

Painting Codes



Part 1

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Fine Arts 2022



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Introd

uction

When I began to write this thesis, I thought I would be writing about painting as dead and what it is that declares it as dead. But immediately, during the research phase, I realized 'dead' is only a word that has been used to describe what happened to painting during, and after modernism. I have now understood painting is as sufficient as any other medium. It is only a matter of understanding how painting works. I began, under the influence of Aby Warburg and Gerhard Richter to build an image Atlas, to categorize painting. It formed constellations that began to reveal codes within painting. Codes that were removed from the picture plane during modernism and developed

further through abstraction. The image-constellations are the second part of this thesis, and the first part literary. Gerhard Richter's research would also help me understand how to deal with the photograph as a material. It has guided me towards an understanding of how to deal with my family's image archive, viewing the materiality of the photograph above it as memories.

This thesis will begin contemplating the modernist attempts to end painting, and what it means to me as a painter. How can I use it? What were the attempts, and how were they executed? How has it been contextualized and how can it shape a framework for me?

The End

Alexander Rodchenko one of the major characters of modernism said:

I reduced painting to its logical conclusion and exhibited three canvases: red, blue, and yellow. I affirmed: It's all over. Basic colors. Every plane is a plane, and there is to be no more representation.¹

One of the many modernist attempts to end painting. In *Painting as Model*, Yve-Alain Bois writes about these attempts further and describes them as negations of painting. Since painting had until the beginning of the 20th century been considered as the highest form of fine art, artists began to question paintings' incapacities.

Marcel Duchamp was also one of the participants of neglecting painting through his ready-mades. Duchamp began by signing a pissoir and send it to the Society of Independent

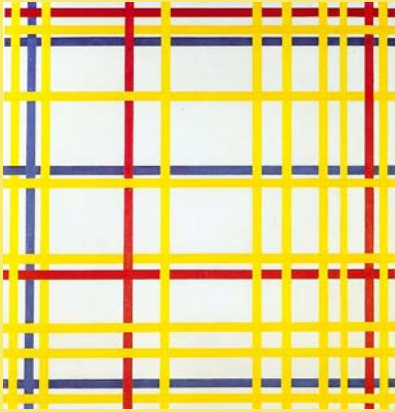
1. Yve-Alain Bois, *Painting as Model*, Alexander Rodchenko, from the manuscript "Working with Maiakovsky" (1939), quoted in *From Painting to Design: Russian Constructivist Art of the Twenties* (Cologne: Galerie Gmurznska, 1981), p. 191. On Rodchenko see also Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, *Niele Toroni—L'Index de la peinture* (Brussels: Editions Daled, 1985), pp. 40-42 (unpublished in English.).

Artists in 1917. An art Salon where anyone could submit their works as a contribution. But Duchamp's contribution was rejected, as he had anticipated, and managed to awaken a discourse about what makes art. These negations were executed by picking painting apart, piece by piece as a kind of reduction. And in my case it is interesting what this reduction left behind, particularly in a painted form. Like the reductive attempts of George Seurat to reduce the visual trace of a hand through repetition, or Piet Mondrian's attempts to reduce the aspects of achieving penetration of a surface, or cubism's fragmentation of the picture plane attempting to escape it or even break it. Or Rene Magritte's reduction of symbolism, or Kazimir Malevich's manifestation of the material limitations of painting. I am interested to find what all these major characters of modernism managed to define painting as, and

what that says about what it is that constitutes painting as a medium. This sort of completion would mean that it should be possible to create an overall description of what painting is. A description that would be able to collect and gather the remains from these reductions to shape a visual and conceptual framework of what signifies painting as painting.

PAINTING CODES

Duchamp's negation of painting was done through what today is defined as making a gesture. And his gesture of questioning painting as the only authentic medium of fine art would come to later inspire many of the post-modernists and the idea-based artist in the 60s- and 70s. Art forms which, according to my interpretation, have their fundamental philosophies in mediating gestures, and gestures, according to me as a painter, have a sculptural quality. While the reductive attempts of modernism is about code. A set of codes that defines the realm of the picture plane; codes that belong to a realm closed off from bodily gestures, internal codes that are beyond our reach, codes that we can observe and interpret from the outside, codes in the form of color combinations, spatial articulation, symbolism, penetration and layering. Codes born to live and exist within a painted world. Codes that belong to the medium of painting, codes that have been established to tell stories to the ones who could not read, codes that have been established to tell stories to the ones who could not read in the middle ages. I am trying to identify these codes, and my attempts are executed by juxtaposing paintings. By putting two paintings against each other, patterns of codes begin to grow. Like Piet Mondrian's *New York City 1*, juxtaposed beside Caspar David Friedrich's *Der Wanderer*. A combination that turns Friedrich's depth into painterly code of layers and color.



***Der Wanderer
über dem Nebelmeer***

Oil on Canvas, Caspar David Friedrich ,1818



New York City 1

Oil on Canvas, Piet Mondrian, 1942

THE PICTURE PLANE AS A REAL THING

The idea as paramount to the material as is in the case of conceptual art, has its origins from works like Duchamp's *1200 Bags of Coal*. Duchamp placed a smaller vessel for burning coal underneath the entire ceiling covered in bags of coal. A gesture that immediately consumed the other works in the room. This curatorial decision emphasized the involvement of the spectator of art, and the activation of artworks by human presence. An aspect which was not of importance, or rather not even thought of, but came to be highlighted by post-modernist artworks and later conceptual works. Artworks that declared sculpture as the appropriate medium of gestures and as an extension of the body. Not necessarily what Duchamp intended when he replaced the paint tube with the ready-made, but a notion that influenced post-modernism to abandon the picture plane entirely. And meaning that now the inside of the artwork as well as the outside has more or less been completely defined, contextualized, and packaged. The inside being the picture plane and the outside the space it occupies, and where the spectator moves around.

This art historical transition I am trying to frame shapes an understanding of certain qualities that the artwork possesses and sets the ground for visual artists to construct a conceptual framework upon. A framework mainly for image artists like the photographer Thomas Demand. Thomas Demand works with already existing pictures and breaks down the image source layer by layer into a new version. He rebuilds the source image in life-size paper models and then takes a new photograph from the same angle as the original and presents them as prints. This invokes a conceptual consciousness of how to deal with an observer from the internal context of the picture plane and declares the fact that the inside is now conscious of itself as an existing concept that it is observed from the outside. Even if the writer Michael Fried defines Tomas Demand's works as anti-conceptual "anti-literalist", I think it's more of a continuation of art history. When Demand completely

reduces the traces within the image content by building it in paper and presents it as life-size prints behind Plexiglas, it creates an urge within the spectator to want to step into the image, into the picture plane. When the spectator as a victim to this illusion then realizes, they are limited to the outside of that inside world that Demand's prints depict, they partake in both of these two spaces, the inside, and the outside.

Michael Fried defines Demand's work as "saturated with intentions". In that sense his prints are already internally occupied by an understanding of how to lure the spectator into the picture plane and urging the body to follow and finding the material means, in the shape of how to present the work to the spectator, to make them aware of the illusion themselves as soon as they fall victim to it.² It is not a neglect of the internal aspect of an artwork, nor ignorance of the spectator, but rather a clever and well-calculated method of mediation between the inside world of his prints, the picture plane, and the activation of it by the spectator. Thomas Demand's work is not paintings, but they do serve as an example of why the picture plane is a real thing that can be used in a contemporary aspect and not be neglected as an outdated notion regarding art. And the works show how a contemporary art practice involves concept as part of an artistic framework and not only something that belongs to a sculptural notion of making a gesture.

2. Michael Fried, *Why Photography Matters as Art as Never Before*, 2008, Yale University Press, chapter: 9 Thomas Demand's allegories of intention; "exclusion" in Candida Hofer, Hiroshi Sugimoto, and Thomas Struth, Page 271 and 275.

LUC TUYMANS' PAINTED CODES

I'm not sure that Luc Tuymans himself uses the notion of painting as defined intentionally. Since his framework seems not to neglect, but simply ignore any attempts to make conceptual art. His interest lies within image-making and imagery, and what images are to us:

For me, photography is only a means to an end, just as I use Polaroids or do a sketch or a drawing. The point isn't (as it still is for Gerhard Richter) to be able to set up a correspondence between the picture and the photographic source. Instead, the photograph is integrated in the working process.³

The photograph simply fulfils the role of reducing content to act as a model for visual research regarding the art of image-making. He makes use of typical categories of painting to achieve an illusion of deceit when one gets exposed to his work. His paintings possess a photographic quality at many times. This is seen in the sense of color temperature, and the fact that material flaws in the photographic source are often highlighted through painterly solutions. There is a doubt regarding if it fulfils a conceptual purpose that has not been framed by Gerhard Richter, but Tuymans does manage to properly make use of painting and the history of painting as image-making when he attempts to ask his questions. Different from Richter who uses the materiality of oil paint, Tuymans adds a conceptual layer of what defines painting. He turns a still life into something that is experienced as a cityscape, he forges the styles of old masters by incorporating ideas from Han van Meegeren, he turns horrid and unattractive characteristics of skin disease into the beauty of color and appropriates media images to question authenticity. Tuymans made me see these codes and continue to investigate further. Codes that are important parts of his painterly practice, codes he picks up on and acts out on, emphasizes in his work, researches, and incorporates. Painterly codes that become important to define, so I as a receiver of his work, I become aware of his

awareness of his work as paintings, and the transformation of the image source into a painted world, into a painted reality. Or as he says in his own words:

A pragmatic representation of a world, where the painting is actually quite precise. The impression is a painted one. Where Gerhard Richter wipes the blurs, mine are painted. It's all painted. It's a painted world and a painted time.³

Tuymans manages to do something similar to what Demand does and that is to find the right means to continue to build upon a tradition of artmaking. Even if it is not in Tuymans interest to make art, he does as a painter manifest and transmit what has happened to painting and what it is as an art medium.

3. *ON&BY Luc Tuymans*, Edited by Peter Ruyffelaere, Whitechapel gallery London, The MIT press, Cambridge, Mass, page 81, Ende: In conversation with Udo Kittelmann 2007.

