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paint-er-ly adj. 1. of, pertaining to, or characteristic of a painter. 2. Fine Arts characterized by qualities of color, stroke, or texture perceived as distinctive to the art of painting, esp. the rendering of forms and images in terms of color or tonal relations rather than of contour or line.¹¹

painterly a. Characteristic of a painter, artistic; characteristic of paintings; (of a painting) not using clearly defined outlines.¹²

These dictionary definitions provide a reinforcement for further interpretation and exemplification of the convolutions, variable functions, and possible extensions, of this particular word.

In all three definitions transcribed above, a clear differentiation is made between the word as either a meaningful reference to the painter, or a designation of a painting. Notably, the word as pertaining to the painter is given first consideration in all three examples, and the emphasis is located in the qualification, 'of a painter'. Such emphasis is the basis for attention being granted in the present study to this primary meaning of the adjective 'painterly'. Equally, however, all three definitions refer to a meaning when the word is used as a pictorial term to define the outward appearances of a painting. By definition, such appearances may not coincide with the legibility of individually distinct lines. This secondary meaning is the familiar one acquired by proxy from Wölfflin's devised system. Wölfflin's system as such is valued in the context of this dissertation only in that the painterly creative concept, as an alternative to the linear, was made accessible.

When the meaning of the word 'painterly' is directed towards the overall effect achieved by the painting process, the implication that the painter must have manipulated form, colour and texture in conformity with the transmissible non-linear, and therefore painterly, appearances

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was disagreeable to the candidate, and questioned. Considerations were provoked as to how the adjective 'painterly' could meaningfully be applied without prior acceptance that certain pictorial treatments resulted in a set of identifiable and classifiable characteristics.

At this juncture, cognisance should be taken of Wölfflin's original word malerisch, for which 'painterly' was a deemed equivalent:

Malerisch. This word has, in the German, two distinct meanings, one objective, a quality residing in the object, the other subjective, a mode of apprehension and creation. To avoid confusion, they have been distinguished in English as "picturesque" and "painterly" respectively.¹³

Although nuances of meaning render translation hazardous, malerisch as 'painterly' carries the subjective meaning of, 'a mode of apprehension and creation' and this makes possible a distinction between 'painterly' as a creative concept and 'painterly' as a pictorial style. That Wölfflin, intent on pursuing the notion of the development of style, did assign his painterly concept to function objectively in a formal critique of pictorial appearances is not to be construed as a forfeiting of the subjective significance of the concept.

By extracting 'painterly' as a subjective, motivating creative force from Wölfflin, and by reconsidering the primary adjectival definition of the word 'painterly' as pertaining to the painter, then the vital consideration of the painter as the thinking subject during the painting process, the subjectivity of which is reflected in the painting, can be fully recognised. Although it is conceded that Wölfflin's painterly concept has been tied to a particular type of pictorial presentation, the characteristics of which refer to the painterly style, the candidate maintains that the subjectivity pervading both Wölfflin's concept and the primary adjectival definition of the word 'painterly', constitutes a dynamic extension of the painting di-

cipline. The subjectivity of the concept and word 'painterly' offers far-reaching consequences for pictorial presentation, irrespective of any attachment to a notion of style surrounding 'painterly' when used as a formal analytical term.

In reaction to the implication of the dictionary definitions that to adhere to painterly principles is tantamount to realising the painterly style, and intent on finding a viable alternative to this accepted meaning of the word 'painterly', the candidate contends that to assert a painterly sensibility is to be motivated by the painting process. Individual creative intentions are realised in response to the subjective kind of thinking of the painter when immersed in the painting process, and the meaning of the word 'painterly' becomes dissociated from automatic inferences of style. The emergence of this differentiation counters major confusion between two meanings on usage of the word 'painterly': that as generally understood by art theoreticians and by the practising painter.

In so far as the concept and term 'painterly' remain in usage today, Wölfflin's objective function has predominated over the subjective significance. However, cognisance of the subjective aspect of Wölfflin's concept and, in particular, the purely adjectival meaning of the word, allows for a legitimate, albeit revised, function of the word 'painterly' if used as an analytical term and applied in a critical context. By using the hypothetical example: "The painter paints in a painterly manner", this revised critical function of the word 'painterly' may be exemplified. The two implications of meaning for the word 'painterly' within this example are both of stylistic import, yet with differing emphases.

