ART HUMANITIES: PRIMARY SOURCE READER

Section 10: Picasso

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Georges Braque

PERSONAL STATEMENT, 1910

I couldn't portray a woman in all her natural loveliness . . . I haven't the skill. No one has. I must, therefore, create a new sort of beauty, the beauty that appears to me in terms of volume, of line, of mass, of weight, and through that beauty interpret my subjective impression. Nature is a mere pretext for a decorative composition, plus sentiment. It suggests emotion, and I translate that emotion into art. I want to expose the Absolute, and not merely the factitious woman.

The Architectural Record, New York, May 1910

Georges Braque's personal statement is reprinted from the May 1910 issue of the *Architectural Record*.

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Gertrude Stein

Perhaps best described by Picasso's portrait of her, Gertrude Stein was an imposing figure and a powerful influence on modern literature and art. Stein is the author of numerous books, plays, poems, and essays on literature. While her place in the history of literature is still somewhat contested, there are those who would place her with Joyce, Pound, and Eliot as one of the great literary innovators of the 20th century.

Gertrude Stein was born in 1874 in Pennsylvania, grew up in Vienna, Paris and Oakland California. She studied psychology at Radcliffe and Johns Hopkins before moving to Paris with her brother Leo in 1902. The house that the two Stein siblings shared in Paris became a meeting place for artists and writers, and both Steins were supportive patrons of the most advanced art being made in Paris at the time.

Just as Cubism called for a redefinition of visual representation, and tried to make us see the tools of representation (line, shading, marks) as things in themselves, worthy of attention, Stein's writing, with its incremental repetitions and rhythms, has been described as "a systematic investigation of the elements of language (parts of speech, syntax, phonetics, morphermics, etymology, punctuation) and of literature (narrative, poetry, prose, drama, and genre itself)." Hers was thus a highly analytical project in its aim of breaking down literature into its parts. This is the way in which it was compared to Picasso's analytical cubism. In addition, some of her works have been compared to collage for their abrupt juxtapositions, their incorporation of divergent linguistic materials, and their attempt to detach words from their common meanings. These comparisons between Picasso and Stein are encouraged by the historical evidence, namely the close personal and artistic friendship that developed between Stein and Picasso in the early years of the twentieth century, and which lasted many decades. Both attached great importance to the work of French painter Paul Cézanne, and discussed his work during some of the eighty or so sittings that Stein had to endure while Picasso attempted to capture her portrait in 1905.

Stein attempted several literary portraits of Picasso over her lifetime, and published a book on his art in 1938. The text provided here was written in 1909 and was published in the United States in the August 1912 issue of Alfred Steiglitz's influential magazine *Camera Work.* Although Stein had been writing for many years, this was one of her earliest publications. Using rhythm, tone and slight changes in sentences that almost repeat themselves, Stein

made her readers aware of the materiality of words and of writing, that is, how they are made up of sounds, rhythms, and cadences.

"PICASSO," 1912

One whom some were certainly following was one who was completely charming. One whom some were certainly following was one who was charming. One whom some were following was one who was completely charming. One whom some were following was one who was certainly completely charming.

Some were certainly following and were certain that the one they were then following was one working and was one bringing out of himself then something. Some were certainly following and were certain that the one they were then following was one bringing out of himself then something that was coming to be a heavy thing, a solid thing and a complete thing.

One whom some were certainly following was one working and certainly was one bringing something out of himself then and was one who had been all his living had been one having something coming out of him.

Something had been coming out of him, certainly it had been coming out of him, certainly it was something, certainly it had been coming out of him and it had meaning, a charming meaning, a solid meaning, a struggling meaning, a clear meaning.

One whom some were certainly following and some were certainly following him, one whom some were certainly following was one certainly working.

One whom some were certainly following was one having something coming out of him something having meaning and this one was certainly working then.

This one was working and something was coming then, something was coming out of this one then. This one was one and always there was something coming out of this one and always there had been something coming out of this one. This one had never been one not having something coming out of this one. This one had been one whom some were following. This one was one whom some were following. This one was being one whom some were following. This one was one who was working.

Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger

Albert Gleizes (b.1881, Paris, France) and Jean Metzinger (b.1883 Nantes, France) were painters as well as writers and occasional critics. They had begun exhibiting together in 1910, alongside Fernand Leger, Robert Delaunay. A critic wrote disparagingly of their "pallid cubes," thus spawning the term "cubism." This group's influential "Golden Section" (Section D'Or) exhibition of 1912 coincided with the publication of Gleizes and Metzinger's book Du Cubisme.

