

LINE AND INTERVAL

Clementine Barnes, Julien Bowman, Shobha Broota, Terrence Combos, Vsevolod Vlaskine, Daria Baiocchi

Early modernists like Paul Klee adopted working analogies with sound or music in an effort to describe a method that made traditional non visual sources the subject of their painterly translations. Such emerging theories of cross-art methods are still relevant today.

Rudolf Arnheim in his book "Radio" explained that transmission could by-pass cultural or political boundaries, moving as invisible signals across vast and often inhospitable terrain. Radio messages could be said to be truly cross cultural. Language in that context was to arrive via sound waves that allowed the subject a space in which to greatly expand and this dynamic condition provides us with one to the earliest global models. Nothing like this had been imagined before. The way people recognised space and time was altered for ever.

The possibilities of informational transmission in the relay of the radiophonic impulse also appears to have manifested happened in 'translations' between art forms but with very different outcomes. The translation of subject across art forms resulted in new visual systems, as though the mediums were being made up and arranged as short-hand signals or codes that in their reductive abstract fashion were able to convey ideas as indicative series of symbolic impulses that could replace the dramatic narrative that had dominated the visual arts of the past. Novelistic narratives that once created the pictorial sense in visual art was being replaced in the modernist plastic arts with something far more concrete and genuinely experimental. Narrative shifted over to film makers and photographers who exploited the advantage, and mass new agencies and marketeers used these concentrated trajectories or story lines to greater affect as part of a new informational system that could distribute to a mass syndicated audiences with rapidity.

At this early stage of the modern project the traditional artist was challenged in the act of representation. This challenged their ongoing relevancy. Artist developed a counterpoint to such literary modes of accounting things in the world with reductive formulations likened to scientific analysis. Ideas around the syncopation of the visual and the aural consumed the imagination of the experimental artists. In this early stage Klee had discussed notions like the "qualitative accent" in spatial temporality, how that might represent the world as a rhythm of forms, or how the structure divided as "translations into the pictorial realm". Klee recorded these acute observations of the pictorial world in terms of movement and time and what the effect on the picture frame might be, and how such energies form as a system that might be measured or calibrated and how that could function as a new and abstract visual language. He contemplated certain distinctions in rhythmic structures and even categorised the non-divisive phenomena naming the type of rhythmic qualities as cosmic, organic or cultural.

The works in this exhibition focus on 6 different individualised methods of visual and aural synthesis. Clementine Barnes "Corner Wall Work", 2015 is a chamber installation, made of threads of colour tapestry wool. Her work demonstrates structural rhythm that enables her to set-up a set of syncopated relationships with the material by how it is placed. Her structural concern is primarily to do with point and line, and the resulting planar arrangement is accentuated by the microtonal nature of the hue of the colours selected. These microtonal divisions encompass an imagined pivotal point or idealised zone at the centre. The change in 'constructive choice of colour' itself manifests movement by an alternating range of chromatic tone & pitch. Such a selective process represents a translation of structure. The

distinctions between the two axis brings with it a design or selective outcome that informs the entire installation without need of subdivision.

In different ways the work of Julien Bowman selectively draws a structural formation defined by alternating parts. The all over surface treatment in the series "C.L.F" 2014-2015 are fashioned by the smallest possible means. Each cell in the treatment (the drawing) depends on relation to all others, and yet each of these cellular frames are an individuated unit embodying progress and change. With the repetitions aimed in this spatial occupation and drawn through this given time frame (the painting is performed) it could be said that 'a field is delimited' (PK.250). The progressive rhythmic change is causal. In another way the progression between the long and the short is a ceremony of increase. How are these progressive changes cultural formations? They are internal and external, they alternate and they are uniform. It is a regular projection on an even plane, as numerically the drawn units could be categorised, as being the simplest synthesis where 'the scene of action with fixed limits' (PK.266) is defined. In terms of human rhythms the action performed is liquid or fluid. Given that the nature of the membrane is devised as not to impede the linear gesture and construction of the elemental forms, the field maintains a preoccupation in the pictorial network.