GERHARD RICHTER AND *ATLAS*, THINKING LIKE A PAINTER

Gerhard Richter is one of the artists I have investigated deeper while working on this thesis. Under the influence of Benjamin Buchloh's text on Richter's *Atlas*, I was able to begin to break down Richter's practice specifically regarding his photographic paintings, the ones that have the iconic blurred appearance. Gerhard Richter's *Atlas* begins with juxtaposing photographs from what seems to be taken from his family's own picture archive, images that could resemble any family's urge to store memories of travels, birthdays and weddings, any moment that would be sought as memorable to the family. Since Richter spend time growing up in East Germany, the collective imagery such as newspapers, commercials, etc, would consist of communist propaganda developed to shape the collective memory of its society, so the need to archive private images by collecting private photographs I can understand was important to Richter as well as his family. Important to make sure they kept their own memories and experiences of history. When Richter then comes into contact with media in West Germany after his escape, it must have been rather intrusive to face the free flow of imagery, especially since many of the images commercially exploited the cliché of family photographs to lure a potential consumer into a feeling affection towards the product. When these pictures from the West German media, as presented a few panels into Richter's *Atlas*, become mixed with Richter's family's photographs, it visually manifests the experience of his possible confusion. It is like seeing someone's careful observations of a new environment that they never before experienced. And this transition that Richter possibly went through makes me, as an artist, see another artist trying to navigate his new surroundings in west Germany. When Richter then materializes the visual navigation of his new home, it becomes evident how someone as a painter thinks through the medium. His blurring and saturation of the canvas seen in the painting *Christa and Wolfi* based on an image from the fourth panel in *Atlas* gives the painting a material quality of a photographic print and manages at the

same time to mediate Gerhard Richter's concerns regarding the flaws of a photograph to function as a medium of documentation. What I am a bit torn between, is that the format of painting must accept the original composition of the photographer, and this leaves me hanging in a state of in-between, that maybe also is a residue of Richter's confusion.



Christa and Wolfi

Oil on canvas,
Gerhard Richter,
1964.

I can relate to the confusion, and critical process, towards the photograph. Since my family, like most other families in my generation, keep a well-documented archive of printed pictures, resembling moments of importance. Images depicting travels, birthdays, weddings, funerals, christenings, etc. As time passed, I have come to understand that these people I had around me growing up, were hiding matters to me like abuse and shame behind their surface. I cannot but feel a deep ambiguity towards this composed history of my family that does not show the reality, as I know it to be.

I'm working on a project ignited by the idea of an Atlas as a tool of research, a project where juxtaposed images, mainly paintings, begin to try and categorize

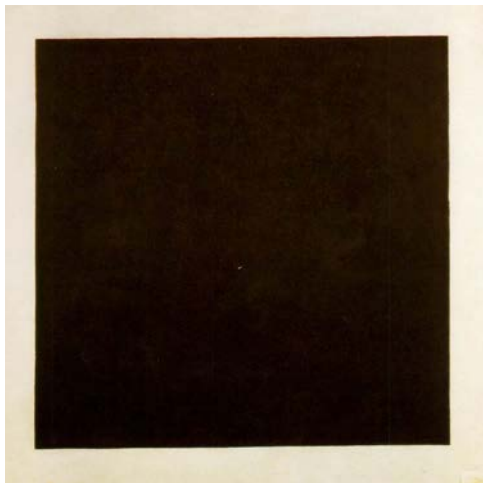
painting codes. It consists mainly of two images juxtaposed per panel. I have begun to notice that it manages to describe patterns, similarities, differences, and notions in painting that I cannot define with words. The image constellations of paintings when juxtaposed manage to, in a painterly sense, expose codes that seem to shape a conceptual framework of painting.

It manages to resemble a conceptual consciousness regarding modernist abstraction and the post-modernist conceptual execution of the picture plane, that has been left behind. I'm not trying to objectively find a definite definition of painting as in a continuation of the notion of ending, painting has already been ended, but I am trying to map aspects of what painting means and is. To be able to apply it to my practice. Like the tradition of reduction.

TRADITION OF REDUCTION

Like Rodchenko's negation of painting that resulted in three monochromes, reduction became a major part of the modernist attempts to complete painting. Rodchenko tried to bring painting back into our world by reducing the imaginary aspect of another plane. A plane that supposedly was not real, according to him. But painting is about a phenomenon of color. It is real in the sense of being metaphysical, like light. You cannot touch light like you can touch your own skin, but you can see light, sometimes even feel it. And when painting is used right it manifests an illusion of light, like in the paintings of Giorgio Morandi that manages to transpond paint into the Italian afternoon sun, capturing the dust on the utensils in his studio.

For me, painting has two major aspects to it, one is the sheer painterly quality of color phenomenon, and the other is about spatial articulation. Reduction can touch upon them both as a concept, and in many cases on them both, as in the case of Kazimir Malevich's *Black Square* for instance. It is about a reduction of color down to black as depth and white as a surface, as well as white as space and black as a thing.



Black Square
oil on panel,
Kazimir Malevich,
1924.

It is a reduction that states an example of how real painting is, it is as real as the illusion it creates. It is very real, and it shows how it can cheat the eye into persuading the brain. In this way, painting and photography have a significant similarity, but only the eyes can tell when an image has been painted by hand and when it has been mechanically printed, even the most photorealistic paintings tend to have features that reveal it has been done by hand.

There is a conceptual and technical difference between reduction in painting and reduction in photography. Let's look at Walter Benjamin's idea of the loss of aura through mechanical reproduction as an example. Here we are talking about the issue of trying to represent a real experience and the loss of an experience of originality, while a production through painting depends on the kind of painterly decisions that are made to recreate codes that can simulate the experience. As well as how to make use of painterly limitations, such as layers, transparency, color, brushes, the hand, and vibrance. It is almost what Walter Benjamin was lacking in the photograph, a feeling of aura, a portrayal kind of concept, an abstraction into an appropriate representation. It is if like a reduction in photography is limited to its mechanical means, and it cannot reach beyond itself like painting can, at least not in the sense that I can acknowledge the experience of a painting as a painted reality.

A photograph can cheat me without me knowing I have been cheated. I do interpret the mechanical print as truth since I cannot separate it in the way I do when I acknowledge the image as painted.

And especially today when social media allows our images to be edited beyond recognition. Most of the imagery we face today has more or less in some way been edited, composed. In the sense of a spectacle, it is constructed to orient us towards a trajectory of consumption, to direct our behavior. So, Walter Benjamin was right all along, so was Guy Debord. The image world is a spectacle without a soul. In Werner Herzog's documentary *Lo and Behold*, Leonard Kleinrock, one of the founders of the internet explain he thinks the internet and computers

“are the worst enemy to deep critical thinking because today we expect and depend on the computer to tell us what we are looking at”.⁴ This issue is probably why Luc Tuymans paintings work so well; I can see that his image is painted. Turning the image into a painted reality creates enough distance to the image content to understand that it is not an original depiction of reality. By taking parts of the content and transforming it into painting, into the illusion of painting the image becomes reduced down to an understandable form of codes that shifts the visual information into a material question. And it makes it easier for me to critically examine what I am looking at. When I can acknowledge myself as becoming a victim to the illusion of painting, I can also begin to question my interpretation of what I am looking at. And understand it is simply a surface.

4. *Lo and Behold*, 1:28:30, Director: Werner Herzog, Producers: Rupert Maconick and Werner Herzog, Manuscript: Werner Herzog, Original music: Mark degli Antoni and Sebastian Steinberg, Photo: Peter Zeitlinger, Cut: Marco Capalbo, Production: Saville Productions, Distributor, Magnolia Pictures, 2016, 98 minutes, USA.

THE IMAGE AS A FACADE

What follows are works that further elaborate upon the definitions of an image, the image as a surface and the lack of the image to be something else besides a painted or printed surface, a surface that cannot circumscribe the entire history of what the image depicts. Below are three images of Thomas Demand, Gerhard Richter, and Luc Tuymans.

They have all in one way or the other tried to approach the banality of evil and attempted to depict it. Or not so much to depict it, but to question the insufficiency of representation beyond being something else than simply a surface. All of them have this idea of the insufficiency of an image as a core question in their work. Thomas Demand erases the traces within the original photographic source by making me as a viewer not think of the fact that something has happened in those spaces, since all traces of the material as used have been erased, the passing of time is gone along with its history. Gerhard Richter's painting questions the limitations of a photograph as purely a medium of documentation and makes me think of the materiality of a printed photograph rather than about the subject. His blurring, as a conceptual gesture, concerns the technical errors of a photograph through a painterly tradition of defining materiality. And Luc Tuymans uses historical connotations that painting has attached to it as an object of fine art, of beauty, of value, and invites me to fall into an intended trap of admiring the interior of a gas chamber and make me catch myself forgetting what history the image source has connected to it.

It is three ways or attempts to question the picture as a document, as evidence, as truth. Three presentations of the lack of pictures to manage to tell the entire story. Three examples of the picture as a facade rather than an entity, as sloughed skin, and nothing else than a residue. Three alternatives to deal with the human fear of being able to know what is true or not, of being a victim of illusion. Three ways of materializing how the process of forgetting works.



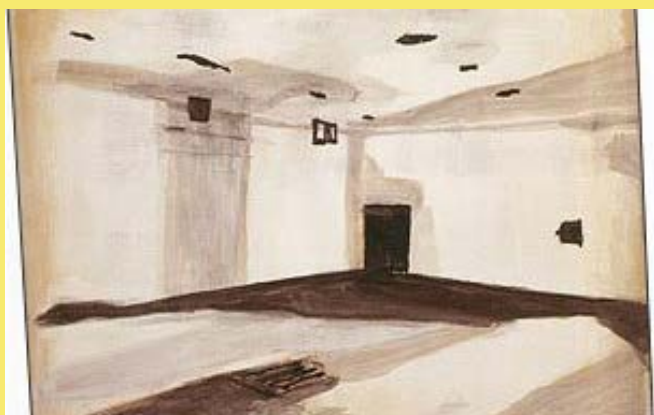
Korridor

Chromogenic process print with diasec, Thomas Demand, Corridor, 1995.



Korridor

Oil on canvas, Gerhard Richter, 1964.



Gaskamer

oil on paper, Luc Tuymans, 1986.

How a fragment of trauma can catch our attention, and we find ourselves remembering. A useful instrument to catch someone's attention and the beauty of painting, image-making, the capacity to cheat the eye or and the intellect, like a magician, like Caravaggio.