Part manifesto, part treatise, part exhortation, Du Cubisme was an effort to describe the common ground that was shared among these artists and to reconcile their many differences under a unifying theory. Among the artists they discuss are forerunners such as Paul Cézanne and André Derain, as well as Picasso, Leger, Gleizes and Metzinger themselves, as well as Francis Picabia, Marcel Duchamp and others. It was the first substantial text on the new art.

Despite the fact that Du Cubisme treats cubism as a descendant of the French tradition, Gleizes and Metzinger do not embrace Impressionism wholeheartedly. They write of Impressionism that "by diversity of color it seeks to create life, and it promotes a feeble, and ineffectual quality of drawing. The dress sparkles in a marvelous play of colors; but the figure disappears, is atrophied…the retina predominates over the brain; but the Impressionist is conscious of this, and to justify himself he speaks of the incompatibility of the intellectual faculties and the artistic sense!" On the other hand, they are hardly advocating an overly intellectual art, and insist, in the passage excerpted below, that "Geometry is a science, painting is an art. The geometer measures, the painter savours."

Like the other protagonists for the new art collected here, Gleizes and Metzinger sound the call that painting must abandon slavish representation when they exhort "let the picture imitate nothing; let it nakedly present its motive, and we should indeed be ungrateful were we to deplore the absence off those things - flowers, or landscape, or faces – whose mere reflection it might have been."

EXCERPT FROM **CUBISM, 1912**

To understand Cézanne is to foresee cubism. Henceforth we are justified in saying that between this school and previous manifestations there is only a difference of intensity, and that in order to assure ourselves of this we have only to study the methods of this realism, which, departing from the superficial reality of Courbet, plunges with Cézanne into profound reality, growing luminous as it forces the unknowable to retreat.

Some maintain that such a tendency distorts the curve of tradition. Do they derive their arguments from the future or the past? The future does not belong to them, as far as we are aware, and one be singularly ingenuous to seek to measure that which exists by that which exists no longer.

Unless we are to condemn all modern painting, we must regard cubism as legitimate, for it continues modern methods, and we should see in it the only conception of pictorial art now possible. In other words, at this moment cubism is painting.

Here we should like to demolish a very general misunderstanding to which we have already made allusion. Many consider that decorative considerations should govern the spirit of the new painters. They cannot see that a decorative work is the antithesis of the picture.

A decorative work exists only by virtue of its destination; it is animated only by the relationship existing between it and the given objects. Essentially dependent, necessarily incomplete, it must in the first place satisfy the mind so as not to distract it from the spectacle which justifies and completes it. It is an organ.

The true picture, on the other hand, bears its *raison d'être* within itself. It can be moved from a church to a drawing-room, from a museum to a study. Essentially independent, necessarily complete, it need not immediately satisfy the mind: on the contrary, it should lead it, little by little, towards the fictitious depths in which the co-ordinative light resides. It does not harmonize with this or that ensemble; it harmonizes with things in general, with the universe: it is an organism . . .

Dissociating, for convenience, things that we know to be indissolubly united, let us study, by means of form and colour, the integration of plastic consciousness.

To discern a form implies, besides the power to see and to be moved, a certain development of the mind; in the eyes of most people the external world is amorphous.

To discern a form is to verify against a pre-existing idea; this is an act that no one, save the man we call an artist, can accomplish without external assistance.

In the presence of some natural spectacle, a child, in order to co-ordinate his sensations and to subject them to mental control, compares them with his picture-book; a man, culture intervening, makes reference to works of art.

The artist, having discerned a form which presents a certain intensity or analogy with his pre-existing idea, prefers it to other forms, and consequently for we like to force our preferences on others -- he endeavours to enclose the quality of this form (the unmeasurable sum of the affinities perceived between the visible manifestation and the tendency of his mind) in symbol likely to affect others . . .

Let the picture imitate nothing; let it nakedly present its *raison d'être*. We should indeed be ungrateful were we to deplore the absence of all those things flowers, or landscape, or faces whose mere reflection it might have been. Nevertheless, let us admit that the reminiscence of natural forms cannot be absolutely banished; not yet, at all events. An art cannot be raised to the level of a pure effusion at the first step.

This is understood by the cubist painters, who indefatigably study pictorial form and the space which it engenders.

This space we have negligently confounded with pure visual space or with Euclidian space.

Euclid, in one of his postulates, speaks of the indeformability of figures in movement, so we need not insist upon this point.

If we wished to relate the space of the painters to geometry, we should have to refer it to the non-Euchdian mathematicians; we should have to study, at some length, certain of Riemann's theorems.