The etymological derivation of 'painterly' is cited: '(f. PAINTER

+ -LY)'. Thus, the word pertains only to that condition in which having the qualities of a painter is specified; the stressed phrase being the definitive function of the suffix '-ly' in the formation of adjectives. This adjectival quality requires scrutiny in order that emphasis be made on the working method of the painter as opposed to the designation of style in terms of the outward appearance of an end-product, the resultant painting.

In the given hypothetical example, the adjective 'painterly' qualifies the painter's methodology of painting. If 'painterly' is understood as one distinct way painters have of applying paint to a surface, and of organising the format, then a concern with categorising paintings underlies this meaning, in that the painting, and not the painter, is considered responsible for the ultimate designation 'painterly'. Alternatively, if 'painterly' is again understood as a painter's painting process, but refers to one individual's particular application of paint to a surface, then the word 'painterly' emphasises the painter's activity. Whereas the traits of the painter's cultivation of idiosyncratic pictorial sensibilities and tendencies realised in the painting process are carried by the painting, they are not necessarily of a categorial type. A concern with qualifying a painting process, rather than a concern with categorising the appearances of paintings, underlies this meaning of the word 'painterly'. The latter concern fulfils an objective function; the former satisfies the subjective aspect of the involved circumstantial evidence of painting processes qualified by the word 'painterly'.

Although grammatically irregular, were the painter to paint 'painterly-ly', then the objective function of the word 'painterly'; the categorial meaning, and a concern with final appearances, would be

indicated. If the painter paints 'painter-ily' then the idiosyncratic and non-categorical meaning, inclusive of the painter's subjective involvement with the painting process, is contained within the word 'painterly'.

Significantly, the resultant painterliness of the paintings should be clearly assessed in accordance with one of these two aspects, the categorical or the non-categorical, in order for the word 'painterly' to gain exactitude of meaning. This directive is implicit in the definition of painterliness:

'Paint-er-li-ness n.: the quality or state of being painterly'.¹⁴

As an indicator of what has been argued, it may be posited here that the overall painterly concept is the concern of the aesthetician (and all-embracing in its connotations); painterly style the concern of the art historian; the condition of painterliness the concern of the art critic; and the painterly process the concern of the painter. As collateral disciplines, aesthetics, art history and art criticism have been classified as promulgating a categorical meaning for the term 'painterly', whereas the meaning and significance of the term 'painterly' for the painter is of a non-categorical nature.

While the painterly process for the painter is of paramount concern to the candidate, the critical necessity to ascertain the painter's conditioning of painterliness, as distinct from the condition of painterliness itself, is central to the concerns of this dissertation. While the critical urgency of this aspect permeates this study, full concentration on such an issue would entail intensive critical probing of a diverse range of paintings. By necessity, the candidate has limited this endeavour to a critical examination of her own work, based on her direct experience of the painterly painting

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process involved. Art critics have been included in the entrenchment of the categorial meaning of the term 'painterly' owing to the fact that acceptance of painterliness as the state of being 'painterly' predominates over attention to painterliness as the quality of being painterly. To fully determine the painterly character of a painting, concentration should be centred on the operations of the painter. By elaborating on the attitude of the painter when painting, and the intimacy of the relationship between the painter and the picture surface, the following statement by Francis Bacon, made in 1953, captures the essence of the painter's understanding of the term 'painterly', and hence, the non-categorial meaning implied by the term. Bacon said:

... every movement of the brush on the canvas alters the shape and implications of the image. That is why real painting is a mysterious and continuous struggle with chance -- mysterious because the very substance of the paint can make such a direct assault on the nervous system; continuous because the medium is so fluid and subtle that every change that is made loses what is already there in the hope of making a fresh gain.¹⁵

If the painter's understanding of painterly refers to recognising and seizing opportunities, and manipulating infinite possibilities throughout the painting process, then, questions must be raised concerning, at what point does the process stop? Whereas the notion of a finished painting in the painterly idiom presents a critical imponderable, for the painter:

... his task is to find a complex of qualities whose feeling is just right -- veering toward the unknown and chaos, yet ordered and related in order to be apprehended.¹⁶

Rather than accepting the notion of a finished painting in the sense of its being a finite entity, the painter releases himself from his painting at that (usually fleeting) moment of contentment after having manipulated paint continuously in search of that 'complex of qualities whose feeling is just right'.