Caravaggio was active in a time when tools like camera obscura and reflections of mirrors were used to support the painters to trace their subjects accurately on their canvas. A tool that came with an issue of the subject's stamina to keep still and to properly find accurate relations between the subjects and the separate occasions they were present. His painting *The Cardsharps* shows how the glance of the subjects seems to overlook what they should be looking at as if they are confused as if they are victims of illusion, of a trick of cards. When Caravaggio painted this, the instrumentalization of lenses had been used and known of for at least 100 years.



The Cardsharps

Oil on canvas
Michelangelo
Merisi di
Caravaggio, 1594.

Therefore, the issue of how to accurately aim of the glance of the subjects had probably been discovered and in this case even used to emphasize the ongoing scene of a trick of cards.

For me to understand how to create a conceptual framework, aspects like the ones I have written about so far, are important. They are important for me to be

able to separate notions of the involved factors - factors that concern painting and photography. Painting and photography are two different mediums that have a long history of touching upon a similar field, the camera even replaced functions that the painter once had. So, for me to be able to deal with them both it has been important for me to establish a clear definition of what position they hold. Painting as medium and the photograph as source material. There are also factors like my own emotional involvement towards the source material that I need to define and find the accurate position for. A topic that in many cases makes it a bit difficult to handle since my emotions are constantly present in my decision-making. But also, a part of it I consider highly important, much since it is the reason why I wanted to deal with my family picture archive to begin with.

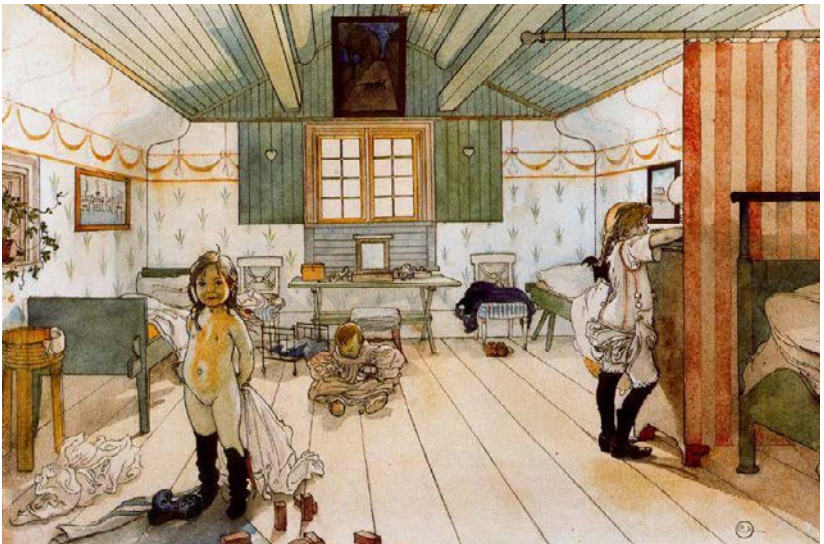
Image Materiality and a Visual Legacy

Every Christmas Ingmar Bergman's film *Fanny and Alexander* is broadcasted. It is a four-hour-long film about the traumatic youth of the two protagonists living in a stereotypical image of the Swedish home. A film that traumatized me as a child for many years to come. There is a scene quite far into the film when one of the old and aged relatives is burned alive, a character that has an ugly and repulsive appearance, much like I experienced old people when I was young.

It caused me to have nightmares for many years to come, and my body can still remember the physical terror and nausea. Bergman manages to take an indoctrinated image of the Swedish home and turn it into a literal nightmare. It is probably because Bergman manages to recreate the image of Swedishness that makes it so effective, for me. In Sweden, we grow up constantly facing this imagery since

it covers cake jars, cups, and other kitchen utensils. Imagery that derives from the artists like the painter Carl Larsson and authors like Elsa Beskow that were both active around the end of the 19th century. Imagery that can be traced in the illustrations within Astrid Lindgren's novels as well.

Being Swedish has been a large part of my childhood. Since my father's family moved to Sweden from Finland at a time when being Finnish was not as good as being Swedish. I can almost see my grandmother implying the need for her family to achieve this image of what it means to be Swedish as a stamp of quality. And carrying a name and a cultural history from a country which has its trauma of not being as good as Sweden probably, as I perceive it, made it even more important to be accepted and perceived as Swedish. And if I psychoanalyze myself this might be a reason why I cannot seem to think my own opinion is good



Mammas och småflickornas rum (Mum's and the young girl's room)

Watercolor, Carl Larsson, 1897.

enough, as if I am not good enough. Every behavior, every interior, and every detail that does not fit into what portrays this surface of what it means to be Swedish is not to be mentioned is not to be shown and if you liked to approach the subject it is met with shame. My grandmother has however never dismissed my personal interest in Finland. She answers my questions in a jolly mood as if she becomes nostalgic. But I perceive her joy might be based on the fact that she happily declares herself as Swedish since

there are different groups of minorities due to the complex relationship after colonialization. For instance, my grandmother belongs to Swedish-Finns. Her family even has their own Association that published an issue of their research regarding their Swedish identity dating back to 1754. In a way her family has a well-developed behavior of defining themselves as Swedish, so she is not to somehow be blamed for doing so. To the right are images depicting the published research issue by the Björklund Association.

But with this need to create a surface of being something else I have always been curious about a part of me that I do not know much about. But also, the behavior of building this image of being Swedish using the picture. When I am looking at the photographic archives from my family this is all I see, attempts to materialize a surface, traces of erasure and reduction.

Släkten Björklund från Jeussen, Kronoby 1754 - 2007



Jeussen, Davidsböcka (1819-1820)

Denna släktbok bygger på två tidigare släktböcker som getts ut av Släktföreningen Björklund r.f. i Kronoby. Den första släktboken utgavs år 1978, och den andra år 1991. Detta är en reviderad och kompletterad utgåva.

Det första Björklundska släktmötet hölls år 1963 och föreningen grundades år 1966. Släktföreningen Björklund r.f. registrerades 1.3.1968. Numera hålls släktmöten vart tredje år i Kronoby.

Släktföreningen Björklund r.f.
www.bjorklundfamily.fi

PREFACE

This genealogy is a new, updated version of the two previous genealogies. The first genealogy was published in 1978 and the second in 1991. They are published by the Björklund Family Association in Kronoby, Finland. We could not have made this new edition without the help of many of the persons in it and we therefore wish to extend our warmest thanks to everyone who has helped us with information about their families. Our relations are rarely made and we apologize for all the mistakes we might have made. If you wish to make any corrections or give new information please contact the secretary of the Family Association, Mia Hagral (secretary, through the Family Association's homepage www.bjorklundfamily.fi) or the moment just in Swedish) or e-mail sakri@bjorklundfamily.fi.

The family is divided into three branches: the members of the A-branch are descendants of the ancestor David Mattsson Björklund's son Nils Davidsson Björklund, the members of the B-branch are descendants of the above mentioned ancestor's daughter Maria Davidsson Björklund and the members of the C-branch are descendants of Maria Davidsson's son Matti Johansson Björklund. He took his family and moved to the small village of Sojras in the municipality of Kronoby in Karjala, in the southwest of Finland, in 1867 (the part was lost to the then Soviet union during World War II).

Please note, that all dates are given the Finnish way, i.e. day-month-year.

In the last two genealogies a patronymic, a father's name, such as Mattsson (Matti's son) or Johansdotter (Johan's daughter) had been added to the main person in each table. As this caused some confusion and irritation, we have now deleted all patronymics for persons born after 1900, except if the patronymic is actually a part of the person's name. We have, however, kept the patronymics for persons born before 1900, as the patronymics were part of the names in those days. For persons with the same name we have added a patronymic to their first name in the index of persons, in order to make it easier to locate the person you are looking for.

We have, in all tables, tried to mention if a person has taken a double surname or has kept or taken back the surname he/she had before they married. Unless otherwise is mentioned, the wife has taken her husband's surname when they married. Children, whose parents are or have been married, have their father's surname, unless otherwise is mentioned. For children born in a common law relationship we have tried to mention which surname they use.

We have also tried to mention where a family lives or formerly lived. When using names of places in Finland, we haven't given the name of the country, just the name of the municipality the place is located in. For names of places outside Finland we have mentioned the country in which it is located and for places in the US and Canada we have also mentioned the state.

In the index of persons you can find all persons who are over 18 and all children now living. Children who have died before the age of 18 are thus not listed in the index; you have to look for them using their parents' names. People who have changed their surname when they got married can be found both under their surname before marriage and their married name. People who have changed their surname for some other reason than marriage can be found under all the surnames they have used. If a woman has been married more than once she is however registered only under her current surname, but in connection with her maiden name all surnames she has used are listed. If a woman has taken back her maiden name after a divorce, she is only listed under her maiden name. Please note, that we haven't always been informed of a person's change of name and we have therefore not always been able to register them under their correct surname! All names of firms have been treated as surnames in the index and references have been used, if a person has used more than one name of a firm as a surname.

In the index all names who sound the same, but are spelled differently, can be found in the same place even if they shouldn't be there according to the alphabet. You can thus find people with the surname Karlsson under the heading of Carlsson/Carlson. People with the same surname and the first names Christina and Kristina can also be found in the same place, just as people with the first names Christopher and Kristoffer.

We hope you will enjoy the new genealogy!

The board of the Björklund Family Association

Pictures of my grandmother's Family

Publication regarding their history.

MATERIALITY ABOVE EMOTION

At the moment I am occupied with dealing with the picture archive of my family, and I have been for one year. The catalyst would be the ambiguous relationship I have towards the photographs as documents. As a painter, I wanted to deal with my attitude towards these posing subjects, but I find it difficult to not be an emotional slave under them. As I have begun to dig deeper into this topic, I have started to reach a point where I can see the picture archive as material above them as memories. At the moment it is a question of making use of the pictures as research material for finding painting codes and about consciously negating the picture source as a reflection of my attitude towards the family pictures.