As for visual space, we know that it results from the agreement of the sensations of convergence and “accommodation” in the eye.

For the picture, a plane surface, the “accomodation” is useless. The convergence which perspective teaches us to represent cannot evoke the idea of depth. Moreover, we know that even the most serious infractions of the rules of perspective by no means detract from the spatiality of a painting. The Chinese painters evoke space, although they exhibit a strong partiality for *divergence*.

To establish pictorial space, we must have recourse to tactile and motor sensations, indeed to all our faculties. It is our whole personality, contracting or dilating, that transforms the plane of the picture. Since in reaction this plane reflects the viewer's personality back upon his understanding, pictorial space may be defined as a sensible passage between two subjective spaces.

The forms which are situated within this space spring from a dynamism which we profess to command. In order that our intelligence may possess it, let us first exercise our sensibility. There are only *nuances*; form appears endowed with properties identical with those of colour. It can be tempered or augmented by contact with another form; it can be destroyed or emphasized; it is multiplied or it disappears. An ellipse may change its circumference because it is inscribed in a polygon. A form which is more emphatic than the surrounding forms may govern the whole picture, may imprint its own effigy upon everything. Those picture-makers who minutely imitate one or two leaves in order that all the leaves of a tree may seem to be painted, show in a clumsy fashion that they suspect this truth. An illusion, perhaps, but we must take it into account. The eye quickly interests the mind in its errors. These analogies and contrasts are capable of all good and all evil; the masters felt this when they tried to compose with pyramids, crosses, circles, semicircles, etc.

To compose, to construct, to design, reduces itself to this: to determine by our own activity the dynamism of form.

Some, and they are not the least intelligent, see the aim of our technique in the exclusive study of volumes. If they were to add that it suffices, surfaces being the limits of volumes and lines those of surfaces, to imitate a contour in order to represent a volume, we might agree with them; but they are thinking only of the sensation of *relief*, which we hold to be insufficient. We are neither geometers nor sculptors: for us lines, surfaces, and volumes are only modifications of the notion of fullness. To imitate volumes only would be to deny these modifications for the benefit of a monotonous intensity. As well renounce at once our desire for variety.

Between reliefs indicated sculpturally we must contrive to hint at those lesser features which are suggested but not defined. Certain forms should remain implicit, so that the mind of the spectator may be the chosen place of their concrete birth.

We must also contrive to break up, by large restful surfaces, all regions in which activity is exaggerated by excessive contiguities.

In short, the science of design consists of instituting relations between straight lines and curves. A picture which contained only straight lines or curves would not express existence.

It would be the same with a picture in which curves and straight lines exactly compensated one another, for exact equivalence is equal to zero.

The diversity of the relations of line to line must be indefinite; on this condition it incorporates the quality, the unmeasurable sum, of the affinities perceived between what we discern and what pre-exists within us: on this

condition a work of art moves us.

What the curve is to the straight line the cold tone is to the warm tone in the domain of colour . . .

The law of contrast, old as the human eye, and on which Seurat judiciously insisted, was promulgated with much clamor, and none of those who flattered themselves the most on their sensitivity had enough of it to perceive that to apply the law of complementaries without tact is to deny it. It is only of value by the fact of automatic application, and only demands a delicate handling of values.

It was then that the cubists taught a new manner of regarding light.

According to them, to illuminate is to reveal; to colour is to specify the mode of revelation. They call luminous that which strikes the imagination, and dark that which the imagination has to penetrate.

We do not mechanically connect the sensation of white with the idea of light, any more than we connect the sensation of black with the idea of darkness. We admit that a black jewel, even if of a dead black, may be more luminous than the white or pink satin of its case. Loving light, we refuse to measure it, and we avoid the geometrical ideas of the focus and the ray, which imply the repetition-contrary to the principle of variety which guides us-of bright planes and sombre intervals in a given direction. Loving colour, we refuse to limit it, and subdued or dazzling, fresh or muddy, we accept all the possibilities contained between the two extreme points of the spectrum, between the cold and the warm tone.

Here are a thousand tints which issue from the prism, and hasten to range themselves in the lucid region forbidden to those who are blinded by the immediate . . .

If we consider only the bare fact of painting, we attain a common ground of understanding.

Who will deny that this fact consists in dividing the surface of the canvas and investing each part with a quality which must not be excluded by the nature of the whole?

