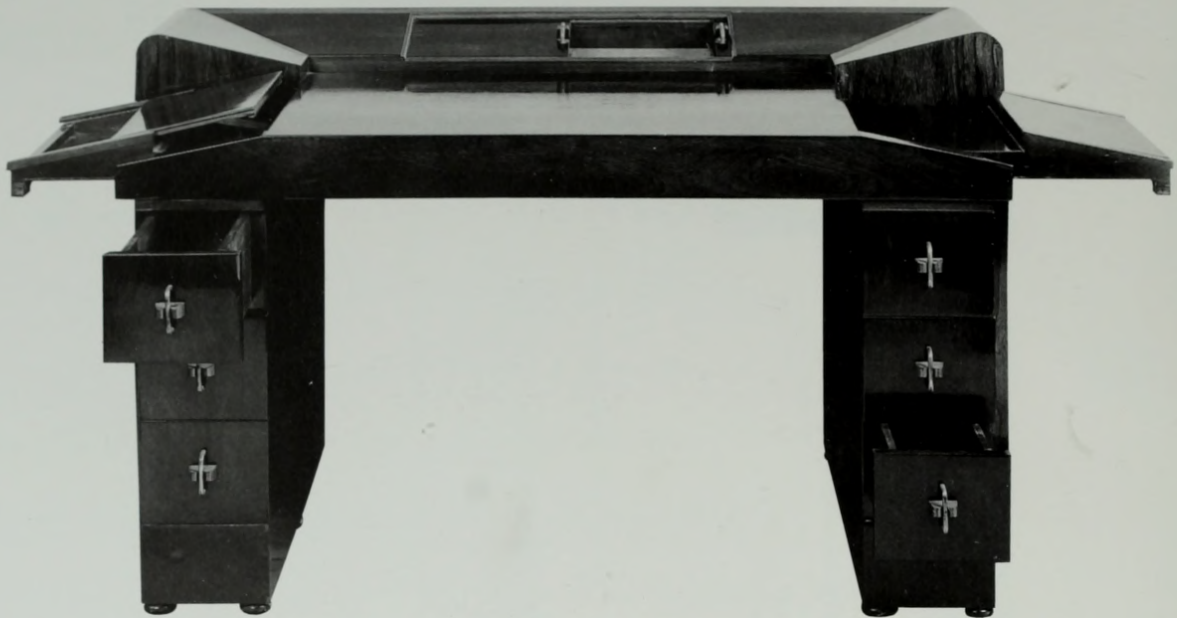
Cubism and Modern French Design

THE DECORATIVE AND APPLIED ARTS were revolutionized in France during the first quarter of this century. By 1925, the swirling, curvilinear patterns of Art Nouveau which dominated design at the turn of the century had been replaced with bold geometric forms, sharp angles, and faceted planes. This new aesthetic pervaded design in all of its manifestations: architecture, furniture, objects, textiles, graphics, jewelry, and even movie sets and costumes. In the abundant writings of commentators between the wars, there is repeated reference to one decisive catalyst in this development: Cubism. As the editor of the French *Encyclopedia of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts* wrote in 1925:

No matter what one thinks of the results obtained in painting and sculpture by Picasso, Braque and their followers, it is a fact that their method contributed to the development in designers for a taste in broken lines and abstract patterns, far from living nature. Tired of curves, having used up the joys of a timid naturalism and stylized flora and fauna which their predecessors had abused, the designers of 1925 have developed a capricious geometry.¹

This dramatic change from naturalistic to geometric forms was not merely an issue of style, but also involved social, political, and economic factors. This essay traces the history of design in France in the first part of the century to demonstrate how and why Cubism emerged between the wars as both an aesthetic and conceptual force in design's transformation.

LEFT
Fig. 23 Jean Dunand
*Screen with Geometric
Design*, circa 1927
silver lacquer, colored
lacquer, scored
brown lacquer and wood
67 x 79 in.
Anthony DeLorenzo,
New York.



France's decorative arts industry was in crisis in the period just prior to the First World War. Foreign imports were increasing at home, and the country's dominance of foreign markets had slipped dramatically.² To stimulate the decorative arts industry in France, critics such as Roger Marx started proposing to the government as early as 1909 an international exhibition of decorative and applied arts.³ The original date for the exhibition was 1913,⁴ but it was delayed and was eventually staged in 1925. The issues surrounding the proposed exhibition came to dominate the design industry in France for decades.

Industry reformers felt that French designers were too limited in producing cheap imitations of historical styles (usually from the eighteenth century). They called for the creation of a modern, up-to-date style:

For centuries, since the Middle Ages, with the exception of the Italian Renaissance, France has imposed her taste on the world. Today, we know only how to boast of the talent of our ancestors. Will we sink to being nothing but imitators and copyists? We must react courageously, we must get on our feet. We owe it to ourselves to renew our relationship to our tradition and remain creators. It is a primary duty of the Republic to help in the realization of modern styles.⁵

Something fresh and exciting was sought to attract market share.⁶ The first rule for the proposed international exhibition was that it feature exclusively "works of a new inspiration, and exclude all pastiches or copies of the past."⁷ The Société des Artistes Décorateurs, founded in 1901 with the aim of establishing a firm direction for the decorative arts in France, had set as its first priority the encouragement of new styles.⁸

The aim was not to create just a modern style, but one that was distinctly French, as the catalogue to the 1911 Salon de la Société des Artistes Décorateurs makes clear:

The goal towards which our Society is striving is nothing less than the creation of the French styles of the twentieth century. An endeavor which, alas, has received too little encouragement! Not everyone has yet understood the obvious necessity of having styles that harmonize with our habits and tastes.⁹

Art Nouveau, the most recent decorative art style in the country, qualified as new—as its very name suggests—but was very much an international style and was vehemently criticized as such by the nationalistic French press.¹⁰ Known as *Jugendstil* in Germany, *Jeune Belgique* in Belgium, *Modernista* in Spain and *Ver Sacrum* in Austria, Art Nouveau was cosmopolitan. Moreover, Art Nouveau's design was heavily dependent on *Japonisme*, or the influence of Japanese art, in its flatness and emphasis on nature. In addition, the leader of the Art Nouveau movement in France, Siegfried Bing, was a German by birth. He initially sought to emphasize the internationalism of the movement, but was compelled to soften his approach upon criticism from the French press.¹¹

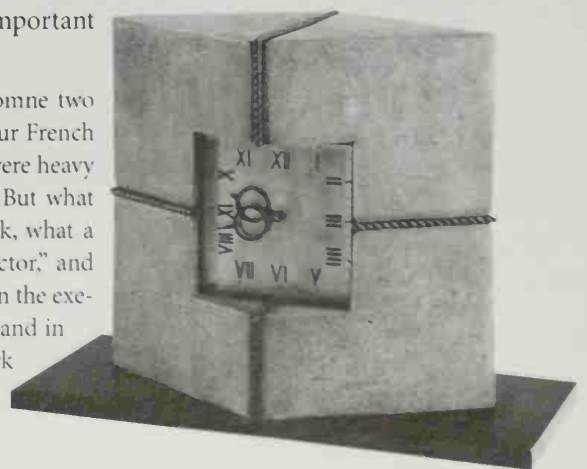
Industry reformers also observed that French designers were too eclectic or individualistic, that they did not collaborate enough with painters, sculptors, and architects to form a common aesthetic.¹² Compounding this problem was the method of presentation of objects in salons, isolated in display cases as if each were a masterpiece.¹³ As one French commentator later wrote, "More than one example has come to us from abroad of the superiority of cohesive groupings over individualism and the vain desire to stand out."¹⁴ Presenting an ensemble encourages the client to buy a whole display rather than only one or two objects. The client buys an aesthetic with pieces that go together. One of the principal stipulations for the proposed international exhibition of decorative art was that "the works be exhibited in harmonious ensembles."¹⁵

Germany, France's main competitor, was France's model for the presentation of unified ensembles.¹⁶ German designers exhibited at the Exposition Universelle of 1900 and were invited back by the French to exhibit at the Salon d'Automne of 1910.¹⁷ Critic Louis Vauxcelles commented in 1912 on the important lessons that were learned from the 1910 exhibition:

The exhibition of the Munich group at the Salon d'Automne two years ago served as a powerful and effective stimulus to our French furniture-makers and ornamentalists. . . . The ensembles were heavy and featured discordant tonalities that shocked the eye. But what powerful discipline, and what homogeneity in their work, what a perfect subordination of the artisan to the "artistic director," and also, what concern for technical achievement, what finish in the execution! This lesson was not lost. At the Salon d'Automne and in the Pavillon de Marsan, we felt the need to unite, to work together, to fight against the foreign competitor.¹⁸

LEFT
Fig. 24 Pierre Chareau
Desk, 1925
rosewood veneer on
mahogany and oak,
polished steel handles
30 1/2 x 55 x 30 1/4 in.
Primavera Gallery,
New York.

BELOW
Fig. 25 Pierre Legrain
Clock, circa 1925
metal and sharkskin
10 x 10 3/4 x 6 1/2 in.
Primavera Gallery,
New York.



RIGHT
Fig. 26 Sonia Delaunay
Images from *Ses Peintures,
Ses Objets, Ses Tissus
Simultanés, Ses Modes*,
circa 1925
pochoir (portfolio of 20
images)
22 3/8 x 15 3/8 x 5/8 in.
Robert and Maurine
Rothschild Collection.