The personal reason for doing what I am doing is not necessarily important for the receiver of the work, to artists that would say, because as I have certain ways of looking at painting as a painter, other artists view works through the artistic framework they built for themselves. This causes each one to look at works from the aspect of their own framework causing there to become different ways to interpret each artwork. So, to find a common ground to interpret artworks we are taught to look at art based on the history of art per a set of concepts that have been established and defined. I aim to make my paintings act upon this language that we are being taught as art students. This means I have to avoid my paintings being read as residues of effect from my emotional projection or bond to the picture source and seen as professionally considered outcomes. It is none-the-less an interesting part, the visual trace of affect. And I think quite often about how and if it would be of importance to someone who does not look at my painting via this taught language of art, but as amateurs. I am concerned about this since they are as much intended to become involved in my work as artists are. Perhaps sometimes it is even for me considered more of a success if my paintings manage to reach outside of the art world, to someone who does not have an art education

but still can relate to the painting and understand what I am trying to achieve. The Danish novel Erasmus Montanus describes a farmer's son who moves to Copenhagen to study Latin at the university. He returns home after his studies with his newly adapted knowledge. His new ideologies, unfortunately, cause him to fall into dispute with his family and the entire village since they cannot relate to his worldview and institutional language. It is about the issue of knowing how to make oneself understood in a world where no one speaks your language, and about how to find ways to incorporate them as well.

So, I have to understand or find ways of working that take into consideration how the photograph has been dealt with through painting, and how to find a continuation from what painters like Gerhard Richter and Luc Tuymans have established before me. And if I can manage to retain traces of my emotional attachment to the picture source maybe this would add to the intention of incorporating an audience from outside of the art world.

PAINTING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Dealing with photography as material I have constructed ways to formulate myself by the context of art history as well as the institution I am studying at. It includes formulating myself regarding the incorporated parts in my art practice and what they mean.

There is something about dealing with an already composed image that fascinates me, maybe because it is about the materiality and an already existing composition. I like the images as traces of the past, as fragments, traces of what was, body language, environment, about who was present. It gives a time frame for seeing what clothes were worn, and it gives an insight into what someone you know used to look like when they were younger.

In one of the photographs that my grandmother gave me, the face has been cut out. It turns the image into an unknown character, into anonymous. It transforms the photograph into something else. It has no longer an emotional value, to me, due to the erasure of identity. It is now a photograph where the face of anybody could be. It is a photograph that is suddenly about composition and background. It's about what clothes the subject is wearing and to what timeframe they belong. It has suddenly done what most commercial imagery does and replaced the sentimental value with a material one. It also defines the interpretation of a photograph as material rather than a document. And something happens here, because if, as in the case of Tuymans painting "Der Architekt", the face is intentionally painted white and not cut out, one does not partake in this phenomenon, but it becomes about reducing the information into painted, it becomes reduced into the medium of painting and history of painting rather than erased information in the sense of material damage. It's about painting and the temperature of color, the symbolism of the reduced identity, and not traces of an affect, as in the case of the photograph. This happens in Gerhard Richter's paintings as well when he reduces painterly notions regarding realism into an abstracted illusion and reaches



Private photograph
from my research material.

Der Architect

Oil on Canvas,
Luc Tuymans, 1998.



beyond the limitations of a photograph by emphasizing it as material through a tradition of materialism in painting. Richter's and Tuymans' painterly practices do however represent different interests in the photograph.

Subjects in the paintings *Onkel Rudi* and *Issei Sagawa* are both based on images depicting Nazis, and both possess a quality of blurring. It is in Richter's case about the documentation value and the photograph as authentic evidence, and in Tuymans case:

photography is only a means to an end, just as I use Polaroids or do a sketch or a drawing. The point isn't (as it still is for Gerhard Richter) to be able to set up a correspondence between the picture and the photographic source. Instead, the photograph is integrated in the working process.⁵

But in the case of Richter, it is about trying to make a photograph, about trying to take the material and technical errors of a photograph and paint it to point towards it precisely as errors. However, in Tuymans case it is about the issue of the image being nothing else than a surface and attempting to merge different ways of image-making and signifiers of image mediums to point towards it as only a surface.

5. *ON&BY* Luc Tuymans, Edited by Peter Ruyffelaere, Whitechapel gallery London, The MIT press, Cambridge, Mass, page 81, Ende: In conversation with Udo Kittelmann 2007.

Onkel Rudi

Oil on Canvas, Gerhard Richter, 1965.



Issei Sagawa

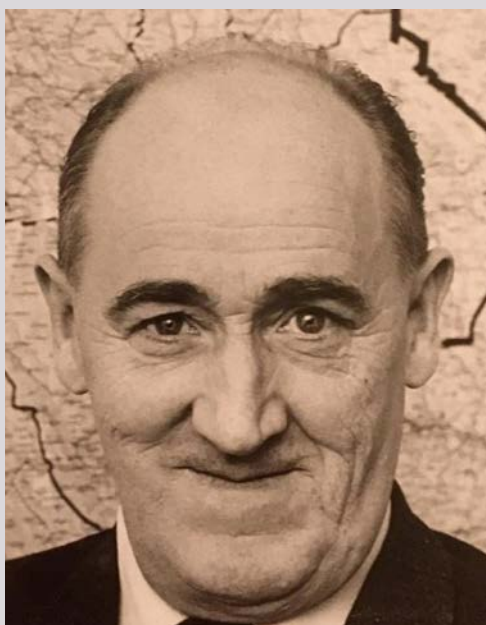
Luc Tuymans,
Oil on Canvas, 2014.

THE IMAGE AS REALITY

It is at this very moment that the Atlas also yields its own secret as an image reservoir: a perpetual pendulum between the death of reality in the photograph and the reality of death in the mnemonic image.⁶

The death of reality in the photograph and the reality of death in the mnemonic image sums up what and why I have such a deep and ambiguous relationship with our family images. It is not only the diffuse notion regarding my family's Finnishness that has created this attitude but how I deal with the fact that people like my other grandfather, on my mother's side, had parts to him which were not very nice. To me, he was always a very warm and kind grandfather, but after he passed away my mother told me about a man I did not know. A man who beat his wife and psychologically abused her. A man who stole his son's self-earned fishing rod and broke it and denied it, a man who always was correct when everyone else was wrong. These are, after all, human flaws, and of course, he was a good human as well since he treated me and my brother as a warm and caring grandfather. But as my mother told me about the grandfather the human, a human I saw as only capable of acts of love it became the naïve interpretation of a child that faced a person capable of hurting and breaking down his life partner and mother of his children. This realization made me question my memory of him. It made me doubt my interpretation of him as not true, and even if it is far from what happened during the Holocaust it has given Hannah Arendt's theory about the Banality of Evil a face, and an understanding of the concept beyond a theoretical one. His warm inviting smile became a smile of a man who was someone else when others did not see.

6. Benjamin Buchloh, page 29, *Gerhard Richter's "Atlas": The Anomic Archive* Benjamin H. D. Buchloh October, Vol. 88. (Spring, 1999), pp. 117-145. October is currently published by The MIT Press.



PRIVATE PHOTOGRAPH OF MY
GRANDFATHER, MY MOTHER'S FATHER.

Cognitive Memory

Even if I begin to question my memory of someone as I grow up it does not make the memory not real. Maybe it is only a part of growing up. I think in the case of my grandfather, what makes me mistrust my memory apparatus is the fact that someone I thought was a good person for my entire childhood suddenly turned into a villain. To have a photograph of someone, from a time before they became someone else, supports me in convincing myself that my former interpretation was not wrong. It was only a part of the process of how our cognitive memory functions. I mean memory is something that is influenced by trauma, and trauma is a part of our survival system. It happens for us to be able to cope with an event to understand when the situation arises again. It can make us shape another interpretation to deal with the horrible reality the experience was and makes us create an alternative.

We forget to survive.

MEMORY SIMULATION

Benjamin Buchloh defines Gerhard Richter's *Atlas* as a depiction of photography as a medium of forgetting, rather than a medium of memory. The photograph acts many times as a replacement for our memory. We simply are mistaking the illusion of the image for memory, when memory really is about something quite physical, about a bodily experience, about much more than a visual image. Well, maybe it is not so much about replacing but about the fact that we acknowledge the similarity in the process of photography as the process of creating an alternative to survive. As subject to many years of CBT, I have come to understand that memory is affected by multiple reasons, reasons such as trauma and epigenetic legacy. Effects that shape how we perceive the world and that create our behavior. It is not something we might notice, we can even have been born with it, but it is a residue that we can learn to change or learn how to live with. We can store trauma in our muscles to be able to suppress and forget the emotional fear our brain experienced. It can be a curse as it might limit us but it is a blessing because it is done by our body to survive. When I talk to people about memory, I receive their life in fragments. The fragments could concern questions about their siblings, about childhood, about a time when they experienced ecstasy or grief, about pleasure or pain. As they respond it is almost as if I can see a tear in space appear. It is beautiful to behold, as they travel back to a location in their mind, as they travel to a time and place that now only exist in their imagination. And as they begin to share detailed descriptions about the weather, about the smell, about noise and emotion. I can see how their bodies begin to simulate the cognitive setting for that particular event. It is more fascinating to see how they morph into a former version of themselves rather than the words they use to describe. It is so much more to read from that transformation than the choice of words, because the bodily simulation or response is in many cases an automatic reaction of their former selves, while the words are of their present version.

DREAMS

My dreams seem to belong to a similar phenomenon as the bodily response I observe when asking about memory. But in a more distilled form. My dreams, or rather my nightmares, are a montage of signifiers, signifiers that I have encountered, or rather unconsciously collected during moments of feeling like I am not in control. It mainly consists of notions that I have felt subdued under, notions that have made me abandon what I morally would consider being the right thing to do. The scenarios vary, so do the people, sometimes their personalities have a very significant part and sometimes their body is merely fulfilling a purpose, as a fetish. It is the same with the atmosphere. But it is always like a ghost, memories of a situation, of a face, a body part, hair, color, material, substance, visual phenomenon's, always visual, never really sound, noise, or taste, etc. But the montage seems to fulfil the purpose of re-awaken emotions, pure emotions. Emotions that my body seems to have been unable to process when I am awake. My body seems to use the memory as an archive to trigger suppressed feelings from experiences, which somehow has not been digested by my body, and so my body uses the capacity to create scenarios. Not fictive scenarios, but a mixture of memories, so my body can recall the trauma and process it, while whatever is holding back the bodily capacity to perform this process is sleeping. When I wake up it is still as if my body remains in this alternative reality.