Taste immediately dictates a rule: we must paint so that no two portions of similar extent are to be found in the picture. Common sense approves, and explains: let one portion repeat another, and the whole becomes measurable; the work, ceasing to be an expression of our personality (which cannot be measured, as nothing in it ever repeats itself), fails to do what is expected of it.

The inequality of parts being granted as a prime condition, there are two methods of regarding the division of the canvas. According to the first, all the parts are connected by a rhythmic convention which is determined by one of them. This-its position on the canvas matters little-gives the painting a centre from which the gradations of colour proceed, or towards which they tend, according as the maximum or minimum of intensity resides there.

According to the second method, in order that the spectator, himself free to establish unity, may apprehend all the elements in the order assigned to them
by creative intuition, the properties of each portion must be left independent, and the plastic continuum must be broken into a thousand surprises of light and shade.

Hence two methods apparently inimical.

However little we know of the history of art, we can readily mention names to illustrate either method. The interesting point is to reconcile the two.

The Cubist painters endeavour to do so, and whether they partially break the tie proclaimed by the first method, or confine one of those forces which the second method would leave free, they achieve that superior disequilibrium without which we cannot conceive lyrical art.

Both methods are based on the kinship of colour and form.

Although of a hundred thousand living painters only four or five appear to perceive it, a law here asserts itself which is to be neither discussed nor interpreted, but rigorously followed.

Every inflection of form is accompanied by a modification of colour, and every modification of colour gives birth to a form.

There are tints which refuse to wed certain lines; there are surfaces which cannot support certain colours, repelling them to a distance or sinking under them as under too heavy a weight.

To simple forms the fundamental hues of the spectrum are allied, and fragmentary forms should assume shimmering colours.

Nothing surprises us so greatly as to hear someone praising the colour of a picture and finding fault with the drawing. The impressionists afford no excuse for such absurdity. Although in their case we may have deplored the poverty of form and at the same time praised the beauties of their colouring, it was because we confined ourselves to regarding them as precursors.

In any other case we flatly refuse to perpetuate a division contrary to the vital forces of the painter's art.

Only those who are conscious of the impossibility of imagining form and colour separately can usefully contemplate conventional reality.

There is nothing real outside ourselves; there is nothing real except the coincidence of a sensation and an individual mental direction. Far be it from us to throw any doubts upon the existence of the objects which strike our senses; but, rationally speaking, we can only have certitude with regard to the images which they produce in

the mind.

It therefore amazes us when well-meaning critics try to explain the remarkable difference between the forms attributed to nature and those of modern painting by a desire to represent things not as they appear, but as they are. As they are! How are they, what are they? According to them, the object possesses an absolute form, an essential form, and we should suppress chiaroscuro and traditional perspective in order to present it. What simplicity! An object has not one absolute form; it has many. It has as many as there are planes in the region of perception. What these writers say is marvelously applicable to geometrical form. Geometry is a science; painting is an art. The geometer measures; the painter savours. The absolute of the one is necessarily the relative of the other; if logic takes fright at this idea, so much the worse! Will logic ever prevent a wine from being different in the retort of the chemist and in the glass of the drinker?

We are frankly amused to think that many a novice may perhaps pay for his too literal comprehension of the remarks of one cubist, and his faith in the existence of an Absolute Truth, by painfully juxtaposing the six faces of a cube or the two ears of a model seen in profile.

Does it ensue from this that we should follow the example of the impressionists and rely upon the senses alone? By no means. We seek the essential, but we seek it in our personality and not in a sort of eternity, laboriously divided by mathematicians and philosophers.

Moreover, as we have said, the only difference between the impressionists and ourselves is a difference of intensity, and we do not wish it to be otherwise.

There are as many images of an object as there are eyes which look at it; there are as many essential images of it as there are minds which comprehend it.

But we cannot enjoy in isolation; we wish to dazzle others with that which we daily snatch from the world of sense, and in return we wish others to show us their trophies. From a reciprocity of concessions arise those mixed images, which we hasten to confront with artistic creations in order to compute what they contain of the objective; that is of the purely conventional.

From *Du Cubisme*, Paris, 1912, pp. 9-11, 13-14, 17-21, 25-32. In English in Robert L. Herbert, *Modern Artists on Art,* Englewood Cliffs, 1964.

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Carl Einstein

Carl Einstein (1885-1940 was a political activist, art collector, magazine editor and groundbreaking art historian. His *Negro Sculpture* of 1915 was the first study of African art to emerge from within the sphere of modern art, and this was the audience for which it was intended. In this text and elsewhere Einstein attacked the idea of evolution in art, much as Picasso does in the statement reprinted here (PSR49) Einstein did not see African art as an art of the past, or as a precursor to modern art. Instead he saw it as an important art form in its own right. A close friend of Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler's (PSR48), Einstein also saw important similarities between African art and the recent efforts of cubism.