Such manipulation involves the placing and displacing, and even the rupturing of painted configurations according to the painter's overriding sensibility. For the writer of art, the painter's sensibility may be interpreted as a creative strategy controlling the decisiveness with which a painter's personal procedures are organised. In the capacity of a strategy, the painter's sensibility is then taken to act as evidence of the underlying intention of a work and, as such, to aid in subsequent critical analysis. Such is the critical standpoint of the painter/critic Max Kozloff.

Kozloff

Essentially, what one does is to examine the physical execution of a work and all its complexities as they lead to some awareness of the organizing concept.¹⁷

He continued:

How, for instance, does one determine whether what one sees are contrasts, deliberate oppositions, dramatic tensions, clever paradoxes, or just plain inconsistencies and contradictions? To ask this question - and I do not see how it can be avoided - is to inquire of intention.¹⁸

That 'the organising concept' constitutes an intention as such, as claimed by Kozloff, is a moot critical point. For the candidate, for example, although intent on, and attentive to, enacting out her imaginative construct of light, essentially, the visual complexity of her work is derived from the painterly reciprocity of what may be termed a 'felt-reality'¹⁹ between the brush and her psyche. Such a creative approach differs in degree from a deliberate choice of painterly usages for the specific purposes of realising 'light' in painting.

Hans Hofmann was of the opinion that a painting, as a created entity, should be intuitively structured, and that convincingly established felt-relationships become the real sources of painterly life. Correspondingly, it is from the organising concept itself that, the implicit 'light' meaning of the explicit form in the candidate's

work is inferable. That a painting through being painted, dictates its own structural organisation results in an equation between the painterly life and the specific pictorial condition.

Using paint affects the intentions of artists. That intention is primarily to work in the painter's medium, paint, towards a desired end. When inextricably tied to the total accomplishment of the painter, Lynton Lamb reserved the word 'painterly' to describe a 'fusion of feeling and action, sight and touch, purpose and paint'.²⁰ Here, the word 'painterly' is willingly ascribed to the painter's attitude during the activity of painting, and is thus closer to its non-categorical aspects rather than to the categorical meaning.

From the combination of a distinctive creative disposition, and the idiosyncrasies of individual temperaments, a welter of individual styles is one outcome of the non-categorical aspect of the painterly concept. Effectively summarising both the categorical and non-categorical positions, Meyer Schapiro considered 'the formal traces' of manipulated materials, the painter's techniques, to be more important for the description of style than 'the operations as such'.²¹

However, Max Raphael, a Marxist art historian, supplied a pointed observation, appropriate at this juncture:

... a technique is not merely an instrumental procedure of the hand, but also a method of the mind ... between the extremes of an artist whose mind is all hand (Frans Hals) and one whose hand seems entirely sublimated in mind (Rembrandt), endlessly varied intermediate degrees are possible. Technique without mind is mere virtuoso play; mind without technique is impotent stammering: both lie outside art.²²

A precarious overlap exists between the appearance of a non-investigative technique exuding virtuosity, skill, and dexterity, where the painter becomes charmed or seduced by his 'touch', and an overt handling of paint where the handling of this physical substance refers

to the structural and expressive potential of the conspicuous visibility of paint.