At the Salon d'Automne of 1912, a group of French artists led by André Mare, submitted an entry that quickly acquired the name "Maison Cubiste." This project, consisting of three interiors and part of a full-scale façade, was an attempt at presenting a modern French ensemble.¹⁹ In addition to André Mare, the project's artists included: Marcel Duchamp, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Roger de la Fresnaye, Albert Gleizes, Marie Laurencin, Fernand Léger, Jean Metzinger, Paul Vera, and Jacques Villon. While all the participants were associated with the cubist movement, their contributions were not altogether cubist, as photographs of the installation reveal.²⁰ The façade is essentially an eighteenth-century building to which a few geometric flourishes have been applied. The furniture seems quite traditional, as well. The presence of cubist paintings on the wall does not alone make the installation cubist. Indeed, this project was criticized at the time for being too eclectic.²¹ Nevertheless, it is significant that the first serious attempt to produce a unified modern French design, one that would break away from Art Nouveau, already looked to Cubism as a guiding spirit.

The imperative to achieve a unified modern French design gained momentum and urgency after the First World War. The war fostered a climate of collaborative enterprise called *union sacrée*, which emphasized the importance of banding together to achieve a common goal.²² The war intensified feelings of patriotism, and hence the need for an aesthetic that was particularly French.²³ Writing in 1918, André Vera declared that designers "should work as though they were part of a confraternity. They will express accord by the development, not of individual themes, but of a common theme, an ensemble of forms and colours whose goal will be to awaken and channel the energies of the nation in a particular and French way."²⁴ Cubism was considered a constructive art of synthesis, or building up, and it therefore resonated strongly with a France in the throes of post-war reconstruction.²⁵

A unified and modern French style of design was achieved by 1925 when the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* took place in Paris. The style that became fixed in history at this landmark exhibition has since become known as "Art Deco," which can be considered the quintessential expression of Cubism in modern design. The importance of this exhibition was summed up by a visitor:

When Cézanne uttered his historic dictum that all form could be reduced to the cone, the cylinder and the cube, the cornerstone was laid for a movement which has its fullest expression in the international Exposition des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. . . . The Exposition marks the coming of age of a new décor. It differs from any expositions of the past. . . in that it is a setting up of new standards, not a perfecting or adapting of the old. It is a definite break with the past. . . . With the Exposition des Arts Décoratifs a new style is established to take its place with the historic periods. To the Renaissance, the Jacobean, the Georgian, the Rococo and the Colonial is added the Modern. It can no longer be said to be in a state of experimentation representing isolated examples by the more venturesome of the designers.²⁶



The highlight of this exhibition was the contribution by the Société des Artistes Décorateurs: "Reception Rooms and Private Apartments of a French Embassy," a collaborative effort to which over thirty important French artists and designers contributed, including Pierre Chareau and Robert Mallet-Stevens.²⁷ Designer Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann submitted a project called "Townhouse for a Collector."

There is little doubt that Cubism was the unifying aesthetic at the Exposition, as critic Waldemar George commented in an article on the interiors presented there:

Architects, furniture designers, decorators are uniformly applying the principles of composition that Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, and Juan Gris have brought in. . . . In a word, progress in the current production of the decorative arts as a whole is being made under the auspices of Cubism.²⁸

Critic Léon Deshairs offered a similar assessment:

The individualism for which the designers of 1900 were reproached has abated. In architecture as in furniture, silverwork, jewelry, even trinkets, one taste seems to dominate: that of simple volumes, smooth surfaces, sharp edges and, when ornamentation appears, abstract designs. To define this trend, one word has come to the lips a thousand times: Cubism.²⁹

Cubist painter and theorist André Lhote called the 1925 Exposition "the world's homage to Cubism."³⁰

After the Exposition, Cubism's influence continued to be far-reaching, as critic Léon Werth noted in 1927:

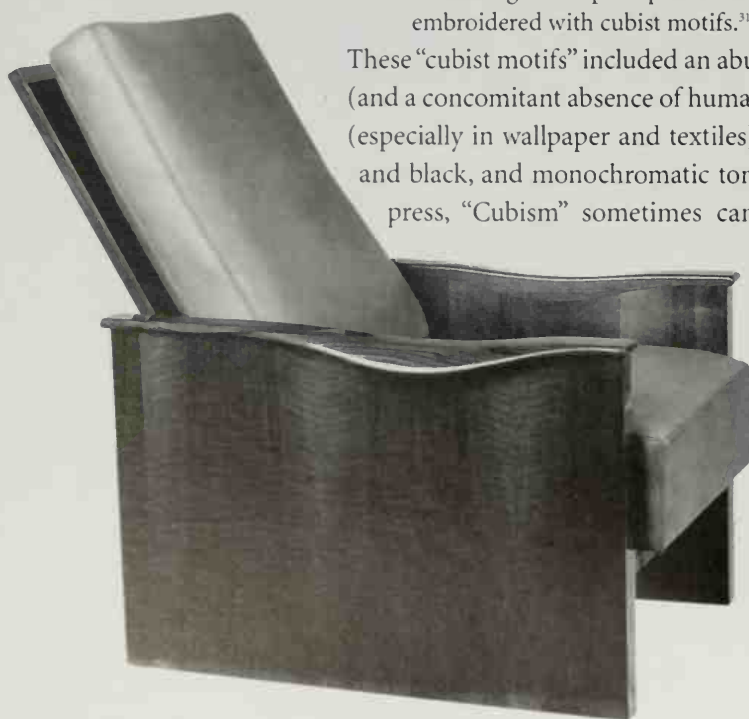
Whoever visits the Salon des Artistes Décorateurs will be struck by its unity. . . . [T]he flower has been replaced by the triangle. . . . [I]t is a fact that the influence of Cubism can be found throughout ornamentation, not only in furnishings. It inspires posters in the street and one can see women's shoes embroidered with cubist motifs.³¹

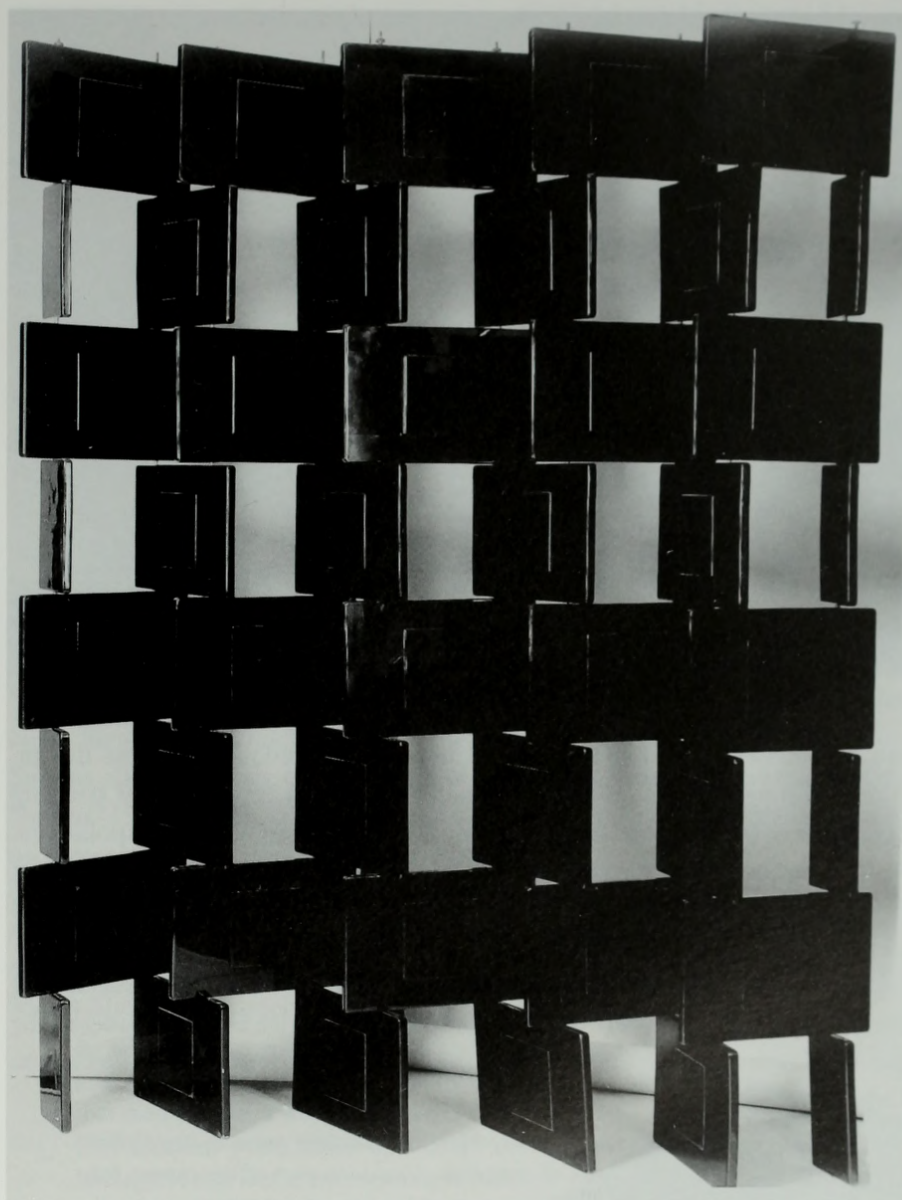
These "cubist motifs" included an abundance of geometric forms and sharp angles (and a concomitant absence of human, animal, or floral forms); flatness of designs (especially in wallpaper and textiles); the predominance of browns, tans, beiges, and black, and monochromatic tonalities as in analytic cubist paintings. In the press, "Cubism" sometimes came to represent anything anti-naturalistic, abstract, or geometric.