Negro Sculpture included 111 plates of works of African art without captions or information about where they came from or the material from which they were made.. It has been suggested that in doing this Einstein was resisting the typical way that non-western cultural artifacts were displayed at the time in Europe. Since at least 1867, World's Fairs and expositions had featured exhibits that claimed to represent entire cultures from the non-western world, sometimes recreating entire villages. Ethnographic museums grouped sculptures with objects such as baskets and weapons, or displayed them in such large numbers, that it was difficult to examine individual objects on aesthetic grounds. Today Einstein's decontextualization of the African art objects he wrote about would be criticized, but it is likely that at the time Einstein was trying to emphasize certain artistic features of the objects that he believed transcended their context. In addition, he believed that these cultic objects were intended to be able to stand alone, without explanation of context, and that this was a part of their cultic power. Like the ideal of an autonomous art that the cubists argued for (PSR46, 48, 49) these objects did not seem to imitate anything, but instead stood on their own.

EXCERPT FROM **"NEGRO SCULPTURE," 1915**

. . . A few years ago, in France, we lived through the epoch-making crisis. By means of a tremendous effort at awareness, men recognised the irrelevance and questionableness of the accepted method. Some painters were able to command sufficient strength to turn away from mechanical, repetitive craftsmanship; shaking free from the customary means of expression, they investigated the elements of the perception of space-what this leads to, and what conditions it imposes. The results of this important struggle are sufficiently well known. At the same time they necessarily discovered Negro sculpture, and recognised that it has, on its own, given birth to the pure plastic forms.

The efforts of these painters are usually referred to as abstraction, although no one could possibly deny that a direct spatial awareness could not have been approached without an immense critical effort in clearing away erroneous paraphrases. This is the essential point; and it sharply distinguishes Negro art from the art which has taken it as a guide. What appears in the latter as abstraction is, in the former, a direct experience of nature. From a formal point of view Negro sculpture will be found to be-out-and-out realism.

The contemporary artist cannot concentrate on working towards pure form; he still feels himself to be in opposition to what has gone before. His creative effort involves an excessive element of reaction. His inevitably critical approach strengthens the analytical in his work.

From *Negerplastik*, Munich, 1915, 2nd ed. 1920, pp. XI-XII.

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Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler

Born in Mannheim, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler was an art dealer, publisher and writer. In 1907 he opened the Galerie Kahnweiler in Paris and visited Picasso's studio, where he saw the recently completed *Demoiselles D'Avignon*. He instantly became an ardent supporter and defender of Picasso's art. Other artists Kahnweiler came to promote and exhibit over the following years included Georges Braque, as well as such important modernist painters as Henri Matisse, André Derain, and Fernand Léger.

Kahnweiler was not only a promoter and patron of cubism from the moment of its emergence in Paris, he was also one of its most dedicated and brilliant theorists. Exiled from France during World War I, Kahnweiler wrote his groundbreaking study *The Way of Cubism* in Switzerland. In this book, Kahnweiler likens Cubism to a new language, and insists that one had to learn that language before trying to appreciate the images created with it. In the excerpt provided below, Kahnweiler describes some of the trial-and-error and discovery that led Picasso and Braque to the development of Cubism, as well as the ways in which Cubism differs from previous Western art. From Picasso's struggle to use color in a new way, to Braque's experiments with limiting the depth represented in a painting, Kahnweiler describes how Cubism led away from the Renaissance method of "painting light as color on the surface of objects" towards something new, where the mind of the viewer played as much of a role in the total experience as his or her eye. A similar emphasis on the idea that cubism leads away from an art of imitation, that it is an art which is "an end in itself" fully autonomous from the duties of mimicking appearances, can also be found in Albert Gleizes' and Jean Metzinger's roughly contemporary book, *Cubism* (PSR 46)

Kahnweiler's writing is particularly interesting in the context of the Core curriculum because of the way he draws on one of western philosophy's central figures, John Locke. In the excerpt below, Kahnweiler is particularly interested in Locke's idea of primary and secondary qualities. Readers familiar with Locke's writing can keep it in mind here and when looking at Cubist works and see if they think Kahnweiler's use of Locke is helpful or plausible.