The following may be taken as pinpointing the overall significance of the foregoing discussion concerning the ramifications of the adjective 'painterly'. Taking Reynolds' comment on the 'odd scratches and marks' evident in Gainsborough's handling, Wollheim surmised:

But since the turn that painting has increasingly taken since, say, Manet, these passages would now have a further, and more intimately aesthetic, significance for us, in their simultaneous assertion of the sensibility of the artist and the materiality of the painting.²³

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Categorial: The Art Historical and Critical Contexts

- 1 Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945), the Swiss art historian and theoretician of whom it has been said:
... there is no art critic of importance after his time who has not, consciously or unconsciously, been influenced by him.
(Herbert Read in his Introduction to: Wölfflin, H. Classic Art: An Introduction to the Italian Renaissance; transl. by P. and L. Murray. Oxford: Phaidon, 1968).
- 2 Clement Greenberg (b. 1909), the American art critic and theoretician whose critical activity has provided insight into mid-twentieth century American art in particular.
The significance of Clement Greenberg cannot be overestimated. He is the designer and subtle manipulator of modernism, which is the single most important and influential theory of modern art.
(D. Kuspit, Clement Greenberg: Art Critic, p. 3).
- 3 The first English translation appeared in 1932, translated by M.D. Hottinger from the seventh German edition (1929) as: Wölfflin, H. Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art. London: G. Bell and Sons, 1932. All references to Wölfflin's text in this dissertation refer to the unabridged and unaltered republication, 1950, of the original Hottinger translation published by Dover Publications, softbound impression, s.d., and will be referred to as Principles. Concerning the Germanic surname, the umlaut is used throughout this dissertation viz., Wölfflin, whereas in certain quotations the alternative form, Woelfflin, may appear.
- 4 A critical vocabulary consisting of, and dependent upon, contrasting terms for ultimate clarification of any one given polar term provides analytical convenience. Such vocabularies are recurrent in art history. For a synopsis of analytical systems in addition to Wölfflin's, see: Sypher, W. Four Stages in Renaissance Style: Transformations in Art and Literature, 1400-1700. New York: Doubleday, 1955, pp. 19-26, and note 8, p. 35.
- 5 H. Wölfflin, Principles, p. 18.
- 6 Ibid., p. 14.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid., p. 16.
- 9 Ibid., p. 15.

- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid., p. 14.
- 12 Ibid., p. 15.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid., p. 155.
- 15 Ibid., p. 15.
- 16 Ibid., p. 155.
- 17 Ibid., p. 14.
- 18 Ibid., p. 29. (Wölfflin's italics).
- 19 R. Wollheim, Art and Its Objects, p. 46.
- 20 H. Wölfflin, Principles, p. 16.
- 21 José Ortega y Gasset (1882-1955), the Spanish philosopher and aesthetician.
- 22 J. Ortega y Gasset, Velazquez, Goya and the Dehumanization of Art, p. 30.
- 23 Ibid., p. 98.
- 24 C. Greenberg, 'On the Role of Nature in Modernist Painting' in: Art and Culture, p. 171.
- 25 H. Wölfflin, Principles, p. 53.
- 26 C. Greenberg, op. cit., p. 173.
- 27 H. Wölfflin, loc. cit.
- 28 C. Greenberg, 'Detached Observations', Arts Magazine, Dec., 1976, p.89.
- 29 Ibid., p. 86.
- 30 It is now customary to divide Abstract Expressionist appearances into two categories: active (gestural) and passive (colour-field). The former is typified by Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, the latter by Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, and Barnett Newman. From the outset however, artists of both factions were committed to pursuing the creative process as an unqualified act and on finding a meaningful content in the reciprocal interchange between the activity of painting and the psyche. For the Abstract Expressionists, the realisation was, as Rothko claimed, 'there is no good painting about nothing'. It is not the aim of this study to elaborate fully on either the causes and specific effects, or the influences, of Abstract Expressionism. However, the underlying rationale of Abstract Expressionism, of the creative act conceived as an indeterminable process, is a theoretical underpinning for later considerations of the painterly concept in this dissertation.

