Lecture 21:

Part I → Studio 35
White artists (but all of different descent) it's a construction of difference in orgin.
Identifies as descendents. Mathieu involved medieval France (history → nation)
Hypothetical: what would he have done in the US: would he have continued to draw on French nation.
But if the other artists are good fints, NO.
→ Personal myth, invocation of the universal, the native american visual motifs ?

→ There's immigration, and then there's diaspora (refers to people who have been dispersed from a homeland)
In the XX th century, it refers to any number of expulsion from homelands and the conditions for why they happened (colonialism/slavetrade)

→ With Diaspora, a sense of lost homeland (& a relationship to said lost homeland). What are the means that bind us together
Nation - People - Territory - State are sundered apart.

→ Newman plays with these notions trough painting
→ Lewis engages in a social realist project, then moves toward a surrealist language of loose figuration. He's holding on to a social referend. gestural stroke images is a continuation of that.

Suite - Lect 21

→ Ambivalent relat°ship to homeland - nation - people that diaspora create
(people - territory - State) that nationalism create

⇒ diff approaches to national identifications

→ Norman Lewis is simultaneously: black identity, and American identity.
relationship to figuration
[subway]: referent of human life
pushes more towards abstract° (fig. doesn't dictate the composition)
scaffolding from cubism, but Lewis' line is thinner, finer. It has a relat°ship to ink and drawing

Part II

→ changing mood (oil and ink): thinning-out the cubist scaffolding
(it becomes a web, a network)
→ small strokes of black: Winter Branches (reference to nature), then speaks to the atomic imaginary (In Every Atom Glows
⇒ de-materializ°ation of matter

Gibson: how the thin line of his webs crops up in a series of compositions
the little figures in Street Scene (arranged around an ellipse)
⇒ archaic representat° of a collectivity
(remnant of the social, but having an open-ended meaning)
some images read with no context, others allude to a contemporary situat°

Diaspora in Rituals: it's connected to a temporality repeating phenomenon
but at the same time Street Music more modern

stick figure: broad enough and specific to speak to both the atemporal
and the modern

Gibson quote: recall Krasner's work of the late 40's. Wagner reads it
as a muffling of Pollock's gestures (insisted on the smaller versions of mark-making)

→ ...[on Krasner] it's a way of suppressing the expressive voice.
Gibson says that you can see the figure as being about multiplicity that Pollock's number ones don't achieve.
Also read the worshipping these collectives as an affirmat° of the collectives's inability to speak.

Part III

→ March on Washington : not characteristic of Lewis' work in the 60's
He was far more pessimistic :
A way to understand race is racism (American taken)
→ almost cartoonish but yet frightening representat° of hooded figures in white (schematizat° of clansmen) - contingency of civil right mvt in the Ku Klux Klan ; and also the redneck series

→ Also cartoonish representat° of clansmen : Guston
x short small strokes, maintain a physical proximity to the canvas but in the sixties he breaks with that completely (yet not directly quoting mass culture). Representat° of violence, clansmen as an archetype and they schematize them.

→ This complicate the mythmaker goal of finding universal identifications
· Lewis finds a claim to the american (NOT universal)
· not° that what is a more fitting american token than the kkk (vs Polan)

Part IV

→ English's piece focuses in on 1971, rethinks how those shows should be thought of.
Harlem on my mind. That's White of Hoving (newly appointed MET director) and it came out of a mix of misguided liberalism and very strategic politics (they wanted to expand, they needed to build a new wing)
The MET was trying to improve community relations : it was a disaster. Less an exhibit°, more like a documentary. A show at the Met didn't show many black artists' art. English say that they only focused on abstraction

→ ... the show shouldn't have been criticized because they showed abstract art.
Studio Museum: weariness to its opening, its first show is Tom Lloyd
This was the first show in the Whitney: Alvin Loving WYN...
was the talisman [how you read color relationships, concatenation of blocks of color]. Your relat° to convex & concave changes: perspective is shifted or multiplied.

⇒ Representationalism (he defines as representing your racial ID, but also to seek out signs of representat° of racial identity) - connecting their experience to artwork and biography

→ Reading of Ed Clark: early shaped canvas
reads addit° of paper as bird, stealth bomber (figure in flight)
⇒ departure, mvmt upward. Figurat° is not color (laid out in a gramarstic fashion: large units of paint collide, "splash" on each other, don't form a cohesive ensemble.

→ Clark's mature style: uses acrylic (new in the 60's)
dries instantaneously unlike oil ptng. But it's viscous - gelatin ooze - you push on the canvas. More hard-edged mark.
He'd poor acrylic on the canvas and then pushes it away with a broom
(flat on the ground cpst°, but the stroke is unique)
English quote: we can reconstruct the mvt of Clark's stroke.
But when you do that, there's a distance btwn mvt and the artist: more so than DeKooning's Bravura, or Pollock's paint.
⇒ emotional directness attributed to Pollock & DeKooning's style is mediated here - put aside

English attributes 2 tendencies:
- Palette work: you have hues, and draw paint from it, then blend them
This blending is done directly on the canvas with Clark
serv with DeKooning: logic of blending colors; Mondrian's testing process

... → direct stroke of painting, in Mondrian, testing of line & plane (figure & ground). Enjoin to think about the quasi-mechanical way of applying paint

- Also like Mondrian: shape that expands beyond its borders (like Mondrian's tilted canvases: centrifugal canvases)

⇒ Holding those 2 notions in tension (vibration)

→ Sam Gilliam can be associated with post-painterly abstract°
beveled 45-degree edges (not uniformally flat)
⇒ objectness of the field of fabric is emphasized
→ mix of dying, painting, pouring (operat°s on the fabric)

→ emphasis on materiality: drapery pieces. (inspired by clothes hanging to dry)
allegorizat° of laborers - janitors
⇒ brings to abstract an urban vernacular into the space of MoMA
But also keep the chromatic aspect (don't collapse them onto each other)

→ Little Dude: suggest° of figuration is in the "twisting" of the drape in the middle

// different approach with figurat° through abstract° compared to Norman Lewis