Pierre Chareau, a regular salon contributor who was one of the leading forces in furniture design between the wars, was a great proponent of Cubism. Many cubist artists, especially Jacques Lipchitz, were his friends.³² He collected paintings and sculptures by Braque, Gris, Lipchitz, and Picasso³³ and regularly featured their works with his furniture in his salon installations.

RIGHT
Fig. 27 Eileen Gray
Folding Block Screen,
circa 1922-1925
black lacquer and wood
7 ft. (height)
Anthony DeLorenzo,
New York.

BELOW
Fig. 28 Pierre Chareau
Reclining Armchair,
circa 1925
walnut with leather
cushions
34 x 31 x 27 in.
Anthony DeLorenzo,
New York.





Chareau's chairs and desks show the direct influence of Cubism in their faceting of planes, which create a play of light and shadow. Such is the case with the desk (fig. 24) featured in the "Study-library" that Chareau contributed to the French Embassy installation at the 1925 Exposition. His chairs and lighting fixtures can be seen as dynamic interplays of planes (fig. 28). According to his wife, it was the Cubists's "architectural sense of structure" that appealed to him.³⁴ His dedication to Cubism led him to be called a "cubist designer."³⁵



Sonia Delaunay, bringing geometry and contrasting colors to women's fashion, was most responsible for taking Cubism into fashion and textile design. Along with her husband, Robert, she had developed a type of cubist painting before the First World War that was dubbed "Orphism" by Guillaume Apollinaire. At the heart of this art form was the idea of "simultaneity," in which the contrast of colors was more important than a painting's subject. Sonia Delaunay started designing clothing before the First World War and continued to make "simultaneous clothing and fabrics" between the wars (fig. 26), exhibiting a selection at the 1925 Exposition in her "Boutique Simultanée." André Lhote considered the use of a variety of textures in her fashion designs to be wholly indebted to Cubism:

We know that to stimulate the expressiveness of their surfaces, the Cubists often resorted to contrasts of materials. A smooth part of the canvas contrasts with a rough surface. They even went so far as to introduce sand in the mixture that covers certain parts of the canvas. I know such combinations of different materials: fur, wool, silk, used ingeniously by Mrs. Delaunay, who brought to the eye a pleasure of the same order, that is to say, tactile.³⁶

Furniture designer Eileen Gray, an Irish woman who worked in Paris most of her life, began to employ the Oriental lacquer technique early in her career.³⁷ Her most spectacular use of this technique came in her famous rectangular screen, which is informed by a cubist aesthetic (fig. 27). The black rectangles can be turned sideways to create a play of planes. Gray also created beautiful rugs and carpets with geometric designs, as well as wall hangings, lamps, and mirrors.

Pierre Legrain, a distinguished designer of stylish book bindings and furniture, worked for such famous patrons as the Vicomte de Noailles and couturier Jacques Doucet.³⁸ Doucet hired Legrain to bind some of his rare books before commissioning him, in 1926, to design furniture and frames for a new studio in Neuilly.³⁹ Made of expensive materials—such as exotic woods, lacquer, and leather—Legrain’s works display a concern with Cubism in their predominant use of geometric elements and faceted planes. Such is the case, for example, with his sharkskin-covered clock (c.1926) in which two sloping planes meet in the front and back (fig. 25).

Architect Robert Mallet-Stevens contributed five pieces to the 1925 Exposition: a studio for the Société des Auteurs du Film; a garden of cubist trees made of reinforced concrete (in collaboration with Jan and Joel Martel); the Pavillon du Syndicat d’Initiative de Paris; the Pavillon du Tourisme; and a hall in the French Embassy installation.⁴⁰ Among his major architectural achievements was a villa for the Vicomte and Vicomtesse de Noailles, in Hyères in the south of France, that looks like a mass of white cubes on the side of a hill (1923-25).⁴¹ It featured cubist sculptures by Jacques Lipchitz and Henri Laurens, as well as a “cubist garden” designed by Gabriel Guevrekian.⁴² Man Ray called the villa the “Dice Castle” and made it the subject of one of his films.⁴³ The interior includes cubic furniture by Djo Bourgeois,⁴⁴ Pierre Chareau, and Eileen Gray. Mallet-Stevens also created six cubistic villas on a street in Auteuil named rue Mallet-Stevens (1926-27) (fig. 29). He also had a building design executed in the form of an object by a firm called Desny (fig. 30).⁴⁵

Indeed, Cubism left its mark on the whole field of modernist architecture. In the preface to a portfolio on contemporary architecture—which included buildings by Bourgeois, Guevrekian, Pierre Jeanneret, Le Corbusier, André Lurçat, and Mallet-Stevens—architect Alphonse Barrez noted:

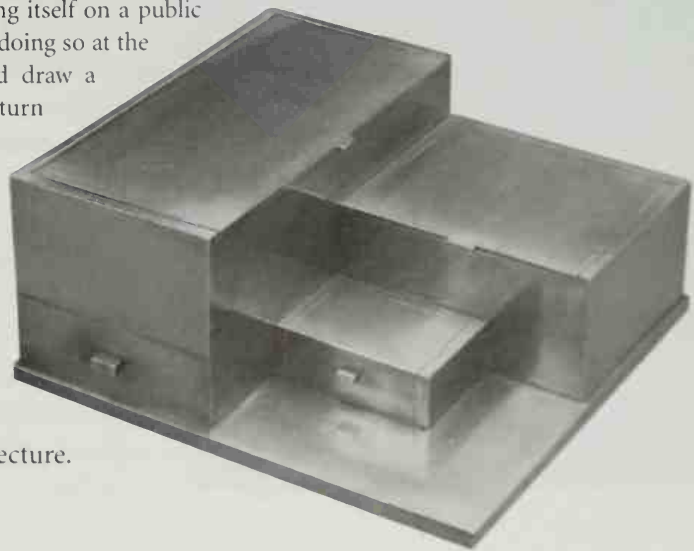
By some singular good fortune, Cubism, which was so ardently and dearly defended, is finally imposing itself on a public that used to greet it with scorn, and is doing so at the very moment when those who could draw a lasting and new lesson were starting to turn away from it. What is happening? What has happened is not very clear except that tireless, patient, repeated efforts triumphed over a common taste that was too much a slave to the past.⁴⁶

Cubism’s influence is most apparent in the cubic forms of the buildings constructed by these architects.

The ensemble idea extended to architecture.

LEFT
Fig. 29
Robert Mallet-Stevens
*M. Allatini's House, Rue
Mallet-Stevens, Auteuil,
1926-27.*

BELOW
Fig. 30
Robert Mallet-Stevens
(executed by Desny)
*Box, circa 1928
nickel-plated metal
with matte finish
3 1/2 x 9 x 8 in.
Primavera Gallery,
New York.*



Writing in 1925 critic Gaston Varenne declared, "The link between architecture and furniture is the most important issue today."⁴⁷ Indeed, the architect was often the interior designer, as well. Mallet-Stevens, Chareau, and Le Corbusier were all architects who also exercised significant control over their interior environments.⁴⁸ Critic Guillaume Janneau explained further:

Fifteen years ago, an ensemble consisted of a group of objects all contributing to one single effect. The evolution then underway has now reached its logical conclusion: architecture itself is being subordinated to the general effect. It has ceased to rule over the "minor arts." It has only its own part to play in the orchestra.⁴⁹

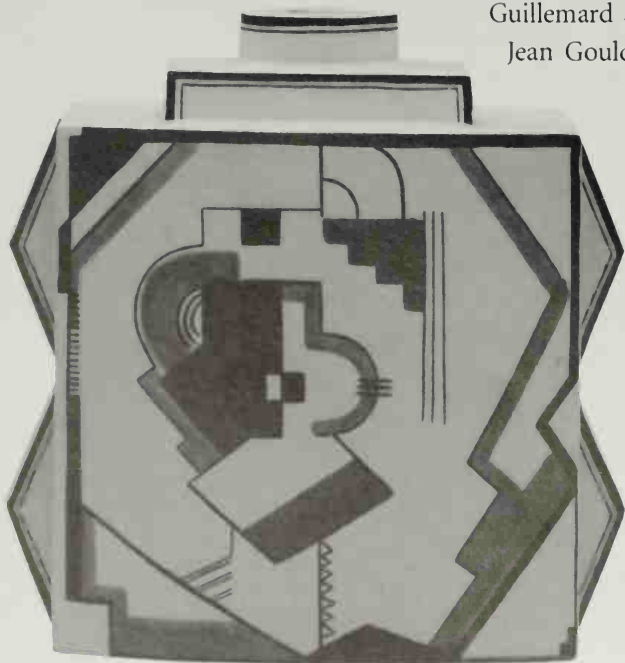
Cubism also pervaded movie and theater sets.⁵⁰ Picasso's creation of the costumes for *Parade* (1917), sometimes referred to as a "cubist ballet," is generally considered to be the first major attempt to integrate avant-garde art in ballet decor.⁵¹ Sonia Delaunay made set and costume designs for two films, *Le Vertige* (1926) and *Le Pet't Parigot* (1926), and for Tristan Tzara's play *Le Cœur à Gaz* (1923).⁵² Mallet-Stevens designed the set for *Le Vertige*, and Pierre Chareau contributed furniture. Mallet-Stevens, Chareau, and Léger all worked on the sets of the film *L'Inhumaine* (1923-1924). Léger created ballet costumes and sets for Darius Milhaud's *La Création du Monde* (1923) and other productions of the Ballets Suédois.⁵³

Several other figures made objects between the wars that are cubist in inspiration. Jean Dunand was a prolific designer of cubist lacquered screens (fig. 23). Robert Lallemant, who made a series of cubist ceramics c.1930 (fig. 31), was praised by one writer for work that was "of completely French inspiration."⁵⁴ Marcel

Guillemard also designed ceramics in geometric shapes (no. 26).