I told a therapist once about how my body has difficulties separating dreams from reality since I would emotionally respond to scenarios in the dreams as if they happened in reality. The therapist responded that the brain really can't separate them. I think it is the same with images. If the image has enough real qualities to it that can cheat my brain, then my brain has difficulties separating it as not real. Even if I can intellectually understand it, it happens. This might also be why it is such good support to cognitive memory.

Concl

I have always looked at photographs as memories and as something you use to keep reminding yourself about what you have seen. It especially comes in handy when you go traveling. The touristic documentation seems to make sense since it tends to cover new experiences such as sightseeing. But to photograph what is near you, what is emotional to you, I do not see the emergence. It only seems to fulfil the purpose of wanting to preserve the emotional sensation one is experiencing. The photograph is taken for the lack of trust in one's own capacity to remember.

As I go through the photographic material I have

gotten from my family, many of the images are depicting moments like these, moments someone in my family thought were important to try and preserve. Their attempts to bottle emotion are as pointless as me trying to bring out and achieve what they could not by painting those pictures. What will remain is a residue and an endless therapeutic process that does not fulfil anything else as a painting except showing the ignorant usage of it as an artistic medium.

The photographs work for me as painting material and to establish a conceptual framework. A framework that includes my interest in them as memories. The photographs give me endless

vision

material support to research my interest in painting codes and as a personal connection to my professional practice. An important aspect for it to keep on being interesting to me. But memory in itself is not something I think belongs to painting, it belongs outside of the picture plane and as soon as one attempts to eternalize a moment by taking a photograph, it turns into an object about the photographer's fear of forgetting.

Gerhard Richter and Luc Tuymans as well as others working with photographic source material have always been interesting to me. I admired the aesthetic of their paintings and the styles that signified them as artists. I

only saw their involvement of the photograph as a tool to find new expressions. I could not understand how their work possessed conceptual concerns. As I have written this thesis, I have begun to learn a conceptual visual language of painting that I could not see before. Painting today is more like it would be when I was a child, without limitations. Since it is not about being the best or establishing the most beautiful aesthetical expression possible, but about communication. About the codes that it is built upon and how I can use those codes to create a discourse.

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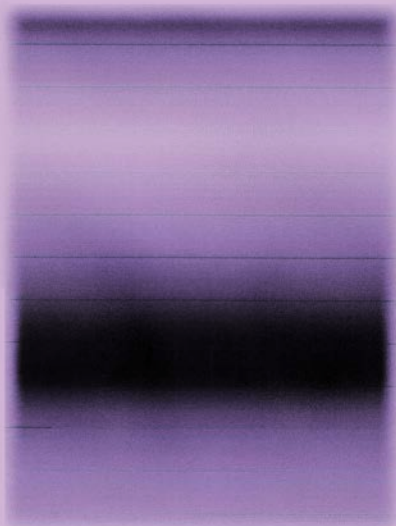
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Painting Codes



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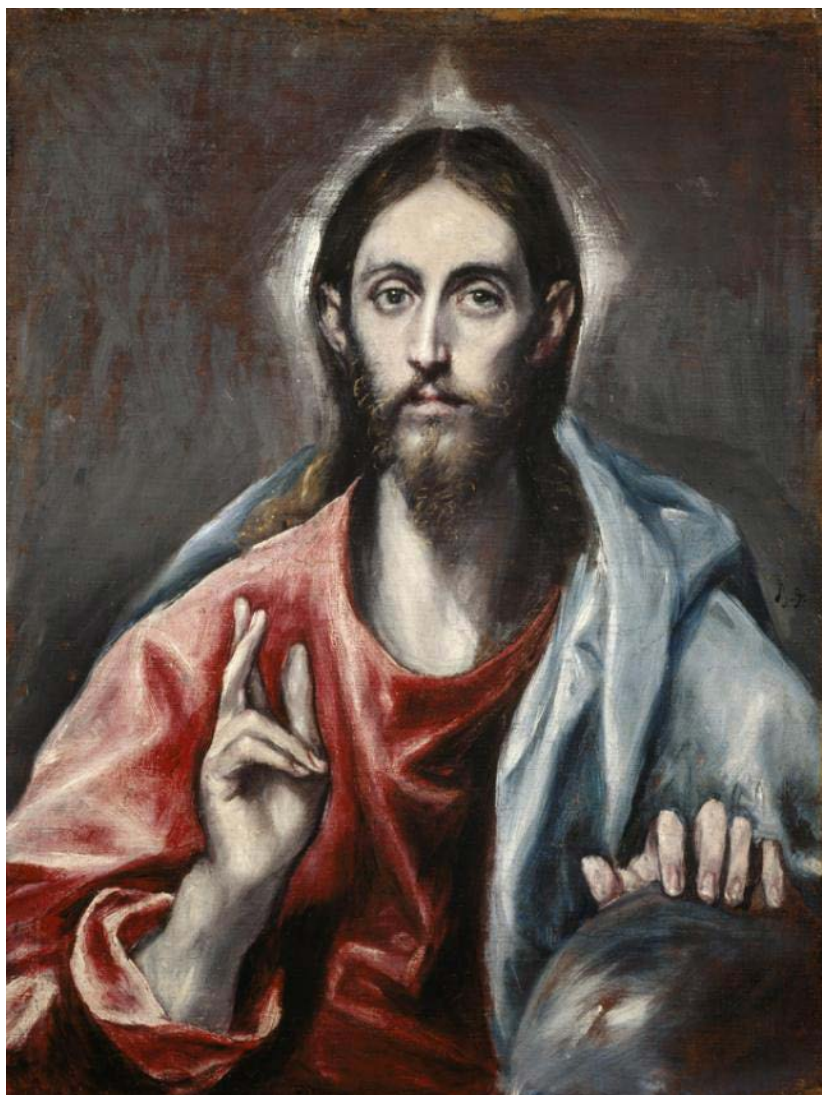
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INTRODUCTION

This is the visual part of *Painting Codes*. It is built upon my categorization of painting into ten main categories: *Portraiture, Still Life, Landscape, Symbolism, Panel, Monochrome, Nude, Residue, Spatial Articulation, and Authenticity*. I have juxtaposed two paintings per panel to reveal codes within painting. Codes defining painting as a medium. The first ten juxtaposes are titled under a category, the gesture then continues without literal definitions.