- 31 In reaction to Greenberg's approach, the critic Max Kozloff stated:
 I can think of no professional person who will be satisfied
 by a notion of the painterly in Abstract Expressionism
 which is not connected with the expressive purposes the
 painterly actually had.
 (M. Kozloff, 'A Letter to the Editor', Art International, June,
 1963, p. 89).
 The alternative critical stance of Harold Rosenberg counters
 Greenberg's formalist approach and embraces the expressive core
 of Abstract Expressionism. Rosenberg's notion of Action painting
 concerned the creative act in toto, and accommodates the con-
 sequence of erasing boundaries between art and life.
 In Action painting the pressing issue for artists was:
 When is a painting finished? Answer: At exactly the end
 of the artist's lifetime. Acting to the end, instead of
 waiting for the end.
 (H. Rosenberg, Act and the Actor, p. 9).
- 32 The creative premises of first generation Abstract Expressionists
 were fully operative in America c. 1955, although the gestural
 faction in particular attracted both a second generation and
 European counterparts (Tachisme, L'Art Informel). When advancing
 his theoretical pronouncements for the development of art,
 Greenberg, in his 1962 essay, 'After Abstract Expressionism',
 combined the American and European variants under the canopy
 term 'Painterly Abstraction' and proceeded to localise Wölfflin's
 formal categories. Interestingly, Greenberg's use of the
 linear/painterly model was reserved for arguments concerning
 artistic developments apropos Abstract Expressionism, and did
 not appear in his earlier and definitive essay on Abstract
 Expressionism, '"American-Type" Painting' of 1955 (revised 1958).
 Greenberg had, however, cited Jackson Pollock's and Hans Hofmann's
 first one-man shows in New York of October 1943, and March 1944,
 respectively, as the starting points for the widespread recur-
 rence of painterliness.
- 33 C. Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting', in: G. Battcock (Ed.)
The New Art, p. 71.
- 34 C. Greenberg, 'After Abstract Expressionism', Art International,
 Oct., 1967, p. 24.
- 35 C. Greenberg, 'The "Crisis" of Abstract Art', Arts Yearbook,
 no. 7, 1964, pp. 90-91.
- 36 C. Greenberg, 'After Abstract Expressionism' (1962), p. 24.
- 37 S. Rudikoff, 'Space in Abstract Painting', Partisan Review,
 Spring, 1958, p. 298.
- 38 The phrase is Greenberg's.
- 39 The phrase is Greenberg's.
- 40 C. Greenberg, 'The "Crisis" of Abstract Art', p. 92.
- 41 C. Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting', in: G. Battcock (Ed.) The
 New Art, pp. 66-77.

(Greenberg refers to this essay in his later article, 'After Abstract Expressionism', 1962, and cites the reference as Arts Yearbook, No. 4, 1961. Battcock's dating of 1965 is erroneous. The fact that 'Modernist Painting' was written before 'After Abstract Expressionism' and 'Post Painterly Abstraction' is an important one when considering the entrenchment of formalist criticism with reference to 1960s abstraction.)

- 42 C. Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting', (Battcock), p. 68.
- 43 Willem de Kooning's gestural abstraction in particular was widely, and crudely, imitated from c. 1958, resulting in the popularised 'Tenth Street Touch' of second generation painters.
- 44 C. Greenberg, op. cit., p. 73.
- 45 W. Seitz, 'Abstract Expressionist Painting in America: An Interpretation Based on the Work and Thought of Six Key Figures', (Ph. D. diss.), p. 288.
- 46 C. Greenberg, op. cit., p. 69. (Candidate's italics).
- 47 H. Wölfflin, Principles, p. 207.
- 48 Ibid., p. 201.
- 49 Ibid., p. 200.
- 50 H. Wölfflin, op. cit., p. 51. (Candidate's italics).
- 51 J. Ortega y Gasset, 'Introduction to Velazquez', in: Velazquez, Goya and the Dehumanization of Art, p. 98.
- 52 Ibid., p. 99.
- 53 Wölfflin's proposal of the painterly mode of vision, as the generative force behind the manifestation of painterly appearances, is essentially agreeable to the candidate. Notably, Wölfflin modified his proposal in the Preface to the sixth German edition of Principles, 1922, and substituted the word 'imagination' for 'vision'. The notion of the painterly mode of imagination has penetrated the present study. Wölfflin's analytical hypothesis functioned from a conviction of subjective modes of imagination, and therefore did take into account, in part at least, the creative disposition of the artist.

1.2 Non-Categorical: The Painter's Context

- 1 J. Albers, Interaction of Color, p. 74. Concerning the choice of 'variant', through which the full significance of the painterly concept may be grasped, a comparable usage of the word reveals its suitability. Josef Albers, when attempting a word to encompass his experimental, and ongoing, investigations into colour interaction, deliberately selected 'variant' in order to convey the significance for

the painting discipline of his thorough reassessment of coloured conditions. Colour, as a creative aspect, was identified as a challenging problem, offering both interesting difficulties and stimulating possibilities.