Jean Goulden, a doctor by training, is best known for making small metal household objects such as clocks and lamps in a powerfully cubist manner.⁵⁵ A. M. Cassandre, graphic artist and jewelry designer, used the system of measurement known as the Section d'Or, or Golden Section, so loved by the cubists, in his designs.⁵⁶ Jean Luce was a ceramicist who both applied cubist designs to his wares and made works inherently cubist in shape, such as his tea service of 1933 (no. 49).⁵⁷ Raymond Templier was one of several designers of cubist jewelry.

The furniture and objects described thus far were handcrafted in precious materials such as imported woods and were time-consuming to produce. As a result, they were expensive pieces created for an elite clientele. A new, more "democratic" aesthetic developed in the late 1920s, though, and



gained many supporters, leading to a schism in the decorative arts field in France. Glass and metal began to rival fine woods and textiles.⁵⁸ These modern materials, drawn from machines and factory culture, allowed for mass production and wide distribution. The new environments were not meant for a collector or an ambassador, but rather for the businessman and the general public.

The Union des Artistes Modernes, formed in 1929, promoted the machine aesthetic.⁵⁹ The stated goals of the UAM were virtually identical to those of the Société des Artistes Décorateurs—artists, artisans, and architects were to work together to create a homogenous, modern aesthetic—but the times had changed, and they required a new approach. Francis Jourdain, a founding member of the UAM, described their aims as

the production of pieces ever more bare and naked, owing their inspiration not to fantasy but to logic. It was no longer a question of decorating forms, of hiding utility, with a so-called “pleasantness,” of disguising a mundane object as a work of art, but of creating forms well adapted to their function, and harmoniously expressive of it. . . . Even if the newcomers have divested the artist of his role as entertainer, they have given him a far higher mission, a striving for precision of statement, singularly akin to that of the engineer.⁶⁰

Thus by 1929, the emphasis had changed from luxuriousness to sparseness, from decoration to utility. Many of the designers associated with the Société des Artistes Décorateurs became members of the UAM—including Chareau, Eileen Gray, Lallemand, Pierre Legrain (who died just two months after the group was founded), and Mallet-Stevens—in an effort to remain on design’s cutting edge.

The roots of this new movement can be found in the work and theories articulated in the preceding decade by Le Corbusier. Fascinated with machines and factories, he sought to incorporate their influence into his designs. Le Corbusier was famous for saying that the house is “a machine for living in” and for calling furniture “equipment.” His ideas about design were first explained in numerous articles in his journal, *L’Esprit Nouveau* (1920–25). His essays on decorative art were brought together and published as a book in 1925.⁶¹ Le Corbusier had presented his *Pavillon de l’Esprit Nouveau* at the 1925 Exposition, which celebrated standardized, mass-produced furnishings.⁶² The fact that Le Corbusier’s very advanced ideas about machines and design were at odds with the luxury products of other designers represented at the 1925 Exposition may account for the placement of his pavilion in the shadow of the Grand Palais, far from the center of the fair.⁶³



ABOVE
Fig. 32 Le Corbusier (with Charlotte Perriand and Pierre Jeanneret)
Chair with pivoting back,
designed 1928
chrome-plated tubular
steel, canvas
25 1/2 x 25 x 26 1/2 in.
Barry Friedman, Ltd.,
New York.

LEFT
Fig. 31 Robert Lallemand
Vase, circa 1930
glazed ceramic
8 1/2 x 9 x 3 3/4 in.
Norwest Corporation,
Minneapolis, Minnesota.

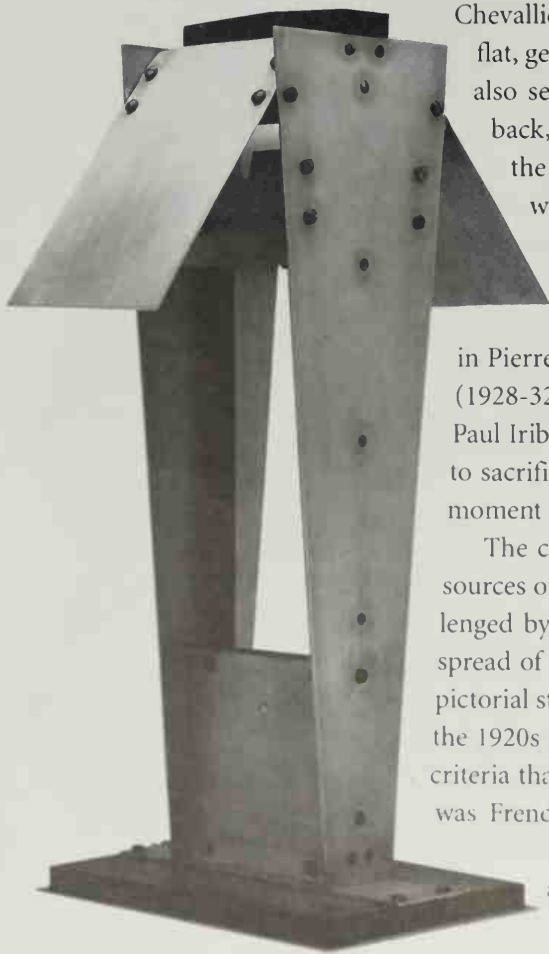
BELOW
Fig. 33
Jacques Le Chevallier
Desk Lamp,
circa 1930
aluminum with bakelite
top and bottom
16 1/2 x 7 1/2 x 11 in.
Norwest Corporation,
Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The commitment by the UAM to mass-produced objects over handcrafted luxury goods revived a debate about quality that began in the nineteenth century, when mass-produced objects were usually cheap, inferior products. In 1860s Britain, William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement rejected technology and looked back to the medieval guild tradition for inspiration in creating high-quality handcrafted objects. Early in this century, the Wiener Werkstätte in Vienna, and Charles Rennie Mackintosh in Glasgow, also put a premium on finely-crafted high-quality works. In 1920s Germany, the Bauhaus, a socially-conscious institution, sought to resolve the “quantity versus quality” issue by making well-designed, mass-produced objects of high quality. Le Corbusier and the UAM in France were taking an approach similar to that of the German Bauhaus.⁶⁴ Their kinship to Bauhaus ideals and practices raised once again the issue of an international versus a national style.⁶⁵ Indeed, the architects associated with the UAM—Bourgeois, Chareau, Guevrekian, Le Corbusier, and Mallet-Stevens—are recognized today as individuals whose work characterize the “International Style.”

Even with the arrival of the new machine aesthetic, Cubism continued to be a guiding spirit. We see its influence in the work of UAM member Jacques Le Chevallier, for example, such as his aluminum lamp (c.1930) whose flat, geometric planes flange out in different directions (fig. 33). We also see it in Le Corbusier’s design for an armchair with pivoting back, the “fauteuil à dossier basculant” (1928) (fig. 32)—made with the collaboration of Charlotte Perriand and Pierre Jeanneret—which contains chrome metal tubing. With its play of planes and geometric elements, this chair is like a synthetic cubist painting carried into the third dimension. In architecture, the cubistic machine aesthetic reached its fullest expression in Pierre Chareau’s metal and glass masterpiece, the *Maison de Verre* (1928-32), whose façade is made of cubes of glass. In 1930, designer Paul Iribe, still partial to naturalistic forms, exclaimed: “Are we going to sacrifice the flower on the altar of the cube and the machine? The moment of truth has arrived.”⁶⁶

The cube and the machine, not nature, were indeed the primary sources of inspiration well into the 1930s, until they in turn were challenged by Surrealism on the eve of the Second World War. With the spread of Cubism to all facets of design, what had begun as a rarefied pictorial style before the First World War became a popular language in the 1920s and ‘30s. This was possible because Cubism embodied three criteria that met the needs of the French design field: it was modern; it was French; and it could lend itself to a unified aesthetic program.

Cubism acted as a conceptual and aesthetic catalyst that allowed French designers to forge a new style.



Notes

1 *Encyclopédie des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes au XXème Siècle*, vol. 2, Paris, 1925, p.26. This twelve-volume series was produced in conjunction with the landmark *Exposition des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* of the same year.

2 Yvonne Brunhammer and Suzanne Tise *The Decorative Arts in France, 1900-1942: La Société des Artistes Décorateurs*, New York: Rizzoli, 1990, p.27; Nancy J. Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France: Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1991, pp.52-59; Kenneth E. Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-1925*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989, p.174.

3 Roger Marx, "L'Art Décoratif s'atrophie en France, pour le vivifier, il faut faire une Exposition internationale en France," *Le Matin* (27 February 1909), reproduced in G. Roger Sandoz and Jean Guiffrey, *Arts Appliqués et Industries d'Art aux Expositions*, Paris: Comité Français des Expositions à l'Etranger et Société d'Encouragement à l'Art et à l'Industrie, 1912, pp.160-62. This book reproduces many important articles on the decorative arts from the period, making it an invaluable source for understanding the development of design in France.