Each of Bowman's three works combine to form a series in this exhibition, Each individual work demonstrates unique properties with each design relying on a different formula or directional modality, different colours and treatments to the layering. These modalities of single interlinked or layered lines demonstrate specific related properties, and each in turn provides its audience with structural information from which we gain insight on how to read across the three works as a whole. These gestural actions perform collectively to demonstrate how in space and time lines and intervals are made operational. Unlike the directions that move between each point that defines the dominant vertical line in Barnes' modular works, these grid painting take up critical methods where the point of connection, either rectilinear or diagonal, networks transmission. Like Broota, Barnes and Combos, these networks can be said to ascend and descend physically as a recognisable action. Each of the panels maintain an interactive optical quality with their audience, a phenomenal physical science and visual quality that makes them far from inert formalist structures.

Terrence Combos' complex works, "Kylie Minogue Keyboard Mash" 2015, "9 Kylie Minogues Keyboard Mash" 2015 and "Sifneai (did Beau)" 2015, account for numerous cross-overs between language and the visual field. These works are devised as alternate interlocking rhythmic planes. A part of their visual language there is an ironic characteristic formed, one where character is visual, and at the same instance is phonetic, taken from systems of language and speech. Without wanting to reach for an alien definition, there is an asymmetrical reliance and centrifugal power similar to structural properties of the Hindu mandala that in principle is ruled by an essential engagement with construction of a networked-field. Here three senses activate at once. We can read or hear it, we are able to see it and we're able to feel it (optical pulses). Their aggregate tessellated design is generating an active rhythmic quality as it increases the parameters of their conceptual fields. Rhythm is said to exist as vibrations, and given that Combos engages with several simultaneous changing accents to 'increase' the overall effect the resulting temporal variants insight into how the paintings relay motion. The idea that the works could be sounded or that we read them and hear their phonetic form is recognition demonstrates that the selection of interval changes are durational. This is crucial to their meaning as a primarily visual works (as a painting). It is the divisible parts of the whole that translates the written word from the outset. There appears to be a number of translations happening simultaneously. Language is not limited, nor is the quality of the mantra disguising some factual other socially isolated hybrid. Not only is the language image derived from a cross-referenced source, but it is a

record of a deeper cultural rhythm that does not necessarily ever truly reveals itself openly. From this active cross-over process a dense baroque pattern-like disguise confronts the viewer. They form an interlocking structural process but that does not cover over a secret or private political language, something that is outside of the socio-normative. The hybrid nature of the language Combos engages with and the visual accent it provides (a thing certainly embedded in these paintings) can be described as a language recognisably departed from the official language of State. Yet this is contradictory in nature.

Aside from the general structural concepts of these works there is something causal that directs their labyrinthine appearance, something that runs parallel to the normal surface of film or screen. Light is thrown outward as though the crystalline structure were transmitting a message or signal. An embedded juxtaposition of like and un-like made of geometric coloured units are grouped in deliberate ways to form a series of 'characters', that combine to make in its final instance a single constellation formed from these constituent parts.

It is important to reference in these exhibition notes, things that stand outside the historicity of art. Not only the common quotidian nature that these works work to slavishly reproduce, but that stand as a signal, as an actual and fundamental social record that abides by external relationships. A relational constructed hybrid form (reversal of) in language is a creolisation, an agent of language, or *verlan* of that which can be heard and read, that is embedded in the process. Something outside but within.

Reading Shobha Broota in her own words, among her inspirations and key concepts that relate intrinsically to this exhibition, a concern about line and interval, are terms like Rhythmic, Vibrating, Musical, Resonating and Flowing. Shobha says, "I have realised that there is a resting centre around which the cosmic existence moves . . . there is no preconceived picture . . . A line, a dot, a tone can be an end in itself". Following Klee's dictum where he states the main characteristic of rhythm is repetition, there is inferred that the spatial relationship that exists between planes, a tension between the 'terrestrial' and the 'cosmic' exists. One that is defined by things being 'nearer' and others being more 'distant'. That 'things' lighten and relax with positive and negative emphasis, movement and countermovement, a shift in positions and the varying intensity of movements.