EXCERPT FROM **THE WAY OF CUBISM, 1920**

Several times during the spring of 1910 Picasso attempted to endow the forms of his pictures with colour. That is, he tried to use colour not only as an expression of light, or chiaroscuro, for the creation of form, but rather as an equally important end in itself. Each time he was obliged to paint over the colour he had thus introduced; the single exception is a small nude of the period (about 18 x 23 centimeters in size) in which a piece of fabric is coloured in brilliant red.

At the same time Braque made an important discovery. In one of his pictures he painted a completely naturalistic nail casting its shadow on a wall. The usefulness of this innovation will be discussed later. The difficulty lay in the incorporation of this "real" object into the unity of the painting. From then on, both artists consistently limited the space in the background of the picture. In a landscape, for instance, instead of painting an illusionistic distant horizon in which the eye lost itself, the artists closed the three-dimensional space with a mountain. In still-life or nude painting, the wall of a room served the same purpose. This method of limiting space had already been used frequently by Cézanne.

During the summer, again spent in l'Estaque, Braque took a further step in the introduction of "real objects," that is, of realistically painted things introduced, undistorted in form and colour, into the picture. We find lettering for the first time in a *Guitar Player* of the period. Here again, lyrical painting uncovered a new world of beauty-this time in posters, display windows and commercial signs which play so important a role in our visual impressions.

Much more important, however, was the decisive advance which set cubism free from the

language previously used by painting. This occurred in Cadaqués (in Spain, on the Mediterranean near the French border) where Picasso spent his summer. Little satisfied, even after weeks of arduous labour, he returned to Paris in the autumn with his unfinished works. But he had taken the great step; he had pierced the closed form. A new tool had been forged for the achievement of the new purpose.

Years of research had proved that closed form did not permit an expression sufficient for the two artists' aims. Closed form accepts objects as contained by their own surfaces, viz. the skin; it then endeavours to represent this closed body, and, since no object is visible without light, to paint this "skin" as the contact point between the body and light where both merge into colour. This chiaroscuro can provide only an illusion of the form of objects. In the actual three--dimensional world the object is there to be touched even after light is eliminated. Memory images of tactile perceptions can also be verified on visible bodies. The different accommodations of the retina of the eye enable us, as it were, to "touch" three-dimensional objects from a distance. Two-dimensional painting is not concerned with all this. Thus the painters of the Renaissance, using the closed form method, endeavoured to give the illusion of form by painting light as colour on the surface of objects. It was never more than "illusion."

Since it was the mission of colour to create the form as *chiaroscuro*, or light that had become perceptible, there was no possibility of rendering local colour or colour itself. It could only be painted as objectivated light.

In addition, Braque and Picasso were disturbed by the unavoidable distortion of form which worried many spectators initially. Picasso himself often repeated the ludicrous remark made by his friend, the sculptor Manolo, before one of his figure paintings: "What would you say if your parents were to meet you at the Barcelona station with such faces?" This is a drastic example of the relation between memory images and the figures represented in the painting. Comparison between the real object as articulated by the rhythm of forms in the painting and the same object as it exists in the spectator's memory inevitably results in "distortions" as long as even the slightest verisimilitude in the work of art creates this conflict in the spectator. Through the combined discoveries of Braque and Picasso during the summer of 1910 it became possible to avoid these difficulties by a new way of painting.

On the one hand, Picasso's new method made it possible to "represent" the form of objects and their position in space instead of attempting to imitate them through illusionistic means. With the representation of solid objects this could be effected by a process of representation that has a certain resemblance to geometrical drawing. This is a matter of course since the aim of both is to render the three-dimensional object on a two-dimensional plane. In addition, the painter no longer has to limit himself to depicting the object as it would appear from one given viewpoint, but, wherever necessary for fuller comprehension, he can show it from several sides, and from above and below.

Representation of the position of objects in space is done as follows: instead of beginning from a supposed foreground and going on from there to give an illusion of depth by means of perspective, the painter begins from a definite and clearly defined background. Starting from this background the painter now works toward the front by a sort of scheme of forms in which each object's position is clearly indicated, both in relation to the definite background and to other objects. Such an arrangement thus gives a clear and plastic view. But if only this scheme of forms were to exist it would be impossible to see in the painting the "representation" of things from the outer world. One would only see an arrangement of planes, cylinders, squares, etc.

At this point Braque's introduction of undistorted real objects into the painting takes on its full significance. When "real" details are thus introduced the result is a stimulus which carries with it memory images. Combining the "real" stimulus and the scheme of forms, these images construct the finished object in the mind. Thus the desired physical representation comes into being in the spectator's mind.

