Lecture 20: Lost... (absent for the first half)

Pollock unhappy about figurat° (precondit° for representat°: figure emerging out of ground) and representat° (figure that has a referend in the world)

Ambivalence about liberating line: experiments in restoring the figure (Fried)
How can he accomplish figuration? White cockatt: add in blocks of color in between the schemes of paint that most suggested a contour
more successful, Cut Out (Fried quote)
"figuration is achieved through eyesight alone", concept of optical space, informs us about space which is being created (while all the other styles are inherently tactile)
vs a space which creates a depth that is exclusively optical
=> solution is to take paint away (contrapasto gingerbread man), the figure here reads as a gap, an absence, a blind spot in our visual field

[redacted]

. More successful is out of the Web, scattered set of portion of canvas (also removing part of a field) but here it doesn't dominate the field. Figuration is harder to see.

It's called Floater (things in your eye) - and you can see how Out of the Web operates visually. The brown bits of masonite are occlusions, too dispersed for you to understand.

Is this figuration really new? We have here a space and a figuration. They're a complete departure from what has been done insofar (see Raphael, Marriage of the Virgin)

Part III Post painterly abstraction

→ DeKooning (Fried) has flopped about. The author's reading is: DeKooning combines faceted plane cubist° with the expressive bravura brushwork of baroque painting. We can read DeKoon as a formula:

Bravura + Cubism = DeKooning

// The term Painterly (from Wölfflin): narrative of bloom-but decay is false. He argues that they were different styles, he establishes a set of formal categories: distinguishing between Renaissance linear painting and Baroque Painterly painting

(bcz line dominates) ← ⇒ linear, more dependent on drawing, on bounding of flys, Precise

⇒ Painterly, no longer crisp divisions of field of color, instead a mixing of shades (no need for pattern) but have range of hues that become red. More pronounced use of the brush as vehicle of design (you can "still feel the pencil"), vs gestural brushwork more thick, palpable stroke (impasto work)

→ What then would be post-painterly?

Pollock after drip-painting (return to figuration) takes raw, unprimed canvas. Poured viscous black paint, pigment is soaked into the canvas. Marks read as gestural, but no materiality. (Number 1 8 & 14)

→ Frankenthaler re-introduces this technique to create a figurate that

... is gestural, but unlike Dekooning. But these works don't achieve an all-over optical space, but Mad Rivals cape has a logic of surface. But it does come closer.

→ Morris Louis learns from Frankenthaler. In Intrigue, pours of paint soaked in canvas, create a diaphanous fashion. We tend not to see the raw canvas: pure shimmering baffle of color
They're big (enveloping experience). His reading enforces that Pollock's work had achieved.

Beta Lambda (1961) is meant to engage your peripheral vision. The center is all white, bands of color can't be seen in full focus: you look in the center and you see them.

Bethney Graham picture speaks to the larger social aspect of Louis

Noland:
→ Creating structure. Fried focuses only on that circular, and later chevron painting which plays on the surrounding frame of the canvas

Part IV Deductive Structure
→ Existentialist thought: Giacometti associated with Sartre equivalent in Newman, barely present trace of humanity aware of the volumes around them.

Fried's reading: Ornament, later Who's afraid of Red, Yellow, and Blue (reference to who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?). He reads them as indicators of the frame of the composition. Deductive structure, logically removed from bounding frame.
Vir Heroicus Sublimis (1950-51), these zips articulate the relat°ship to the frame.

→ Frank Stella: nothing else than stripes in his expression. His work as thick borders. There is a formal structural relationship between this and deductive structure. The whole rest of the composition has been deduced from a few decisions.

... (Stella) "what you see is what you see"
objectness, materialness, flat surface of the plane.
Zambezi following trough on lines.
For Fried, this is different than cubism. Clumping to the center vs beginning with its edge and work its way in.

Stella then evolves: different hues, particular art effect. These stripes begin to read as perspectival space. Stella's composition activates a taste for geometry (Convex vs Concave). Interested in composition: it also holds a two-dimensional shape: the drama / conflict between these things induce a sense of recession that is not there.

Fried
- → Pollock frees line, produces optical space
- → Post-painterly abstraction
- → Deductive structure

Part V
→ Social context:
"The best work of the past 20 years has been produced by Americans"
No: can this only be specific to US artists?
situate formalism within an ethos of postwar America.
Greenberg's optical space & Steinberg's questioning this notion, he situates in the historical moment: space race: we can immerse ourselves floating into a Rothko painting. Art being presented as a series of problems that need to be solved. Fried asserts a fervor to this problem (both for the artist and the critic).
But maybe that urgency shouldn't be taught of in a moral way.
Maybe the painter shouldn't be a cowboy in denim, but as a professional in a suit just doing his work (area of competence, logic of an increasingly specialized professional). Painters define themselves as a training to method and standard, and an internalised to their work.
Maybe we're right to connect the painter to the IBM board room,