4 Emile Berr, "Une Exposition en 1913," *Le Figaro* (29 March 1911) reproduced in Sandoz and Guiffrey, pp.172-73.

5 *Rapport sur une exposition internationale des arts décoratifs modernes, Paris 1915* (Paris, dated 1 June 1911), as cited in Silver, p. 367.

6 A 1911 report by various groups in the decorative arts industry presented to the French Parliament to establish an international exhibition of decorative arts says: "Having established that the current economic conditions make it necessary for our art industries, sources of important national wealth, to establish and diffuse new models, . . . we ask for the Parliament and the Government's support. . . ." in Sandoz and Guiffrey, pp.125-26.

7 Sandoz and Guiffrey, pp.126 and 127.

8 The society's aims are noted in Sandoz and Guiffrey, p.101.

9 Le Comité, "Appel adressé par la Société des artistes décorateurs," *Catalogue du Sixième Salon des artistes décorateurs* (1911), pp.6-7, as cited in Brunhammer and Tise, p.33.

10 See Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin de Siècle France: Politics, Psychology and Style*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1989, pp.280ff. She quotes, for example, Charles Genuys's 1897 article called "A Propos de l'art nouveau, soyons français!" in which he states "Let us not allow this invasion of English and Belgian art!"

11 Ibid, and Troy, chapter 1, "Art Nouveau in Paris: From an Eclectic Movement to a National Style," pp.7-51.

12 Brunhammer and Tise, pp.18-19, 33.

13 Troy, p.67.

14 René Chavance, "Une sélection d'artistes décorateurs," *Art et Décoration*, tome 54 (July-December 1928): 129-40.

15 Sandoz and Guiffrey, p.127.

16 Troy, pp.57-67.

17 Ibid., p.63.

18 Louis Vauxcelles, "Le septième salon des Artistes décorateurs," *Art et Industrie* (April 1912): 123-24, as cited in Brunhammer and Tise, p.35.

19 For the most complete discussion of the Maison Cubiste see Troy, pp.79-97. My description of the project derives from Troy's work.

20 Troy, pp.79-97.

21 Ibid. p.85.

22 Silver, p.25.

23 Ibid.

24 André Vera, "La Doctrine décorative de demain," *Le Matin* (21 November 1918), as cited in Brunhammer and Tise, p.48.

25 Silver, pp.346ff.

- 26 Helen Appleton Read, "The Exposition in Paris," part 1, *International Studio* (September 1925): 93-7. For an excellent research guide to this Exposition see *Cinquantième de l'Exposition de 1925: Bibliographie 1925*, Paris: Société des Amis de la Bibliothèque Forney, 1976.
- 27 Gaston Varenne, "L'Exposition des Arts Décoratifs: Le Mobilier Français," *Art et Décoration* 48 (July 1925):1-15. Varenne considered this to be the first successful example of collaborative work.
- 28 Waldemar George, "L'Exposition des arts décoratifs et industriels de 1925: les tendances générales," *L'Amour de l'Art*, no.8, (August 1925): 283-291 as cited in Kenneth Frampton and Marc Vellay, *Pierre Chareau, Architect and Craftsman, 1883-1950*, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1985, p.46.
- 29 Léon Deshairs, "L'Exposition des Arts Décoratifs, la Section Française: conclusion," *Art et Décoration* 48 (July 1925): 205-217.
- 30 André Lhote, preface to *Sonia Delaunay, Ses Peintures, Ses Objets, Ses Tissus Simultanés, Ses Modes*, Paris: Librairie des Arts Décoratifs, 1925, n.p. English translation in Arthur Cohen, ed., *The New Art of Color: The Writings of Robert and Sonia Delaunay*, New York: The Viking Press, 1978, pp.176-78.
- 31 Léon Werth, "Le XVIIe Salon des artistes décorateurs," *Art et Décoration* (1927): 161-200.
- 32 Dollie Chareau to René Herbst, letter, October 25, 1952 or 1953, in Frampton and Vellay, p.24. Both artists fled to the United States. Chareau, who came in 1939 with his wife Dollie, lived in the United States until his death. His principal achievement in this country was the design and construction of a weekend home and artist's studio for Robert Motherwell in East Hampton, Long Island.
- 33 Frampton and Vellay, pp.24-6.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Gaston Varenne, "L'Esprit Moderne de Pierre Chareau," *Art et Décoration* 43 (January-June 1923): 129-38. For more on Chareau and Cubism, see Joseph Abram, "Aux confins de la culture cubiste: Pierre Chareau et le néo-rationalisme des années trente en France" in *Pierre Chareau, architecte, un art intérieur*, Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1994.
- 36 André Lhote, n.p.
- 37 Philippe Garner, *Eileen Gray: Designer and Architect, 1878-1976*, Cologne: Benedikt Taschen, 1993.
- 38 On Legrain, see Philippe Garner, "Pierre Legrain—Decorateur," *Connoisseur* (June 1975): 130-37; Pierre Lièvre's obituary "Pierre Legrain" dated 17 July 1929, reproduced in Arlette Barré-Despond, *Union des Artistes Modernes*, Paris: Editions du Regard, 1986, p.564; and Léon Rosenthal, "Pierre Legrain, relieur," *Art et Décoration* 43 (1923): 65-70.
- 39 For more on Doucet, see André Joubin, "Jacques Doucet, 1853-1929," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (March 1930): 69-72, and François Chapon, *Mystère et Splendeurs de Jacques Doucet, 1853-1929*, Paris: Jean-Claude Lattès, 1984.
- 40 Alastair Duncan, *Art Deco Furniture: The Furniture Designers* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984, pp.120-21.
- 41 See Léon Deshairs, "Une Villa à Hyères," *Art et Décoration* (July 1928): 1-24. Also, C. Briolle, A. Fuzibet, G. Monnier, *Robert Mallet-Stevens: la villa Noailles*, Marseille: Editions Parenthèses, 1990.
- 42 For an interesting discussion of this garden and others inspired by Cubism see Dorothee Imbert, *The Modernist Garden in France*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993.
- 43 On this film, see Kenneth Wayne, "Man Ray and Film" in *Man Ray Cinema*, Paris: Association internationale pour Man Ray, 1993, pp.9-20.
- 44 For more on this figure, see A. H. Martinie, "Djo Bourgeois, architecte et décorateur," *Art et Décoration* 53 (1928): 64-80.
- 45 See Alastair Duncan and Audrey Friedman, "La Maison Desny," *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* (Summer 1988): 86-93.

- 46 Alphonse Barrez, préface, *Maisons d'Habitations*, Paris: l'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui, 1925.
- 47 Gaston Varenne, "L'Exposition des Arts Décoratifs: Le Mobilier Français," *Art et Décoration* 48 (July 1925): 1-15.
- 48 On this phenomenon in Le Corbusier's work see Christopher Pearson, "Integrations of Art and Architecture in the work of Le Corbusier: Theory and Practice from Ornamentalism to the 'Synthesis of the Major Arts,'" Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1995.
- 49 Guillaume Janneau, "La décoration intérieure, le mobilier," *Beaux Arts* 12 (June 1925): 181-96, as cited in Frampton and Vellay, p.61.
- 50 For films that were cubist in conception, see Standish D. Lawder, *The Cubist Cinema*, New York: New York University Press, 1975.
- 51 There is extensive literature on this topic. See Jeffrey Weiss, *The Popular Culture of Modern Art: Picasso, Duchamp, and Avant-Gardism*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994, chapter 4, "Le Spectacle Intérieur: Parade, popular cubism, and the law of systematic confusions," pp.165-253; Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso's "Parade,"* London: Sotheby's Publications, 1991. Richard Axsom, "Parade": *Cubism as Theater*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1979. See also, Douglas Cooper, *Picasso Theatre*, New York: Abrams, 1987; originally published 1968.
- 52 Léon Moussinac, "Le Décor et le Costume au Cinéma," *Art et Décoration*, tome 50 (July-December 1926): 129-39. See also R. Mallet-Stevens, *Le Décor au Cinéma*, Paris, 1928.
- 53 See, for example, Judi Freeman, "Fernand Léger and the Ballets Suédois" in Nancy Van Norman Baer, ed., *Paris Modern, The Swedish Ballet 1920-1925*, San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1996. For more on Cubism and spectacles see Silver, pp.299-303.
- 54 Georges Pillement, "Chez Robert Lallemand," *Art et Décoration* 61 (March 1932): 65-74.
- 55 Alastair Duncan, *Art Deco Furniture: The Furniture Designers*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984, pp.87, 97.
- 56 Arlette Barré-Despond, *Union des Artistes Modernes*, Paris: Editions du Regard, 1986. p.374.
- 57 Barré-Despond, p.456. See also Jean Clair, ed., *The 1920s: Age of Metropolis*, Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1991, p.568.
- 58 For a fascinating article on this debate see Charlotte Perriand, "Wood or Metal?," *Creative Art* 4, no. 4 (April 1929): 278-79. 1928 seems to have been a key year in this development: "The outstanding feature this year is the definite entry of metal into the domain of furnishing." Marcel Valotaire, "The Paris Salons," *Creative Art* 3, no. 3 (September 1928): 200-03.
- 59 The most complete study of this organization is Arlette Barré-Despond's previously-cited, *Union des Artistes Modernes*.
- 60 Francis Jourdain, "Origin and raison d'être of the new society: the first salon of the Union des Artistes Modernes at the Pavillon Marsan," *Creative Art*, vol.7, no. 5, (November 1930): 368-371.
- 61 Le Corbusier, *L'Art décoratif d'aujourd'hui*, Paris: G. Crès, 1925. It appeared in English translation as Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today*, translated and introduced by James Dunnett, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1987. As Dunnett points out, the title of the book is peculiar given that Le Corbusier did not believe in decoration, but rather a pristine white, "purist" aesthetic.
- 62 Troy, p.193.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 On the Bauhaus see Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, Ise Gropius, eds., *Bauhaus: 1919-1928*, New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1986 (1938).
- 65 The German example encouraged the diffusion of the machine aesthetic in France. See André Salmon, "Exposition du Werkbund au XXe Salon des Artistes Décorateurs," *Art et Décoration* 58 (July 1930): 13-17.
- 66 Paul Iribe, *Choix*, Paris: Editions Draeger, 1930. For a fascinating comment on this book, see R. C., "Chronique: Standardisation ou individualité," *Art et Décoration* 60 (July 1931): n.p.