- 2 R. Wollheim, Art and Its Objects, p. 126.
- 3 Ibid., p. 127.
- 4 For the painterly mode of vision, 'the magic force of light' (Ortega y Gasset's phrase), functions as a major principle of unity, one essential for the painterly emphasis on opticality in painting. Individual objects in Nature, previously recognised as being unequal in form and condition, thus became visually synthesised. Briefly, in Baroque painting, unification by light was not continuous in character, but came to the fore through the nett effect of rhythms of light and dark tonal contrasts, and the conspicuous distribution of brushmarks and colour accents, over the picture surface. Gestural Abstract Expressionist painting arrived at a similar set of repetitive, pictorial circumstances. Greenberg, by elaborating on the decorative condition of repetition, theorised until the essentially unobstructed openness of the post painterly icons of light came into being. For the purposes of his argument, Greenberg shifted his attention from the gestural faction, to the colour-field faction of Abstract Expressionism, and to the work of Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, and Barnett Newman in particular. Greenberg's argument is an elaborate one focusing on the non-delineating function of line, and hence, the fusion of painting and drawing via colour expanses. The outcome was the desirous optical condition of continuous sheaths of colour, referred to by Greenberg as the post-painterly condition. The 'Veil' series of Morris Louis, 1954-1959 provides a significant historical precedent of this condition, and considerably pre-dates Jules Olitski's spray paintings, which he commenced in 1965, (although he had made soak-stain paintings between 1955 and 1962).
- 5 R. Wollheim, Art and Its Objects, p. 126.
- 6 The formal method requires that the characteristics pertinent to the medium in which the artwork is realised are respected. Once recognised, these characteristics are analysed in their own terms before any other kind of discussion. A detailed account of formalism, providing meanings dating from the fourteenth to the twentieth centuries, appears in: Williams, R. Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. London: Fontana, 1976, pp. 113-115. The word 'form' has spanned the whole range, 'from the external and superficial to the inherent and determining', and Williams concedes that 'formalism' is prone to a strongly negative sense, as if equivalent to ideas of 'art for art's sake'.
- 7 R. Wollheim, op. cit., p. 127..
- 8 For example, see: E.A. Carmean's Introduction to the catalogue, The Great Decade of American Abstraction: Modernist Art 1960-1970.

- 9 R. Wollheim, op. cit., p. 128.
- 10 Webster's Third New International Dictionary; unabridged ed., 1971.
- 11 The Random House Dictionary; unabridged ed., 1973.
- 12 The Concise Oxford Dictionary; sixth ed., 1976.
- 13 M.D. Hottinger's note, Principles, p. 3.
Reviews of the first English translation of Principles indicated reservations concerning the awkwardness of the word 'painterly' and Hottinger has been accused of 'linguistic liberty-taking' ('Book Review', Burlington Magazine, 62 no. 362: 247, May, 1933). Lionello Venturi in his book, History of Art Criticism, 1936, preferred the designation 'pictorial' as opposed to 'painterly' for conveyance of Wölfflin's meaning of malerisch as operative in Principles.
- 14 Webster's Third New International Dictionary; unabridged ed., 1971.
- 15 Francis Bacon, quoted in: Measham, T. The Moderns 1945-1975. Oxford: Phaidon, 1976, no pagination.
- 16 Robert Motherwell, quoted in: W. Seitz, 'Abstract Expressionist Painting in America' (Ph.D. diss.) 1955, pp. 144-145.
- 17 M. Kozloff, 'Critical Schizophrenia and the Intentionalist Method', in: Renderings, p. 309.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 The phrase is Hans Hofmann's.
- 20 L. Lamb, Materials and Methods of Painting, p. 9.
- 21 M. Schapiro, 'Style', in: Philipson, M. (Ed.) Aesthetics Today. New York: Meridian Books, 1961, p. 84.
- 22 M. Raphael, The Demands of Art, p. 210.
- 23 R. Wollheim, Art and Its Objects, p. 77. (Candidate's italics).