Now the rhythmization necessary for the coordination of the individual parts into the unity of the work of art can take place without producing disturbing distortions, since the object in effect is no longer "present" in the painting, that is, since it does not yet have the least resemblance to actuality. Therefore, the stimulus cannot come into conflict with the product of the assimilation. In other words, there exist in the painting the scheme of forms and small real details as stimuli integrated into the unity of the work of art; there exists, as well, but only in the mind of the

spectator, the finished product of the assimilation, the human head, for instance. There is no possibility of a conflict here, and yet the object “recognized” in the painting is now “seen” with an intensity of which no illusionistic art is capable.

As to colour, its utilization as *chiaroscuro* had been abolished. Thus, it could be freely employed, as colour, within the unity of the work of art. For the representation of local colour, its application on a small scale is sufficient to effect its incorporation into the finished representation in the mind of the spectator.

In the words of Locke, these painters distinguish between primary and secondary qualities. They endeavour to represent the primary, or most important qualities, as exactly as possible. In painting these are the object's form and its position in space. They merely suggest the secondary characteristics such as colour and tactile quality, leaving their incorporation into the object to the mind of the spectator.

This new language has given painting an unprecedented freedom. It is no longer bound to the more or less verisimilar optic image which describes the object from a single viewpoint. It can, in order to give a thorough representation of the object's primary characteristics, depict them as stereometric drawing on the plane surface, or, through several representations of the same object, it can provide an analytical study of that object which the spectator then reassembles in his mind. The representation does not necessarily have to be in the closed manner of the stereometric drawing; coloured planes, through their direction and relative position, can bring together the formal scheme without uniting in closed forms. This was the great advance made at Cadaqués. Instead of an analytical description, the painter can, if he prefers, also create in this way a synthesis of the object, or in the words of Kant, “put together the various conceptions and comprehend their variety in one perception.”

From *Der Weg zum Kubismus*, Munich, 1920, pp. 27-34; English ed. Way of Cubism, New York, 1949, pp. 10-12.

Pablo Picasso

Picasso was born Pablo Picasso y Ruiz in Malaga, Spain in 1881. His father was an art teacher who became a professor at the Barcelona Academy in 1886. Picasso moved to Paris at age 19 already possessing a prodigious amount of training and great technical facility. His earliest work in Paris was occupied with the cabaret scenes and the nightlife of the city. He received favorable notices from the beginning of his career, and enjoyed the support and patronage of such influential people as Gertrude Stein (PSR45) and Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler (PSR48).

The statement reprinted here was made in 1923 in Spanish and was translated in to English and published as “Picasso Speaks” in *The Arts*, a New York magazine. In this brief statement the artist takes on several of the most contentious topics in modern art at the time. Like Gleizes and Metzinger (PSR46) and like Kahnweiler (PSR48) Picasso clearly wants to dispel the idea that his art is any less precise than previous artistic styles. Note his word choices in this statement: he seems to be insisting that an art that is not imitative can still be concrete, true, and convincing. Like the many other authors on cubism, Picasso asserts that art has a role besides imitation: “nature and art, being two different things, cannot be the same thing” he states with deceptive simplicity.

Another general assumption that Picasso wants to resist is that art evolves logically from one style to the next as part of a logical or organic process. As an artist who throughout his career worked in a multitude of styles and manners, Picasso has a stake in combating the notion of an artist must stick to a particular style or approach to his or her art.

"STATEMENT TO MARIUS DE ZAYAS," 1923

I can hardly understand the importance given to the word *research* in connection with modern painting. In my opinion to search means nothing in painting. To *find* is the thing. Nobody is interested in following a man who, with his eyes fixed on the ground, spends his life looking for the purse that fortune should put in his path. The one who finds something no matter what it might be, even if his intention were not to search for it, at least arouses our curiosity, if not our admiration.

Among the several sins that I have been accused of, none is more false than that I have, as the principal objective in my work, the spirit of research. When I paint, my object is to show what I have found and not what I am looking for. In art intentions are not sufficient and, as we say in Spanish, love must be proved by deeds and not by reasons. What one does is what counts and not what one had the intention of doing.

We all know that Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize truth, at least the truth that is given us to understand. The artist must know how to convince others of the truthfulness of his lies. If he only shows in his work that he has searched, and re-searched, for the way to put over lies, he would never accomplish anything.

The idea of research has often made painting go astray, and made the artist lose himself in mental lucubrations. Perhaps this has been the principal fault of modern art. The spirit of research has poisoned those who have not fully understood all the positive and conclusive elements in modern art and has made them attempt to paint the invisible and, therefore, the unpaintable.