Exhibition Checklist

All artists worked in France for varying lengths of time.
Artists are identified by their country of birth.



ABOVE
Fig. 34 Fernand Léger
Untitled, 1937
oil on canvas
25 5/8 x 36 7/8 in.
Portland Museum of
Art, Maine.
Bequest of Ellen Hunt
Harrison, 1996.8.14.

GEORGE C. AULT
UNITED STATES, 1891-1948

1. *House in Brittany*, 1925

oil on canvas

21 3/4 x 18 1/4 in.

Portland Museum of Art, Maine. Hamilton
Easter Field Art Foundation Collection, Gift
of Barn Gallery Associates, Inc., Ogunquit,
Maine, 1979.13.1.

GEORGES BRAQUE
FRANCE, 1882-1963

2. *Pipe and Basket*, 1919

oil and sand on canvas

14 x 25.1/2 in.

Scott M. Black Collection.

Illustrated on p. 27.

GEORGES BRAQUE

3. *Still Life with Fruit and Bowl
and Pitcher*, 1920

oil on canvas

15 3/4 x 24 3/8 in.

Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Copp, Sr. Collection,
Portland Museum of Art, L32.1987.

GEORGES BRAQUE

4. *Still Life with Fruit*,
circa 1920-22

oil and sand on canvas

13 3/4 x 25 1/2 in.

The University of Iowa Museum of Art. Gift
of Owen and Leone Elliott, 1968.2.

GEORGES BRAQUE

5. *Still Life on a Mantelpiece*,
circa 1923

oil and sand on canvas
25 1/2 x 30 in.

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New
York. Room of Contemporary Art Fund,
1941.

GEORGES BRAQUE

6. *Still Life with Grapes
and Clarinet*, 1927

oil on canvas
21 1/4 x 28 3/4 in.

The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.
Illustrated on back cover.

GEORGES BRAQUE

7. *Still Life with Pears, Lemons,
and Almonds*, 1927

oil on canvas
19 7/8 x 24 in.

Scott M. Black Collection.
Illustrated on p. 59.

GEORGES BRAQUE

8. *Beach at Varangeville*, 1932

oil on canvas
9 1/8 x 15 3/4 in.

Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University Art
Museums. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harold
Gershinowitz.

PIERRE CHAREAU

FRANCE, 1883-1950

9. *Desk*, 1925

rosewood veneer on mahogany and oak,
polished steel handles
30 1/2 x 55 x 30 1/4 in.

Primavera Gallery, New York.
Illustrated on p. 40.

PIERRE CHAREAU

10. *Reclining Armchair*, circa 1925

walnut with leather cushions
34 x 31 x 27 in.

Anthony DeLorenzo, New York.
Illustrated on p. 44.

PIERRE CHAREAU

11. *Pair of small side tables*,
circa 1927

palisandre or acajou and iron
18 1/2 x 19 1/2 x 19 1/2 in.

Primavera Gallery, New York.

STUART DAVIS

UNITED STATES, 1894-1964

12. *Study for New York - Paris No. 2*,
circa 1928-1931

graphite on wove paper
15 x 19 15/16 in.

Portland Museum of Art, Maine.
Museum purchase with a gift from
Mary-Leigh Smart, 1982.183.

STUART DAVIS

13. *New York - Paris No. 2*,
February 1931

oil on canvas
30 1/4 x 40 1/4 in.

Portland Museum of Art, Maine.
Hamilton Easter Field Art Foundation
Collection, Gift of Barn Gallery Associates,
Inc., Ogunquit, Maine, 1979.13.10.
(On view in exhibition from
August 31 - October 20, 1996).
Illustrated on p. 26.

ROBERT DELAUNAY

FRANCE, 1885-1941

14. *Eiffel Tower*,
circa 1925

oil on burlap
51 1/2 x 12 1/2 in.

Philadelphia Museum of Art. The Louise
and Walter Arensberg Collection,
50-134-AI-43.



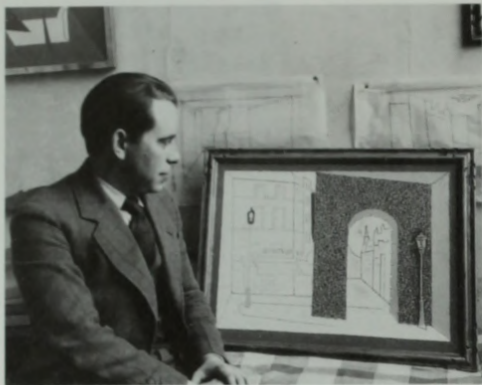
Pablo Picasso, circa 1930



Georges Braque, circa 1930



Fernand Léger, circa 1921



Stuart Davis, 1928-29

SONIA DELAUNAY
UKRAINE,
1886-1979
15. *Ses Peintures, Ses Objets, Ses Tissus Simultanés, Ses Modes*, circa 1925
pochoir (portfolio of 20 images)
22 3/8 x 15 3/8 x 5/8 in.
Robert and Maurine Rothschild Collection.
Illustrated on p. 43.

JEAN DUNAND
SWITZERLAND, 1877-1942
16. *Screen with Geometric Design*, circa 1927
silver lacquer, colored lacquer, scored brown lacquer and wood
67 x 79 in.
Anthony DeLorenzo, New York.
Illustrated on p. 38.



Jean Dunand, circa 1925

ALBERT GLEIZES
FRANCE, 1881-1953
17. *Abstract Composition*, 1921
oil on canvas
32 x 26 1/4 in.
Private Collection.
Illustrated on p. 30.

JULIO GONZÁLEZ
SPAIN, 1876-1942
18. *Harlequin*, circa 1930
iron, ed. 2/4
16 15/16 x 11 13/16 x 11 13/16 in.
Robert and Maurine Rothschild Collection.

EILEEN GRAY
IRELAND, 1878-1976
19. *Folding Block Screen*, circa 1922-1925
black lacquer and wood
7 feet (height)
Anthony DeLorenzo, New York.
Illustrated on p. 45.

JUAN GRIS
SPAIN, 1887-1927
20. *Guitar and Compote*, 1921
oil on canvas
15 x 24 1/8 in.
The Art Institute of Chicago. Mildred Sexton Trust gift, 1976.427.

JUAN GRIS
21. *Mandolin and Pipe*, 1925
oil on canvas
24 x 29 in.
Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire. Gift of Ruth and Charles Lachman.

JUAN GRIS
22. *The Painter's Window*, 1925
oil on canvas
39 1/4 x 31 3/4 in.
The Baltimore Museum of Art. Bequest of Sadie A. May (BMA 1951.306).

JUAN GRIS
23. *Still Life with a Guitar*, 1925
oil on canvas
28 3/4 x 36 1/4 in.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Gift of Joseph Pulitzer, Jr., 67.1161.

JUAN GRIS
24. *The Black Guitar*, 1926
oil on canvas
19 3/4 x 28 5/8 in.
The University of Iowa Museum of Art. Gift of Owen and Leone Elliott, 1968.20.
Illustrated on p. 31.

JUAN GRIS
25. *Still Life: Table with Red Cloth*, 1926
oil on canvas
36 1/4 x 23 5/8 in.
Washington University Gallery of Art, St. Louis, Missouri. Gift of Mr. Charles H. Yalem, 1963.

MARCEL GUILLEMARD
FRANCE, 1886-1932
26. *Vessel with Lid*, circa 1930
glazed stoneware
8 x 7 1/8 x 7 1/8 in.
Norwest Corporation, Minneapolis.

JEAN HÉLION
FRANCE, 1904-1987
27. *Standing Figure*, 1935
oil on canvas
51 1/4 x 35 in.
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo,
New York. Room of Contemporary
Art Fund, 1944.

AUGUSTE HERBIN
FRANCE, 1882-1960
28. *Composition (The Bull)*, 1930
oil on canvas
28 1/2 x 36 in.
Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College,
Hanover, New Hampshire. Gift of Evelyn A.
and William B. Jaffee, Class of 1964H,
through the Friends of Dartmouth Library.

ROBERT LALLEMANT
FRANCE, 1902-1954
29. *Vase*, circa 1930
glazed ceramic
8 1/2 x 9 x 3 3/4 in.
Norwest Corporation, Minneapolis.
Illustrated on p. 48.

HENRI LAURENS
FRANCE, 1885-1954
30. *Basket of Grapes*, 1919
polychromed terracotta
14 1/4 x 7 1/4 x 5 1/4 in.
Indiana University Art Museum. Jane and
Roger Wolcott Memorial.