CHAPTER TWO

LIGHT VERSUS 'LIGHT'

2.1 Light and Colour: The Physical Phenomenon

Having proposed an alternative and non-categorical meaning of 'painterly', a contextual meaning considered appropriate to the advancement of the relationship between light and painterly usages expounded in this dissertation, light is the second aspect of this investigation to be approached.

Again, in order that suitable propositions concerning light may be presented, it is first necessary to disentangle the multiple meanings of light. A preliminary prerequisite for this dissertation is to transpose the identity of light, and its corollary colour, from an insubstantive physical phenomenon, to an identity appropriate to the painting discipline. Hans Hofmann's modern tenet offers a principle for such transposition: 'In nature, light creates the color; in the picture, color creates light'.¹ This tenet, while fulfilling a necessary theoretical function, requires further elaboration in order that the particular investigation central to this dissertation may be developed.²

Light, as natural energy, is subject for systems of knowledge. Extensive literature exists on the formulated knowledge of, and controlled investigation into, the scientific laws regarding the nature, behaviour and effects of physical light. While incorporating a spread of attentions, the detailed information of such disciplines and their corresponding technical terminologies, remains outside the concerns of this dissertation. However, certain issues originating within the primarily scientific disciplines of, for example, physics, psychophysics, psychology and optics have proven, after a process of ideation, to be either affiliated with, or pertinent to, arguments developed in this dissertation.

A summary of the phenomenon of physical light and colour is first required. Once a human receptor gains in significance for disciplines of physical light, such summarising will be discontinued. It is not the intention to elaborate on either the physiology of the eye and the visibility of matter, or on how the mechanics of the eye and brain receive and interpret information from the interaction of light and matter. Similarly, when it eventuates that physical light and colour are considered concomitant circumstances after light's interaction with matter, again the synopsis must cease as this dissertation is not ultimately concerned with the relationship between light and colour, at least not before further theoretical processing has been undertaken.

However, generalities concerning light and colour as a conjoined visual manifestation have been raised in order to make clear certain issues with which the painting discipline must contend when claiming a notion of light. From such a foundation, further theoretical processing is then undertaken in order to expose the intended relationship between light, colour, and painterly usages. Importantly, the candidate's commitment to painterly usages demands, and induces, a particular light and colour sensibility and is elaborated upon at a later stage.

Light is defined as:

- light n. 1. The natural agent that stimulates the sense of sight; visible electromagnetic radiation from sun, fire, lamp, etc.
2. Medium or condition of space in which this is present and therefore sight is possible (opp. darkness).³

Thus, the visual system responds to light as visible radiant energy in the experience of seeing. The entire electromagnetic spectrum varies over an enormous range, spanning radio waves at one extreme and X-rays at the other. Light rays are those that fall within a relatively short range of this spectrum. Light rays, as a portion of the entire radiant energy emitted from an incandescent source, for

example, the sun, are those that have wavelengths in a range to which the eye can respond, that is, their lengths vary between 350 nanometres (nm) and 800 nm, approximately. As electromagnetic energy, light, consists of radiation of different wavelengths, each having a set energy. The energy, or the wavelengths of light to which the human eye is sensitive, is either emitted from an original source, or reflected from matter in varying quantities and of differing wavelengths. When emitted from a source, the entire range of energy, that is all wavelengths of light, and thus the visible radiation of the waveband 380 to 780 nm, constitutes the spectrum of colour. The mixture of all spectral hues exists as white light. The differing energies of the differing wavelengths of light are exhibited when white light is dispersed into its constituent hues.⁴ Sensitive to all wavelengths of light, the eye is thus sensitive to colour. Wavelength may be used to denote the physical colour quality of light.⁵

The correspondence between a particular wavelength and the physical colour quality of light (for example, light of a wavelength 380 nm will produce violet) remains true whether the light radiation incident upon the retina of the eye was emitted from an original source, or reflected from the surface of matter. The wavelength, and hence the colour, of the light reflected from surfaces remains the same as the wavelength of the light emitted from the original source before it reached a surface and was reflected from it. If differing wavelengths of light are recorded on the retina of the eye, then differing colours are registered.