They speak of naturalism in opposition to modern painting. I would like to know if anyone has ever seen a natural work of art. Nature and art, being two different things, cannot be the same thing. Through art we express our conception of what nature is not.

Velazquez left us his idea of the people of his epoch. Undoubtedly they were different from the way he painted them, but we cannot conceive a Philip IV in any other way than the one Velazquez painted. Rubens also made a portrait of the same king and in Rubens' portrait he

seems to be quite another person. We believe in the one painted by Velazquez, for he convinces us by his right of might.

From the painters of the origins, the primitives, whose work is obviously different from nature, down to those artists who, like David, Ingres and even Bouguereau, believed in painting nature as it is, art has always been art and not nature. And from the point of view of art there are no concrete or abstract forms, but only forms which are more or less convincing lies. That those lies are necessary to our mental selves is beyond any doubt, as it is through them that we form our aesthetic view of life.

Cubism is no different from any other school of painting. The same principles and the same elements are common to all. The fact that for a long time cubism has not been understood and that even today there are people who cannot see anything in it, means nothing. I do not read English, an English book is a blank book to me. This does not mean that the English language does not exist, and why should I blame anybody else but myself if I cannot understand what I know nothing about?

I also often hear the word evolution. Repeatedly I am asked to explain how any painting evolved. To me there is no past or future in art. If a work of art cannot live always in the present it must not be considered at all. The art of the Greeks, of the Egyptians, of the great painters who lived in other times, is not an art of the past; perhaps it is more alive today than it ever was. Art does not evolve by itself, the ideas of people change and with them their mode of expression. When I hear people speak of the evolution of an artist, it seems to me that they are considering him standing between two mirrors that face each other and reproduce his image an infinite number of times, and that they contemplate the successive images of one mirror as his past, and the images of the other mirror as his future, while his real image is taken as his present. They do not consider that they are all the same images in different planes.

Variation does not mean evolution. If an artist varies his mode of expression this only means that he has changed his manner of thinking, and in changing, it might be for the better or it might be for the worse.

The several manners I have used in my art must not be considered as an evolution, or as steps toward an unknown ideal of painting. All I have ever made was made for the present and with the hope that it will always remain in the present. When I have found something to express, I have done it without thinking of the past or of the future. I do not believe I have used radically different elements in the different manners I have used in painting. If the subjects I have wanted to express have suggested different ways of expression I have never hesitated to adopt them. I have never made trials or experiments. Whenever I had something to say, I have said it in the manner in which I have felt it ought to be said. Different motives inevitably require different methods of
expression. This does not imply either evolution or progress, but an adaption of the idea one wants to express and the means to express that idea.

Arts of transition do not exist. In the chronological history of art there are periods which are more positive, more complete than others. This means that there are periods in which there are better artists than in others. If the history of art could be graphically represented, as in a chart used by a nurse to mark the changes of temperature of her patient, the same silhouettes of mountains would be shown, proving that in art there is no ascendant progress, but that it follows certain ups and downs that might occur at any time. The same occurs with the work of an individual artist.

Many think that cubism is an art of transition, an experiment which is to bring ulterior results. Those who think that way have not understood it. Cubism is not either a seed or a foetus, but an art dealing primarily with forms, and when a form is realized it is there to live its own life. A mineral substance, having geometric formation, is not made so for transitory purposes, it is to remain what it is and will always have its own form. But if we are to apply the law of evolution and transformation to art, then we have to admit that all art is transitory. On the contrary, art does not enter into these philosophic absolutisms. If cubism is an art of transition I am sure that the only thing that will come out of it is another form of cubism.

Mathematics, trigonometry, chemistry, psychoanalysis, music and what-not, have been related to cubism to give it an easier interpretation. All this has been pure literature, not to say nonsense, which has only succeeded in blinding people with theories.

Cubism has kept itself within the limits and limitations of painting, never pretending to go beyond it. Drawing, design and colour are understood and practised in cubism in the spirit and manner in which they are understood and practised in all other schools. Our subjects might be different, as we have introduced into painting objects and forms that were formerly ignored. We have kept our eyes open to our surroundings, and also our brains.

We give to form and colour all their individual significance, as far as we can see it; in our subjects, we keep the joy of discovery, the pleasure of the unexpected; our subject itself must be a source of interest. But of what use is it to say what we do when everybody can see it if he wants to?

'Picasso Speaks,' *The Arts*, New York, May 1923, pp. 315-26; reprinted in Alfred Barr: Picasso, New York 1946, pp. 270-1.