HENRI LAURENS
31. *Woman with a Fan*, 1919
bronze
23 1/4 in. (length)
Robert and Maurine Rothschild Collection.
Illustrated on p. 28.

HENRI LAURENS
32. *Head of a
Woman*, circa 1925
stone
17 1/8 x 7 7/8 x 7 7/8 in.
Hirshhorn Museum and
Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution.
Joseph H. Hirshhorn
Bequest, 1981.

JACQUES LE
CHEVALLIER
FRANCE, 1896-1981
33. *Desk Lamp*, circa 1930
aluminum with bakelite top and bottom
16 1/2 x 7 1/2 x 11 in.
Norwest Corporation, Minneapolis.
Illustrated on p. 50.

LE CORBUSIER
(CHARLES-ÉDOUARD
JEANNERET)
SWITZERLAND, 1887-1965
34. *Still Life*, 1920
oil on canvas
31 7/8 x 39 1/4 in.
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Van Gogh Purchase Fund, 1937.
Illustrated on p. 24.

FERNAND LÉGER
FRANCE, 1881-1955
35. *Two Women*, 1922
oil on canvas
35 3/4 x 23 in.
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Gift (partial) of Richard S. Zeisler.
Illustrated on p. 2.

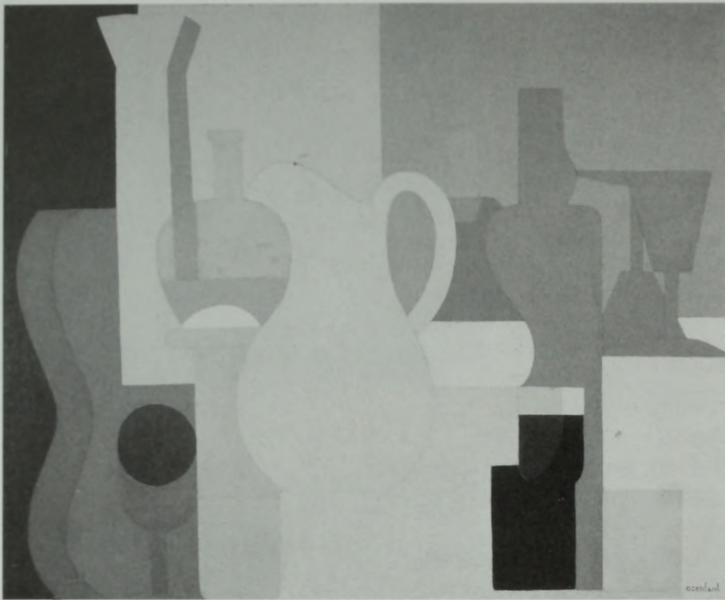
FERNAND LÉGER
36. *Animated Landscape*, 1924
oil on canvas
19 1/2 x 25 5/8 in.
Philadelphia Museum of Art. Gift of
Bernard Davis, 1950-63-1.



Jacques Lipchitz with *Musical
Instruments* (no. 46), circa 1925



Pierre Chareau, circa 1925



FERNAND LÉGER
 37. *Mechanical Element I*, 1924
 oil on canvas
 25 1/2 x 20 in.
 Smith College Museum of Art,
 Northampton, Massachusetts. Purchased
 with Joseph Brummer Fund, 1954.
 Illustrated on p. 35.

FERNAND LÉGER
 38. *Mural Painting*, 1924
 oil on canvas
 71 x 31 1/4 in.
 The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
 Given anonymously, 1965.

FERNAND LÉGER
 39. *Flowers*, 1926
 oil on canvas
 36 5/16 x 25 3/4 in.
 Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of
 Design, Providence, Rhode Island.
 Anonymous gift.

FERNAND LÉGER
 40. *The Bunch of Grapes*, 1928
 oil on canvas
 31 7/8 x 51 1/8 in.
 Scott M. Black Collection.
 Illustrated on p. 23.

FERNAND LÉGER
 41. *Still Life*, 1929
 oil on canvas
 36 x 25 3/4 in.
 Scott M. Black Collection.
 Illustrated on p. 22.

FERNAND LÉGER
 42. *Untitled*, circa 1935
 gouache on paper
 8 7/8 x 13 5/8 in.
 Portland Museum of Art, Maine.
 Anonymous gift, 1986.4.

FERNAND LÉGER
 43. *Untitled*, 1937
 oil on canvas
 25 5/8 x 36 7/8 in.
 Portland Museum of Art, Maine.
 Bequest of Ellen Hunt Harrison, 1996.8.14.
 Illustrated on p. 54.

PIERRE LEGRAIN
 FRANCE, 1887-1929
 44. *Clock*, circa 1925
 metal and sharkskin
 10 x 10 3/4 x 6 1/2 in.
 Primavera Gallery, New York.
 Illustrated on p. 41.

JACQUES LIPCHITZ
 LITHUANIA, 1891-1973
 45. *Pierrot with Clarinet*, 1919
 stone
 28 3/4 x 9 3/4 x 9 1/2 in.
 Private Collection.
 Illustrated on p. 29.

JACQUES LIPCHITZ
 46. *Musical Instruments*, 1923
 stone (unique)
 19 x 35 x 6 1/2 in.
 The Estate of Jacques Lipchitz. Courtesy of
 Marlborough Gallery, New York.
 Illustrated on p. 57.



PAR LEFT
Fig. 35. Amedée Ozenfant
Purist Still Life, 1926
oil on canvas
23 5/8 x 28 11/16 in.
Rachel Adler Gallery,
New York.

LEFT
Fig. 36. Georges Braque
*Still Life with
Pears, Lemons,
and Almonds*, 1927
oil on canvas
19 7/8 x 24 in.
Scott M. Black Collection.

JACQUES LIPCHITZ
47. *Bather*, 1924
coarsely crystalline banded limestone
26 1/2 x 12 x 8 1/2 in.
Fogg Art Museum. Harvard University Art
Museums. Gift of Lois Orswell.
Illustrated on p. 32.

JACQUES LIPCHITZ
48. *Reclining Nude with Guitar*,
circa 1928
bronze
16 1/8 x 29 5/8 x 12 3/4 in.
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution. Gift of
Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966.

JEAN LUCE
FRANCE, 1895-1964
49. *Deco Tea Service*, circa 1933
porcelain
Gloria and Laurence Lieberman, Boston.

ROBERT MALLET-STEVENS
FRANCE, 1886-1945
50. *Box*, circa 1928
(executed by Desny)
nickel-plated metal with matte finish
3 1/2 x 9 x 8 in.
Primavera Gallery, New York.
Illustrated on p. 47.

AMÉDÉE OZENFANT
FRANCE, 1886-1966
51. *Purist Still Life*, 1926
oil on canvas
23 5/8 x 28 11/16 in.
Rachel Adler Gallery, New York.
Illustrated on p. 58.

ALFRED PELLAN
CANADA, 1906-1988
52. *Musical Instruments A*, 1933
oil on canvas
52 x 77 in.
Davis Museum and Cultural Center,
Wellesley College. Gift of Mr. and Mrs.
Henry Clifford, 1954.32.



Henri Laurens, 1935

PABLO PICASSO
SPAIN, 1881-1973
53. *Still Life with a Vase, a Pipe, and
a Package of Tobacco*, Spring, 1919
oil on canvas
25 5/8 x 21 1/4 in.
Philadelphia Museum of Art. The Samuel S.
White, 3rd, and Vera White Collection,
67-30-71.

PABLO PICASSO
54. *Still Life*, 1922
oil on canvas
51 1/4 x 39 in.
Marina Picasso Collection (Inv. 12307).
Courtesy of Galerie Jan Krugier,
Geneva, Switzerland.
Illustrated on p. 11.

PABLO PICASSO
55. *Composition with Glass*, 1923
oil on plywood
8 5/8 x 13 1/8 in.
Marina Picasso collection (Inv. 12320).
Courtesy of Jan Krugier Gallery, New York.
Illustrated on p. 7.

PABLO PICASSO
56. *Still Life with a Guitar and a
Compote (The Mandolin)*, 1923
oil on canvas
31 3/4 x 39 7/16 in.
Philadelphia Museum of Art. A.E. Gallatin
Collection, 52-61-98.
Illustrated on p. 8.



Robert Mallet-Stevens, circa 1925



Eileen Gray, circa 1926

PABLO PICASSO
57. *Harlequin Musician*, 1924
oil on canvas
51 1/2 x 38 1/4 in.
National Gallery of Art, Washington.
Given in loving memory of her husband, Taft
Schreiber, by Rita Schreiber, 1989.31.2.
Illustrated on p. 6.

PABLO PICASSO
58. *Young Woman with
Mandolin*, 1932
oil on board
25 1/16 x 18 5/16 in.
University of Michigan Museum of Art.
Gift of The Carey Walker Foundation.
Illustrated on p. 14.

PABLO PICASSO
59. *Head of a Woman (Portrait of
Marie-Thérèse Walter)*, 1934
oil on canvas
21 5/8 x 15 in.
Scott M. Black Collection.
Illustrated on p. 19.

PABLO PICASSO
60. *Reclining Figure*, 1934
oil on canvas
18 1/4 x 25 3/4 in.
The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.
Gift of The Carey Walker Foundation, 1994.
Illustrated on p. 15.