PORTRAITURE



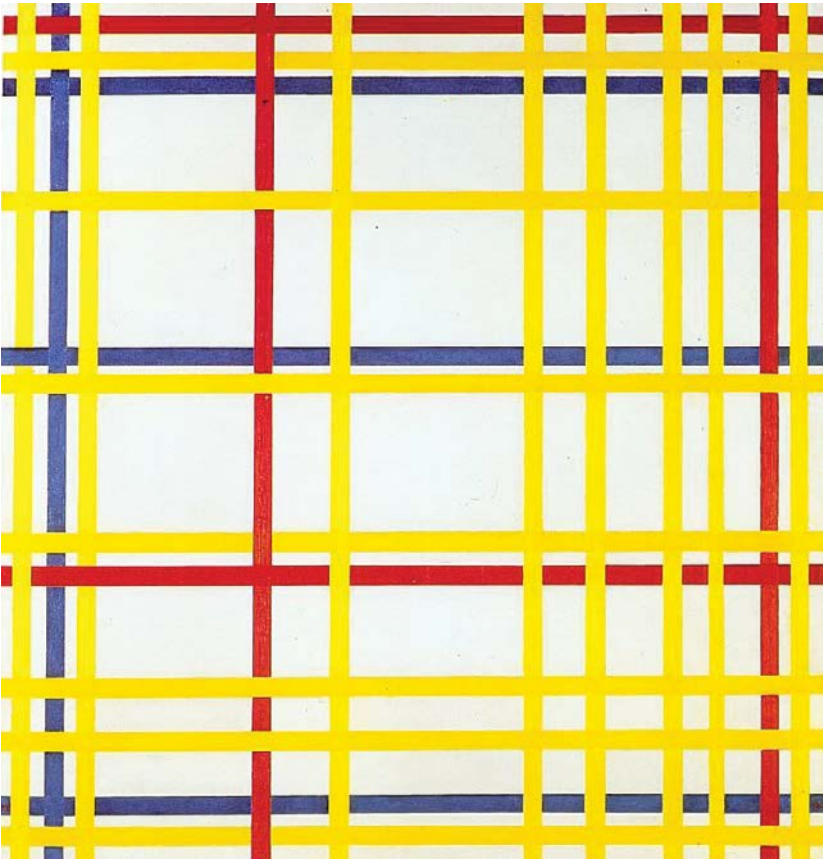


STILL LIFE





LANDSCAPE





SYMBOLISM



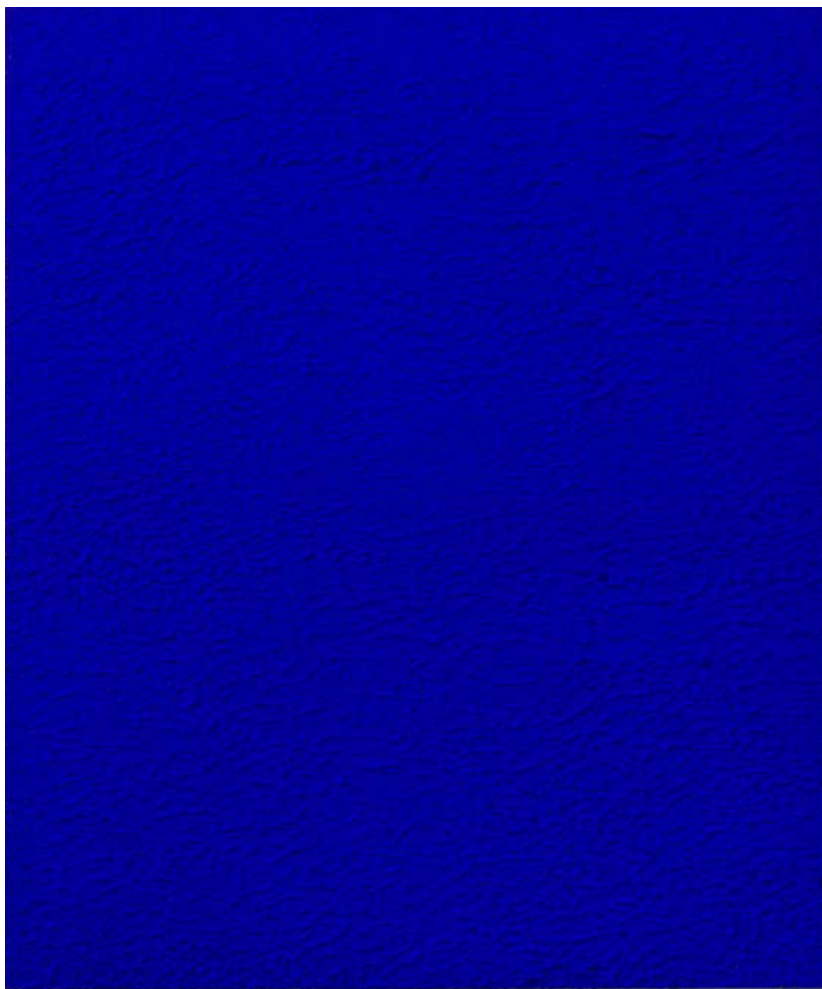


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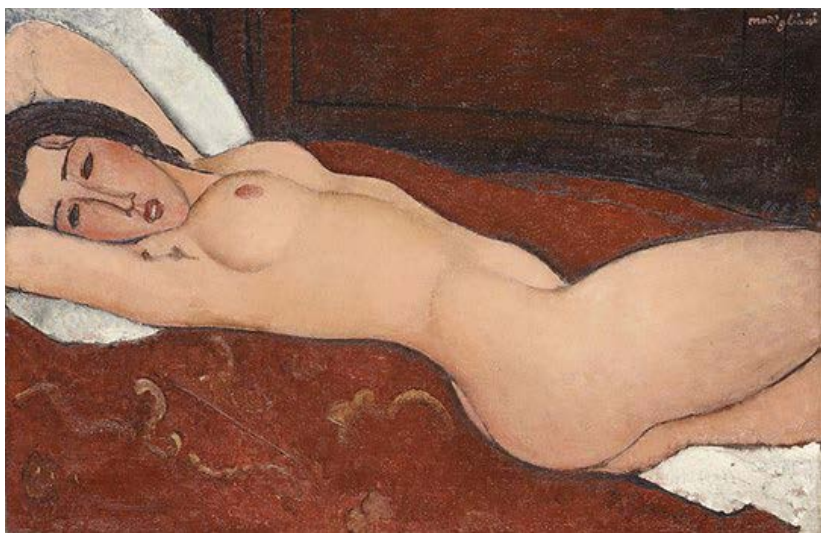


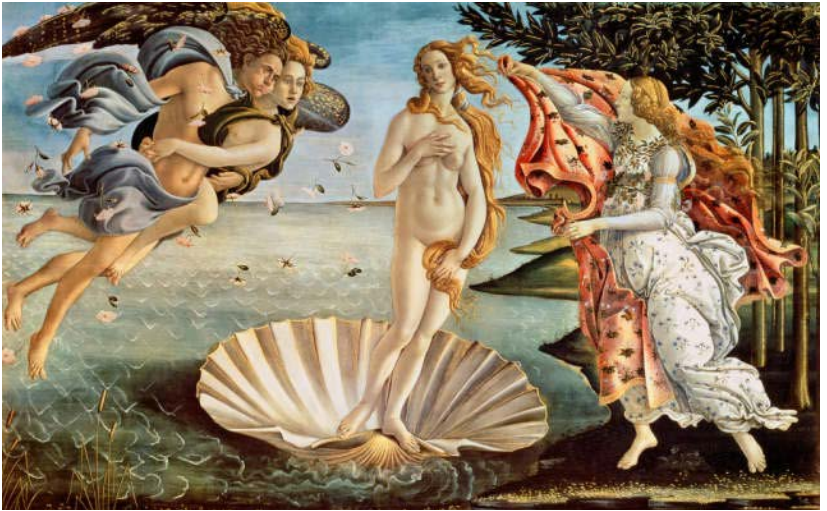
MONOCHROME





NUDE





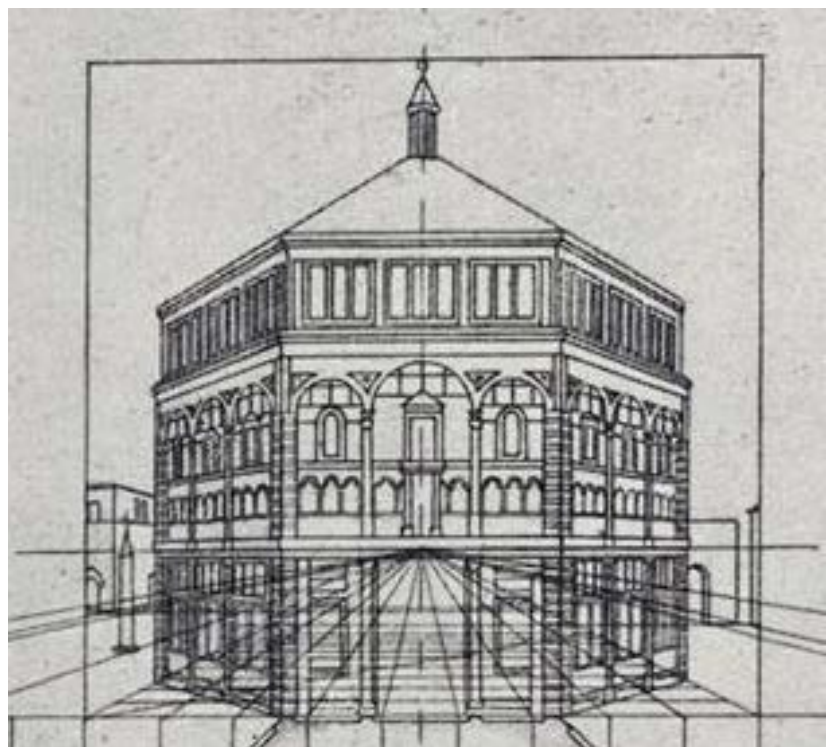
RESIDUE





SPATIAL ARTICULATION





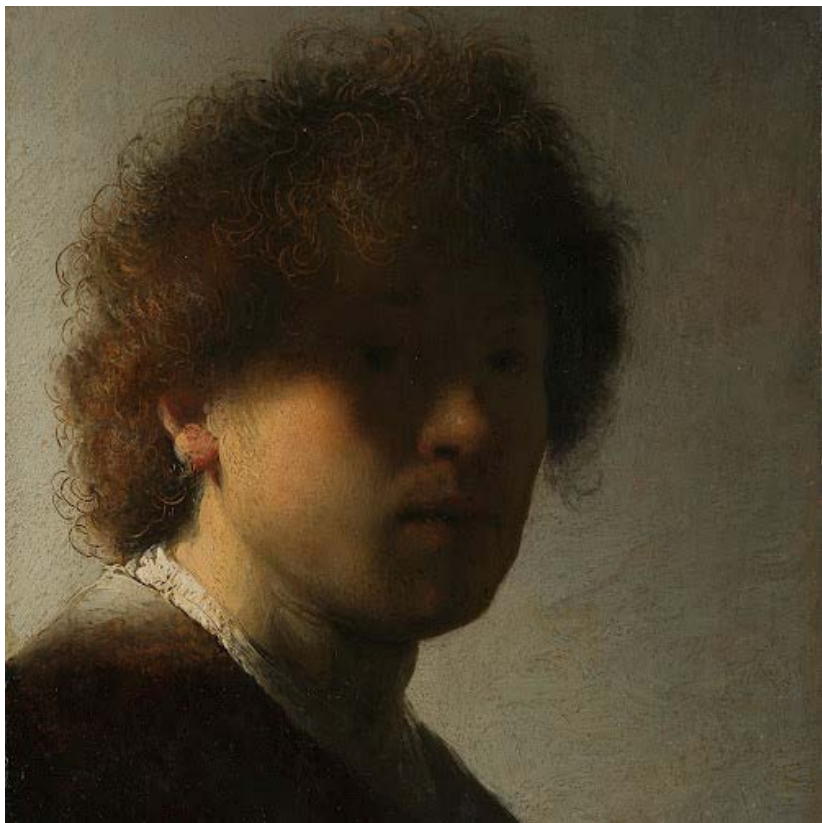
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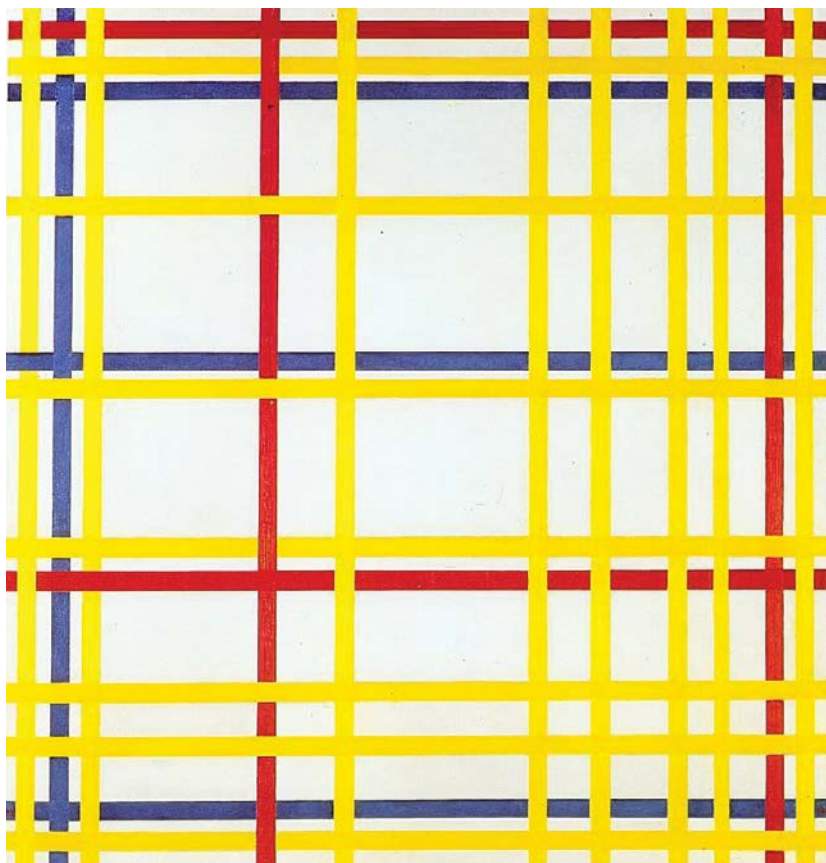