For Broota's singular painting "Untitled" 2010, demonstrates many of these qualities and more as with her technique with the line, and by a magnification of rhythmic form. Through the mindful application of systems where intensity is amplified by the overlapping power of the basic elements, as in a similar way to Bowmen, these spatial conditions are enacted, in a singular performative way to form one meditative zone fused in a mental and physical consciousness able to stand and express the idea of the space/time continuum. For it is through a lattice, a model used to convey the poetic value wherein the maker-speaker-writes using a reductive linguistic system that takes us to this other side. If we set these key words of the artist back on themselves, things like colour, light, rain, silence, subtle contrast, optical transformation, pattern, repetition, water, growth and parallel and adopting a totally non-linguistic reductive approach in the analysis we find a means through which to transmit that journey to that space-within. It is that 'change of place' and the articulation of movement that actualises her synthesis.

So as not to accelerate an idea too much beyond concrete recognition, but allow language in some way to join the exhibits in the gallery and in a way to demonstrate as a document what is and what is not present that determines how the line and interval undertakes the varied directional changes in these works, it makes sense now to focus on the work of Vsevolod Vlaskine. In 2013 SNO commissioned a photographic and movement-based project between Vlaskine and the dancer Tess De Quincy, called "Moondance". Their collaborative

partnership was part of a series of 5 duos created by visual artists, a radio producer, electronic and computer music composers, dancers and movement artists and new-media artists and sculptors. Partnerships were arranged so that each of the 10 invited artists could think about, and experiment together to try and make cross-art form works. On the occasion of "Moondance" Vlaskine was able to bring his innovative photography into a much expanded field, by seeing his night-sky images projected back to him in an almost gigantic scales. With that change in the scope and application of photography moving into the realm of performance and theatre space, De Quincy arranged to make subsequent performances that would take parts of the photographer's vast photo archive into an active post-production environment. This was a playful environment where not only the photos appeared amplified, but also underwent an expanded association with Vic McEwan's audio adaptations, and made seemingly filmic by a kind of gaseous video treatment by Sam James. In all, this experimentation where the photograph was able to move into the expanded fields of performance, the filmic and audio the broader scope that Vlaskine found himself playing in was being more stimulated (the eye).

The current series of photographic and video-sound works is derived from Vlaskine's extended study of water, and the effects that light, reflection and movement has on a liquid surface. It is the generating source of the picture that the photographer forms and its function depends on movements. Each particular study relates a particular character of movement. In each is a successive function at play and these effects could be said to be figural in kind. Not yet in a bodily sense, but certainly being effected as a series of gestural characters. Each series of movements is a record of a place and time. *It comes into being...and it is apprehended.* Paul Klee talked about the eye being weary of the familiar nature and culture surrounding it (PK.369), that the eye tries to locate new things to stimulate and enchant it. Vlaskine's photographs and filmic works come close to being a kind of record of the essence of the source and how that objectively functions. As a noun the figure can be defined as having form or shape, as determined by outlines or the exterior surfaces. As an action the word figure can mean to compute or calculate an object, or portray something by speech or actions. The Latin *figura* as in shape, trope or equivalently to shape something. Returning to language, the figure as is in speech, is said to be the principle of organisation according to which matter moves to form an object during the various stages of its existence. Klee emphasises that the organism is figured from within, and on the basis of its essence, to shape is to indicate this interpenetration of outward and inner nature. These photographs (and videos) are specific locations, observed at a particular point in time designated by certain limits (of the camera). By placing this as an exhibit its nature is its history and vice versa. That being so another change of direction taking the line and interval, a correspondence, that transfigures the line itself into an action related as concrete sound objects. A static formulation the still photograph, and formulation of movement the filmic and finally the reformulation of both these figurations in the shape of sound. It is in this unifying element, a liquid architecture devised and translated from the source of water that permeates the first 3 rooms of the gallery, sometimes overlapping and sometimes duplicated, that leads the listener to assume a filmic – audio correspondence must exist. Both the filmic and audio are examples of a synthesis, both developed from the internal source, and framed or constructed and figured to compute this formal undertaking.

Finally the sound artist for SNO 113 Daria Baiocchi is an Italian classical music composer, and electronic music composer who enjoys a lively international career as pianist. In this sound work, Plasma, she electronically generates and processes a variety of sounds including a new percussion instrument called 'sinori.' The work refers to electrical energy, thunder and blood-flow.

References:

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Curatorial notes Ruark Lewis and Ian Andrews