Colour is defined as:

colour n. 1. Sensation produced on eye by rays of light when resolved by prism, selective reflection, etc. (cf. black, effect produced by no light or by surface reflecting no rays, and white, effect produced by rays of unresolved light).⁶

Because the eye is sensitive to the radiant energy, the wavelengths of

light, matter is illuminated and appears coloured. In principle, of the total amount of light falling on the surface of matter, and depending on the specific molecular structure of a surface, a certain proportion of light is usually absorbed. Light not absorbed is conveyed to the eye after being reflected from, or transmitted through, the surface of matter.⁷ Matter thus reflects light discriminately. The nature, that is the extent, of the wavelengths of light reflected will determine the colours of the visual stimuli. Thus, a surface appears coloured by the joining of two events to result in a visual experience. The first, an external event, is the selective reflection (or selective absorption) of light from matter and the second, an internal event, is the stimulation by light of the receptors in the retina of the eye, thereby activating the optic nerve and neural network to register a colour sensation in the brain. Furthermore, the amount and type of light falling on diverse surfaces affects their illumination and therefore the quality and nature of colour.

Although abbreviated, the effective functioning of physical light just summarised embraces the concerns upon which the major disciplines formulated in response to physical light elaborate. Ralph Evans⁸ has specified the established concerns of light and the corresponding terminologies of the three disciplines, physics, psychophysics and psychology. That these disciplines apply specialised technical terminology within each of their confines, renders a concern with light in investigations other than those attached to the three main disciplines impoverished of a distinctive vocabulary. Herein lies the cause for misleading references to light in connection with the painting discipline, given that no alternative definitive vocabulary for colour-light in painting exists and that the adaptation of established vocabularies is inconsistent. Qualification is thus essential if and when references to light and colour in painting are made.

The system of nomenclature for light presented by Evans is included here in order to acknowledge the scope of the three major disciplines and to cite an authoritative summary of the concerns and related terminology of each. Once tabulated, the physical attributes of light and colour, and the perceptual attributes of the appearance of light and colour, are clearly differentiated. While illumination and associated energy resonances between stimulus and eye can be determined scientifically, such objective data is not of prime importance to the present study.

Necessarily, considerations of light and colour for the purposes of the present study are less empirically didactic and move towards inclusion of the subjective attitude and responses of an observer when confronted with differing aspects of coloured appearances. The following table is thus used as the point of reference for subsequent argument about paintings, rather than for a technical study of light per se. By elaborating on the information presented, it will be shown that to make connections between the subjective appreciation of colour-light impressions and linguistic expression is a particularly troublesome issue in the pictorial context. Concerning 'colour words', the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein remarked:

Sentences are often used on the borderline between logic and the empirical, so that their meaning changes back and forth and they count now as expressions of norms, now as expressions of experience.⁹

Furthermore, 'the various 'colour words' have a related use, but, there are, on the other hand, ... differences'.¹⁰ In this way, the innumerable differentiation ... from the contextual distribution and handling of colour in paintings may not be readily accommodated verbally.¹¹

Table 3 Physical Light: A System of Nomenclature

Physics		Psychophysics		Psychology	
Visual stimulus		Light		Visual sensation	Visual perception
Radiant energy Spectral composition		Luminous energy Color		Color sensation	
Characteristics of radiant energy:		Characteristics of light = color		Attributes of color sensation:	Corresponding modes of appearance
Radiant flux a. Radiance b. Irradiance c. Radiant reflectance d. Radiant transmittance	Spectral distribution (Relative spectral composition, quality Radiant purity	1. Luminous flux a. Luminance b. Illuminance c. Luminous reflectance d. Luminous transmittance		1. Brightness	Aperture (1-5) Illuminant (1-8) Illumination (1-3) Object modes: (1-11) Surface (1-9) *
		Chromaticity		Chromaticness 2. Hue 3. Saturation	Attributes of modes of appearance: 1. Brightness (or lightness) 2. Hue 3. Saturation 4. Size 5. Shape 6. Location 7. Flicker 8. Sparkle 9. Transparency 10. Glossiness 11. Luster

* The figures in brackets refer to the attributes of the modes of appearances numbered 1-11 as listed in the last block.

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