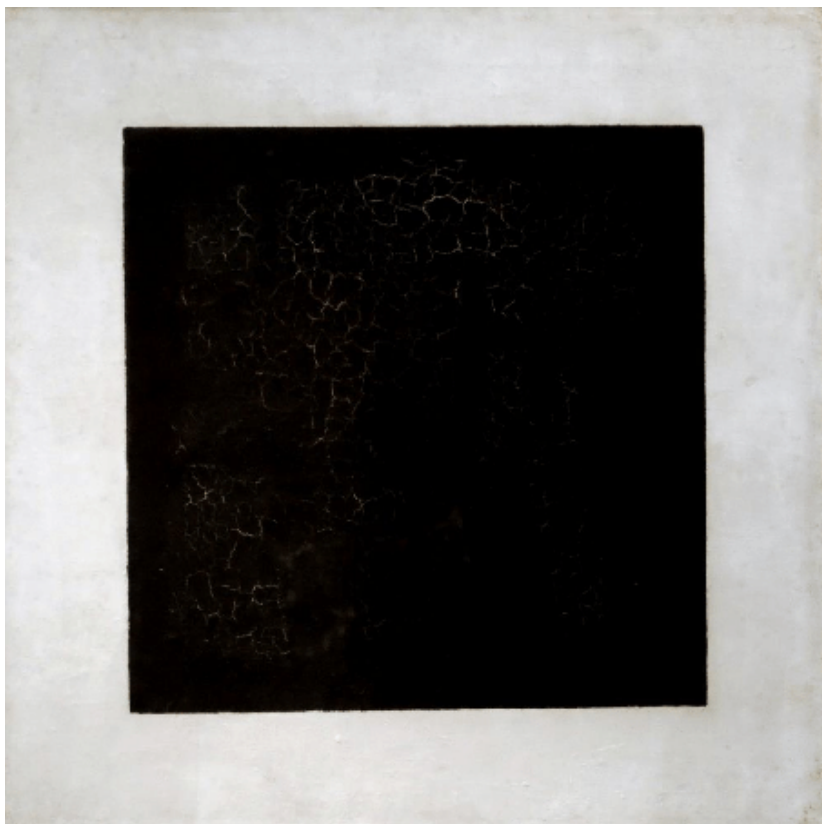




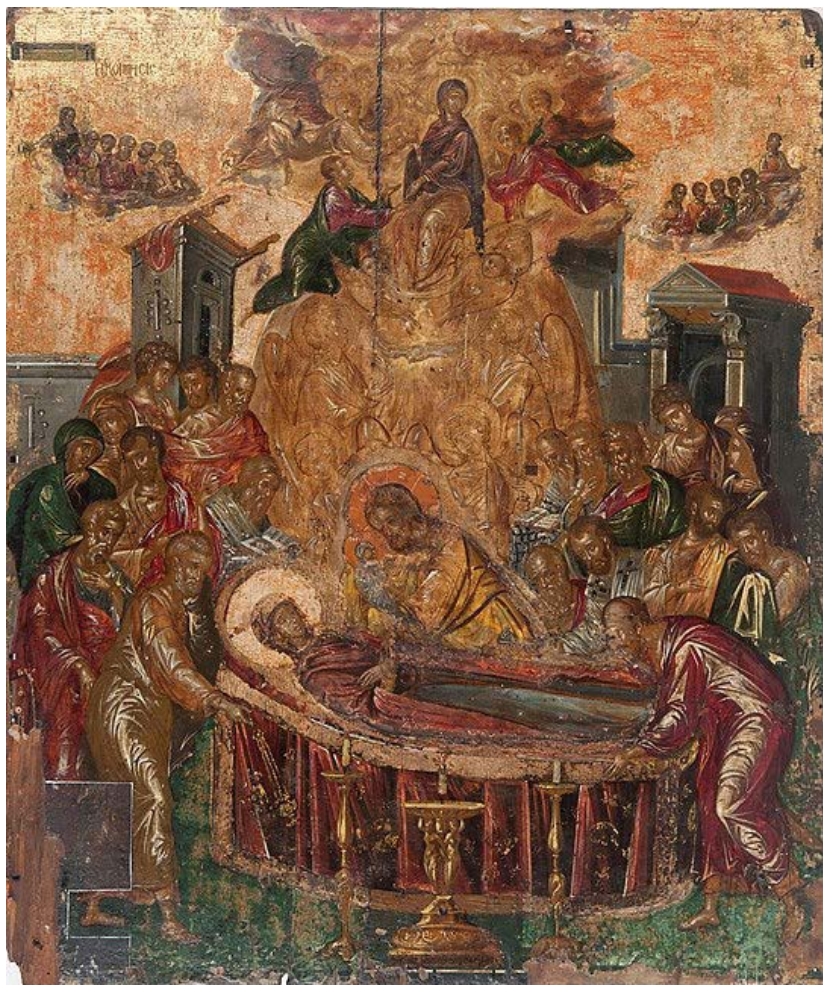










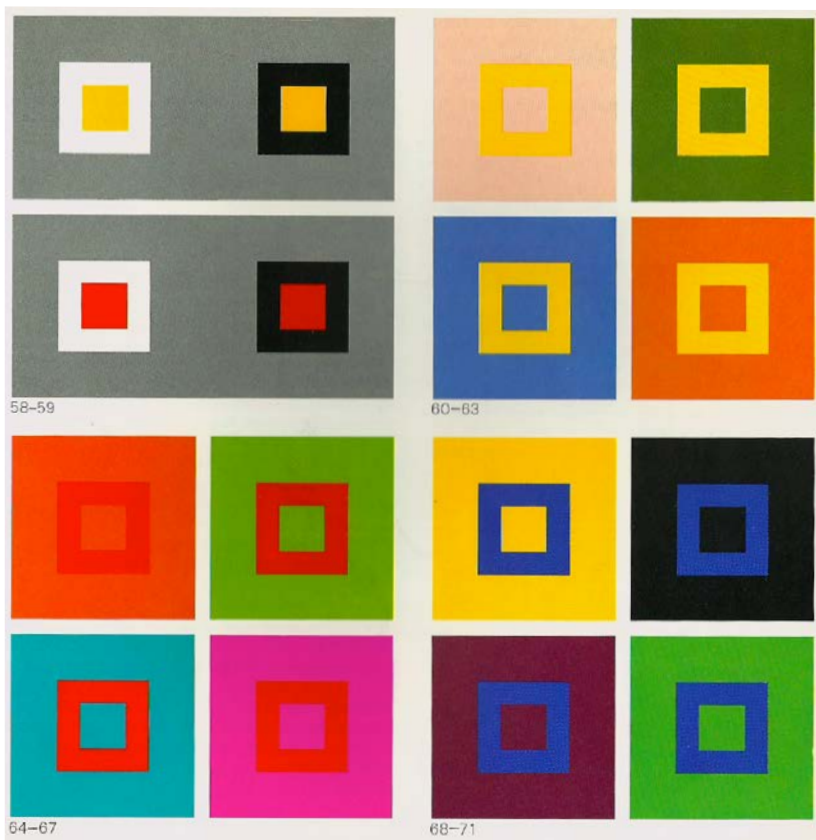






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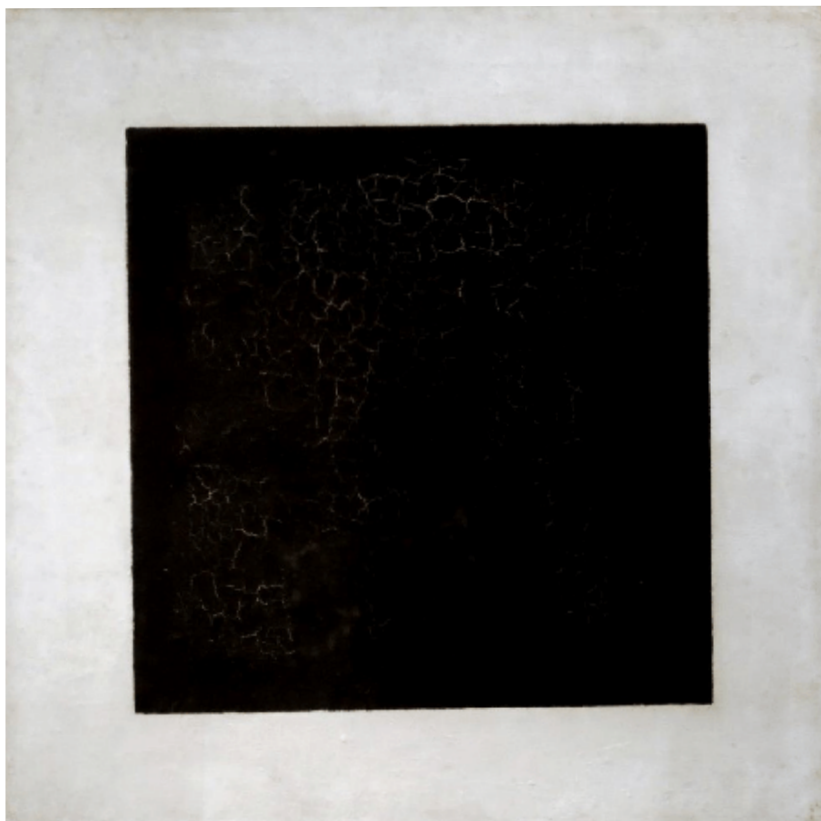