PABLO PICASSO
61. *Head of a Woman with Hat*,
September 1938
pencil and oil wash on canvas
18 1/4 x 15 in.
Courtesy of PaceWildenstein, New York
Illustrated on p. 18.

JOHN STORRS
UNITED STATES, 1885-1956
62. *The Abbott (Gendarme Seated)*,
1920
bronze
17 1/8 x 8 1/8 x 12 1/8 in.
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution. Gift of Joseph H.
Hirshhorn, 1966.
Illustrated below.

JOHN STORRS
63. *Study for Abstract Sculpture*,
January 13, 1931
crayon on paper
14 11/16 x 11 1/2 in.
Portland Museum of Art, Maine.
Museum purchase with a gift from William
D. Hamill, 1985.191.

LÉOPOLD SURVAGE
RUSSIA, 1879-1968
64. *Landscape*, 1921
oil on canvas
15 x 21 11/16 in.
Yale University Art Gallery. Gift of
Collection Société Anonyme.

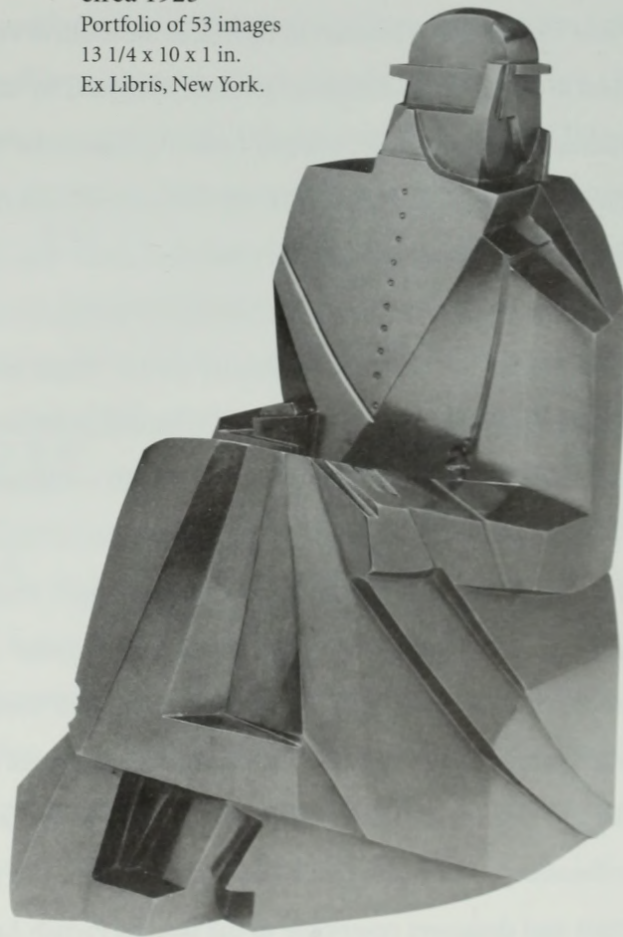
GEORGES VALMIER
FRANCE, 1885-1937
65. *The Fish*, 1929
oil on canvas
16 x 61 in.
Primavera Gallery, New York.

JACQUES VILLON
FRANCE, 1875-1963
66. *Color Perspective*, 1922
oil on canvas
36 5/16 x 28 13/16 in.
Yale University Art Gallery. Gift of
Collection Société Anonyme.

JACQUES VILLON
67. *Color Perspective*, 1922
oil on canvas
23 11/16 x 36 1/4 in.
Yale University Art Gallery. Gift of
Collection Société Anonyme.

68. *Maisons d'Habitations,
Paris: L'Architecture
d'Aujourd'hui*,
circa 1925
Portfolio of 53 images
13 1/4 x 10 x 1 in.
Ex Libris, New York.

BELOW
Fig. 37 John Storrs
*The Abbott
(Gendarme Seated)*, 1920
bronze
17 1/8 x 8 1/8 x 12 1/8 in.
Hirshhorn Museum and
Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution.
Gift of Joseph H.
Hirshhorn, 1966.



Chronology

1919 Picasso paints a series of cubist still lifes before an open window. **1920** March 3-16: Second exhibition of the *Section d'Or*, or Cubist Salon, occurs. This show presents Cubism as a coherent movement that has survived the war. Like the first one in 1912, this exhibition takes place at the Galerie de la Boétie. Participants include: Alexander Archipenko, Georges Braque, Albert Gleizes, Fernand Léger, Serge Férat, Léopold Survage, Louis Marcoussis, Michel Larionov, Natalia Gontcharova, Irène Lagut, and Marie Vassilief. The Dadaists are excluded. October 7-November: the same show apparently travels to the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. Le Corbusier's journal, *L'Esprit Nouveau*, appears and lasts until 1925. **1921** Olga Koklova's and Picasso's son, Paulo, is born. The French government begins to auction the stock of German art dealers Wilhelm Uhde and Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler confiscated during the First World War as enemy property. The auctions continue until 1923. **1923** Robert Mallet-Stevens starts construction of a cubist villa for the Vicomte and Vicomtesse de Noailles in Hyères, in the south of France. Picasso's first major statement is published in *The Arts*, an American journal, translated by the Mexican-American artist and art dealer, Marius de Zayas. Sonia Delaunay creates costumes for Tristan Tzara's play, *Le Coeur à Gaz*. Solo exhibition of Juan Gris at Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler's Galerie Simon. **1924** Léger makes his cubist film *Ballet Mécanique*. Marcel L'Herbier's cubist film *L'Inhumaine*. Robert Mallet-Stevens creates the interior architecture, Pierre Chareau the furniture, and Fernand Léger the laboratory of the engineer Noorsen. **1925** January 12-31: Third exhibition of the *Section d'Or*. Titled "Exposition de la Section d'Or, 1912-1925," it is the debut exhibition at the Galerie Vavin-Raspail, 28 rue Vavin, 138 blvd. Raspail. Catalogue with preface by Guillaume Dalbert. Works by: Archipenko, Braque, Robert Delaunay, Duchamp-Villon, Albert Gleizes, Juan Gris, Roger de la Fresnaye, Marie Laurencin, Léger, André Lhote, Marcoussis, Jean Metzinger, Picasso, and Jacques Villon. This is the first *Section d'Or* exhibition in which Picasso contributes (3 paintings). April 29-October: *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes*, an event organized by the Ministry of Commerce to help re-establish the pre-eminence of French design. This event is considered to be the pinnacle of what is later called the Art Deco movement. Sonia Delaunay has her *Boutique Simultanée* which also offers Jacques Heim's furs, and paintings by Robert Delaunay. Over thirty artists and designers contribute to the famous French Embassy installation. Le Corbusier's

Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau features cubist works by Henri Laurens, Léger, and Jacques Lipchitz. Picasso paints *The Three Dancers*. **1926** Construction begins of six cubist villas by Robert Mallet-Stevens in Auteuil. Sonia Delaunay creates set and costume designs for Marcel L'Herbier's film *Vertige*, while Robert Mallet-Stevens creates the decor, Pierre Chareau the furniture, and Jean Lurçat the tapestry. **1927** Picasso meets Marie-Thérèse Walter. Death of Juan Gris. **1928** Pierre Chareau begins construction of the *Maison de Verre* for Doctor Dalsace, rue St. Guillaume, Paris. Le Corbusier designs his chair with pivoting back (fauteuil à dossier basculant), with assistance of Charlotte Perriand and Pierre Jeanneret. **1929** May 15: Founding of the Union des Artistes Modernes (UAM), an organization devoted to use of new materials (e.g. chromed tubing) and techniques to reflect the modern spirit. UAM statutes declare that "the impartial observer will get a taste of the future." Robert Mallet-Stevens, founding member, presides over the first meeting. Original list of members includes Joseph Csaky, Sonia Delaunay, Eileen Gray, Robert Lallemant, Jacques Le Chevallier, Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret, Pierre Legrain, Gustave Miklos, Charlotte Perriand. This organization represents a complete break with the Société des Artistes Décorateurs. The Vicomte de Noailles is one of its supporters. Publication of Guillaume Janneau's *L'Art Cubiste: Théories et Réalisations, étude critique*. **1930** June 11-July 14: First exhibition of the Union des Artistes Modernes at the Pavillon de Marsan. Waldemar George founds the periodical *Formes*. **1932** Picasso returns to the cubist idiom in earnest after a seven-year foray into Surrealism. **1933** Léger continues to mix biomorphic and geometric elements, displaying an interest in both Cubism and Surrealism. **1935** Picasso's second major statement appears in *Cahiers d'Art*, "Conversations avec Picasso," transcribed by Christian Zervos. Picasso's and Marie-Thérèse's daughter, Maya, is born. **1936** Photographer Dora Maar becomes an important part of Picasso's life. Alfred Barr mounts a major exhibition at MOMA called *Cubism and Abstract Art*. **1937** January-November: Picasso paints a series of weeping women. May-June: Picasso paints *Guernica* for the Spanish Pavilion of the *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques de la Vie Moderne*. **1939** Braque paints large cubist still lifes. Major Picasso retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art entitled *Picasso: Forty Years of His Art*.

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*and several private collectors who
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PICASSO, BRAQUE, LÉGER AND THE CUBIST SPIRIT, 1919-1939 is devoted to art and design in France between the wars, in an effort to dispel the perception that Cubism was only a pre-World War I phenomenon. After the war, cubist painting became more varied, colorful, and accessible, and began to affect other media such as furniture, fashion, cinema and architecture. What had begun as a rarefied pictorial style became a popular language.

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