

Lecture 12: Paris, Havana, Montevideo

Part I Havana

- Wilfredo Lam, *Self Portrait I*: reads like a pastiche but more like an appropriation of his style for self-portraiture (Red Madras, or the Blue Nude article)
Here, Lam is displaying Matisse's visual techniques: fields of color, decorative patterns, arabesques, reduct. of the body to a non-naturalistic rendering of the human form. He's using these methods to make a self-portrait.
He's mobilizing his own identity.
- The Civil War (Lam, 1937) in response to Picasso's *guernica*: attempt to mobilize broken facturing of bones to express violence
- Figure (1939) reversal of figure & ground, no work until now had the figure as an absence as presence of a background; *Sleeping Nude* (1939) mask-like appropriation of the face, patterns etc.
- Lam then goes to Cuba, and his formal language is developed:
motifs in *Woman* (1942) he allows a form to develop, suggesting other human form, vegetat° & plant life, masks, animal faces
Body is re-organized; see Picasso's *Seated Bathers* (1930) but have now taken up a more expressive use.
The Noise (1943) references masks of African culture: not a direct quote of the masks themselves, but a quote of Picasso's *démoselles d'Alger*.
He's engaging with the legacy of primitives: he's restoring the masks to their natural milieu (no more Barcelona but now the jungle)
- The jungle here is a psychic state (not a place): there's no jungle like that in Cuba.
Look at Lam in terms of deployment of landscapes / content's of landscape like Roberto Matta's landscape
- Simon on Wilfredo Lam: second wave of primitivism is descendant of said natives reappropriating the first wave and using their tradit°. But Bearder's position is actually different: culture's not biologically inherited.

... → through his collages in 1960, he finds answers to his premises: based within the fabric of the city, and incorporates found images, references & draws from african sculptures w/ references to urban life. These marks are, however, reproduction (not the original); and these cuts / features are legible as individual elements. There is a cut / space that Bearden is articulating between his own persona, and the imagery; without fully claiming authenticity (awareness of constructedness of identity)

→ How do artists claim a genealogy? Rather than claiming an automatic descent, you can see what it means to have a constructed genealogy to Bearden's & Lam's work

→ The giveaway line of Simon's paragraph: "Lam was ahead of their times", but Colby says it's impossible; but an artists can have more audience after their deaths, or enjoy different degrees of recognition.

Part II) Mondrian

→ Garcia spends the 1920's in Paris. A logic we see in Mondrian as well: cubist scaffolding (Justice [1924] → Still life with Gingerpot [1911])
Logic of fixing objects to the picture plane.

Oblique Rhythms with Fragmented Objects (1925); Fragmentation: references to Gork's emphasis on giving fragmentary rhythm, pattern.

Garcia emphasizes materiality (incessant deployment of chiaroscuro), emphasizing that depth

Also, his parallel pursuit in strut and wood (construct in polychrome wood) engaging with the legacy of Russian artists (Malevich, Tatlin) new material construct & future

Both articulating at once proximity and distance to Mondrian

Color Planes with two superimposed woods, & Constructive Locomotive No. 1 (same primary color,, scaffolding grid BUT returned to a referential purpose, mimetic goal to represent a locomotive (it's got wheels)) with materiality as well

Color Structure (1930), ~~he~~ is more interested in depth, texture than Mondrian Construct with Triangle (1929) no color: pure/ unblem; they have black paint added

... → Garcia's deployment of grid as means of representation
Constructive Painting (1929); scaffolding & plane are completely independent of each other. Interlocked relat°; schematic of symbols built into the grid

→ 1934: Garcia moves back to Uruguay (Albano Article); a lot of exchange between Argentina and Uruguay

Transnationalism: if international operates as a series of nodes (a central hub that coordinates in); transnational is more like soap-suds moving along the surface: proximity of diff. nat°s, people can freely move across countries / borders

→ Garcia is invested to develop an art of the south: he wants to found a movement that is independent of, or not seen as derivative of, the art of European modernism. He advocates a regionalism, but his mode of appeal is the universal

Universal Art (1943), he introduces symbols considered "universal" reference to Mayan pictographs, less engaged with emblems & signs of modernity, expresses his appeal to the universal, construct° (material)
Fish: christian symbol, Jesus

→ He entitles a piece as Atomic Energy (1946), primary icon + pictograph but atomic is another way to show the universal. He extends his pictograph logic to the sculptural; consciously appealing to primordial express. mediated through modernist painting

(Albano) // Paternity claim, yet his most immediate studies reject him; they deny one father and claim another (reputat° & embrace)
That's how Latin South America develops.

Archaic forms have a connect° to premodern past, shared values for Munking.
Irony: Tones Garcia, is rejected by the generat° of artists looking up to him. He is the bridge introducing Eu. Modernism to Rio de Janeiro; and advocates universal art: But the following artists reject him & draw straight from specific Eu art.

... The also hinge on Theo van Doesburg. In the 1930s, he authors a manifesto on Art Concret (6 bullet point, yet another claim to the universal) art devoid of illusion & metaphor. Instead, material construct° of the work are emphatically themselves. (doesn't talk about material as such)

→ 1944: *Arturo* (Tomás Maldonado) magazine. They push it further to emphasize materials and the physicality: defining movement of South America: take one strain of art from Europe & push it even further.

García wants to break sth pure (process of distillat°), the Arturo wants to create (invent) sth new that, in its emergence, makes innovat°

(invent° vs automatism: push back on surrealism) (non-spontaneous invent°)

↳ mechanical approach to invention

→ Neo-Plasticist vocabulary with Carmelo Arden Quin

new irregularly-shaped frames, it speaks to what an irregularly shaped frame does, when the effect of cropping de-emphasizes canvas.

Whereas here materiality & physical struct° is more emphatic

explained by Rhod Rothfuss: a rectangular frame is historically designed to produce illusory effects, makes us pre-disposed to read space metaphorically.

Modi Composit°: emphasize concretism / geometric abstract° / Modi movement

Different shapes in Argentina: Raúl Lozza (arrange a number of frames in tandem w/ one another)

Juan Melo: dismembered Mondrian, independent from the wall

Carmelo Quin: move away from the wall + material of painting

⇒ departure from the European constructivist process, drive to move away from illusion to raw, untransmuted material (same with Rodchenko, 1920 but very unlikely influenced by each other)

→ Concretism in Brazil: Lygia Clark: individual frames locked into each other (1950's) we'll get back to that #neo-concretism