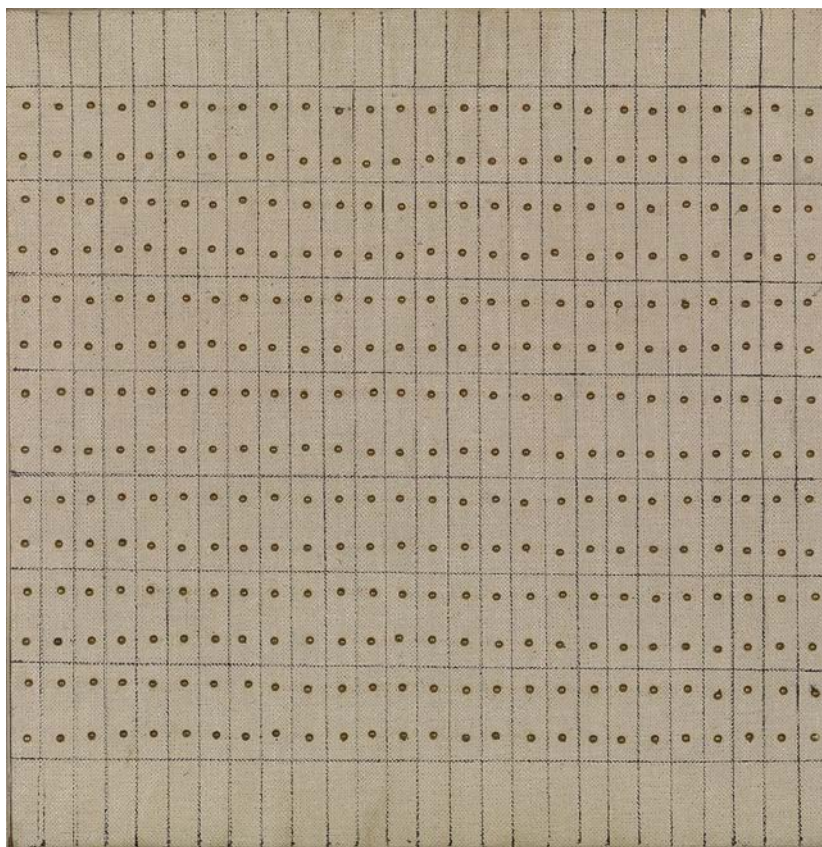






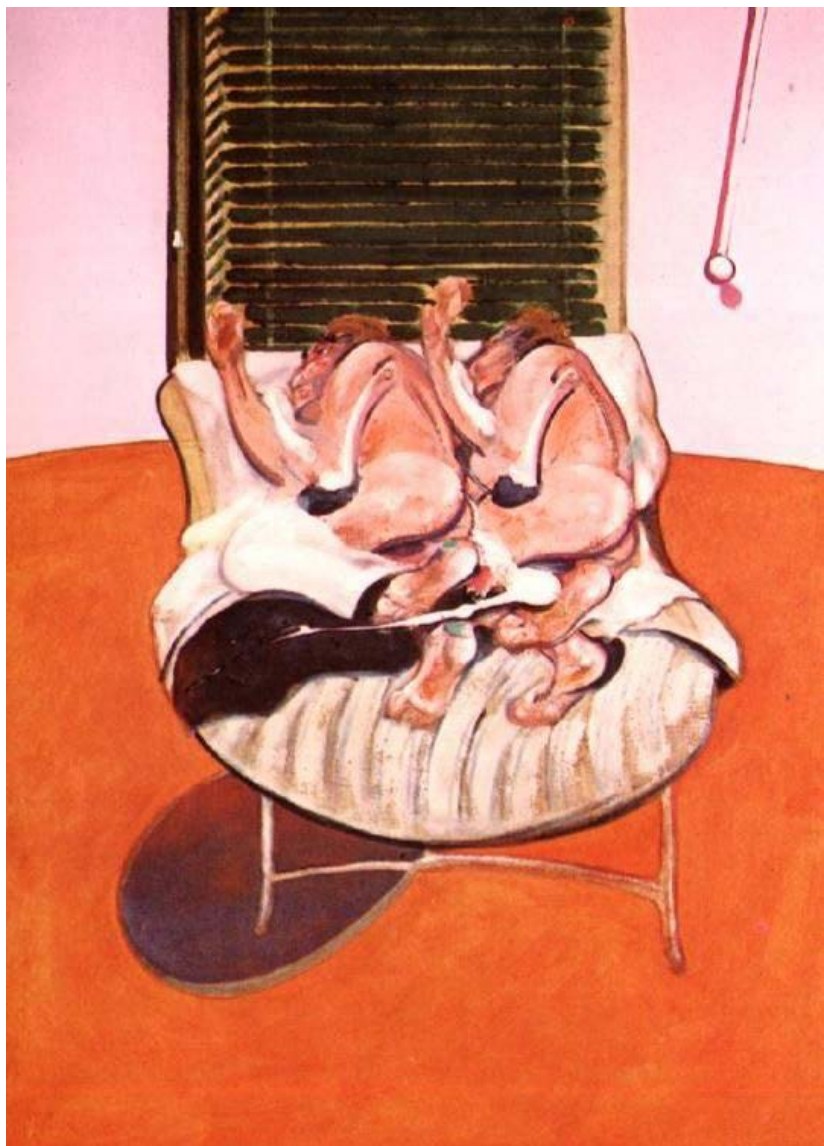


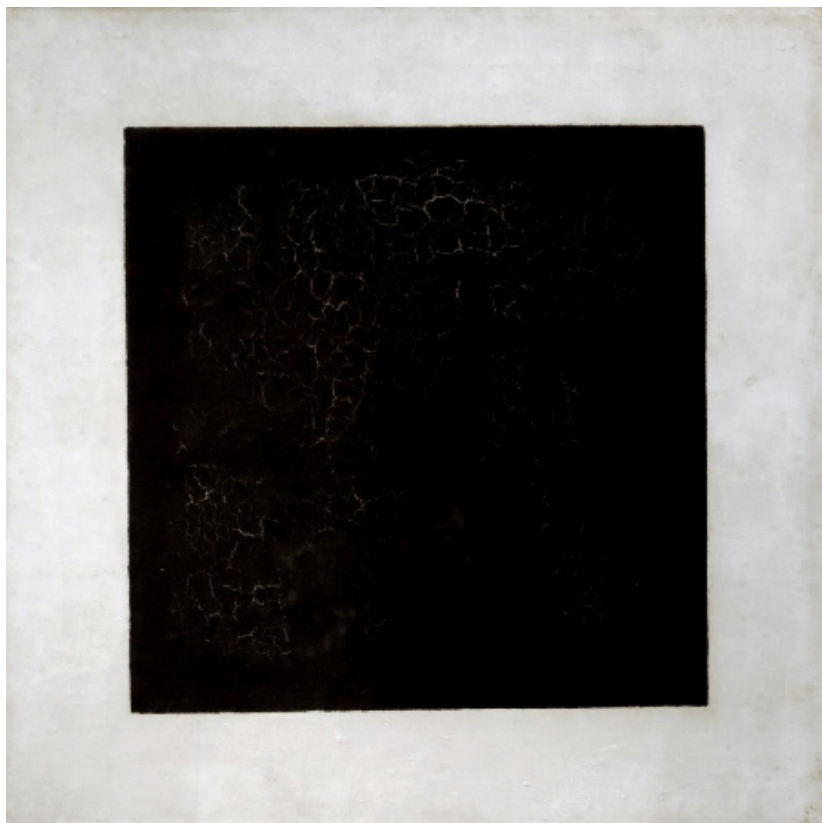


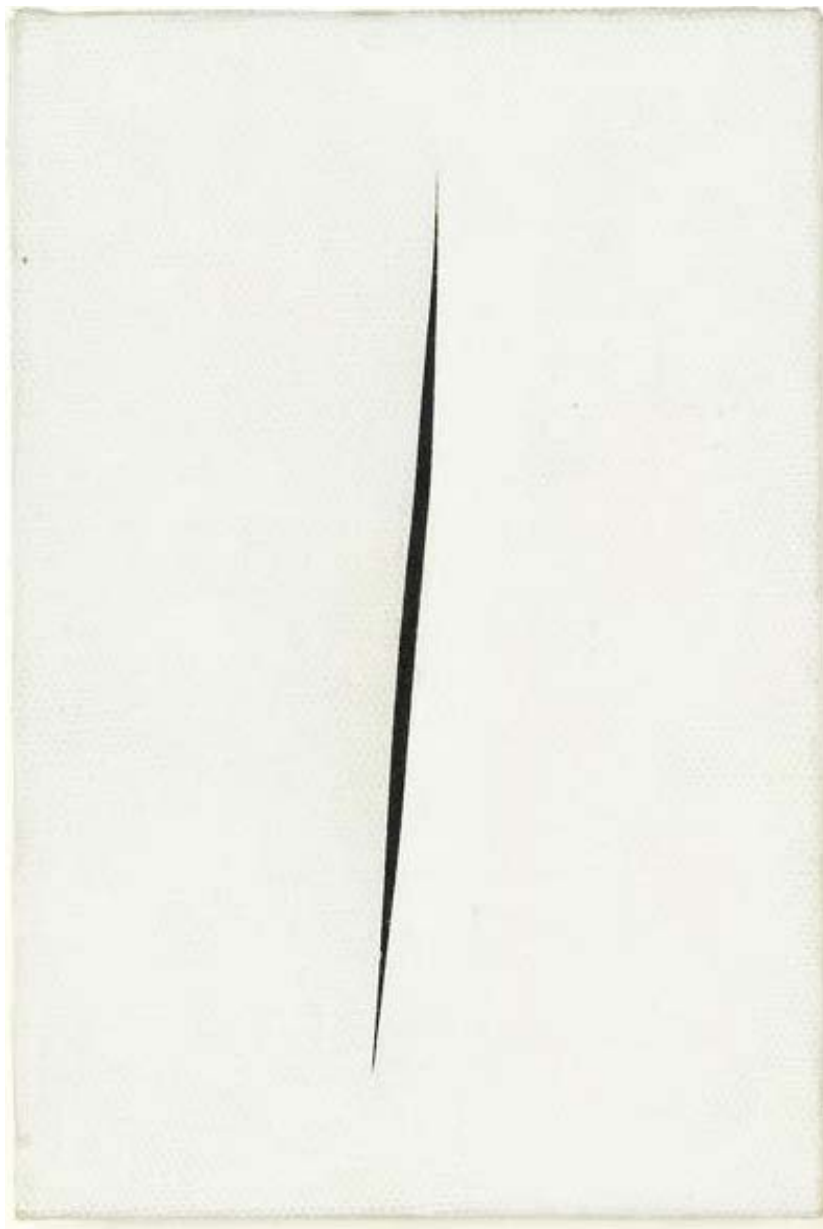












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