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"Envisioning the Unseen:

The Relationship between Vision and Sight in Art"

Paper presented for the Orange County Art Guild

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(Slide 2-Dar al-Athar)

(A version of this talk was originally given at the Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah in Kuwait in May, 2008 as part of their annual lecture series.)

(Slide 3-painted sketches windows)

Many years ago I was asked to design two stained-glass windows for a public building. After thinking about the project for a few days, I sat down, closed my eyes, and in 20 minutes had the images clearly in my mind. Retiring to my studio, in an hour I created two sketchy watercolors of the images that I had seen in my imagination. (Slide 4-intermediate drawings windows) As a medium, glass is inflexible, difficult to cut and shape, and the lead that holds all the glass together has to be placed structurally in the design so that the window is strong and durable. To get from a visually imagined image to a workable design is a long and difficult process. (Slide 5-finished drawings windows) Yet even so, to this day, I am amazed at how close in mood and impact these watercolor sketches are to the actual windows that were created over many months, even though the finished forms had necessarily many revisions in design and structure. (Slide 6-photos windows)

Just as all of us see, all of us also think, dream, imagine, and remember visually, or in pictures. But what is seen with the physical

eye, or sight, is different than what is seen in the "mind's eye", or vision. Visual artists are those whose job it is to navigate between the realms of sight and vision; this work is done in different ways, from different directions.

In this talk, I will explain how as an artist I start with the visual imagination to create something that exists in the material world and is seen by the eye. Later, I will discuss how this is differently approached by artists both historically and today, and then make some concluding remarks. (Slide 7-Ajanta)

As the great 20th Century philosopher and art historian Ananda Coomaraswamy says in his article, "The Intellectual Operation in Indian Art", "The *Sukranitisara* defines the initial procedure of the Indian imager: he is to be expert in contemplative vision, for which the canonical prescriptions provide the basis, and only in this way, and not by direct observation, are the required results to be attained. The whole procedure may be summed up in the words "when the visualization has been realized, set to work", or "when the model has been conceived, set down on the wall what was visualized".[1] Interestingly, Coomaraswamy refers to these two stages in the process as being the same as the *actus primus* and *actus secundus*, the "free" and "servile" parts of the artist's operation, in terms of Scholastic theory.[2] (Slide 8-GGK Cover)

As in the stained glass example, I generally follow this procedure of the "Indian imager" described by Coomaraswamy. Starting with a firm "mind's eye" image, the work is then slowly bringing that image into the world, realizing it in material form. When illustrating my two illuminated books, *The Golden Goose King* and *Song of Songs,* the beginning point was the text. (Slide 9-S of S Cover) I always start the process of creating images by meditatively accessing that mental place

where images emerge effortlessly, that "free" part of the operation as Coomaraswamy calls it. Sometimes this state is most easily achieved between awakening and sleep. One is not asleep and thought processes can still be directed by the conscious mind. But the mind is relaxed and able to drift easily into recesses that are not necessarily determined by conscious thought. This allows me to think deeply about the text but also to link that thought to imaginary images of what might visually embody the text. (Slide 10-Moustafa) I recently asked the artist, Ahmed Moustafa, how this process worked for him, from where his images came and how they developed. In answering he used a wonderful metaphor. He said, "The images always start in my mind but it's like seeing an image through frosted glass. You can see it, but it's not clear, it's a bit elusive. Making the image exist in the physical world as art is like polishing the glass." (Slide 11-Thumbnails GGK)

Once I have that image as "seen through frosted glass", I make a quick pencil sketch. These sketches are rudimentary and are just visual notes to remind me later of what I saw in my "mind's eye". I try not to waste time on these sketches because they are for my eyes only. Interestingly, sometimes when I finish the painting and look back at its initial sketch, the sketch is strongly and vitally connected to the painting, more so than later, more detailed drawings.

Once I have firmly in my mind's eye where I will be going, with my sketch as a reminder, the process of creating the piece is the work of bringing the image into the physical world, or as Coomaraswamy describes it, the "servile" part of the artist's operation. It is a "servile" process because it serves the purpose of bringing into worldly existence what is seen in the mind's eye. (Slide 12-drawings frame GGK) In my gouache paintings, all of the components in the image—

the figures and the details of their environment—must be developed and then carefully put together. I often use visual information—photos and other sources that help me to develop the detail that I need in my sketches and I work with various configurations until I get the two-dimensional composition that I want. Using gouache, the composition won't change, but the details—facial expression, specifics of the environment and clothing—those can and must change when painting. Otherwise, the piece will be dull and lifeless. (Slide 13-Frame painting GGK)

After I transfer the finished drawing to watercolor paper, the painting begins; though the composition will not change, this is far from a rote exercise. Color becomes a huge presence, and various painting techniques take over with spontaneity and surprise. (Slide 14-sketches court scene) I paint and paint, and finally, when enough paint has been applied, there comes a tipping point when the piece starts to come alive. That is when I begin to see the realization of what I saw in my imagination perhaps months before. (Slide 15-painting court scene)

Another metaphor that Ahmed Moustafa used in our conversation was about process. He said, "It's like looking for buried treasure. You know it's there; you dig a little; maybe you cover some of it back up and dig from the other side, being very careful not to damage it. But then finally it's uncovered, and at that point you see it in the same way as everyone else does, not as the artist, but as any viewer might. In a sense it's no longer yours." (Slides 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21-sketches/paintings S of S)

In recent years my medium has changed to ceramics. (Slide 22-pots) Some of the imagery in my ceramic work comes from my paintings. (Slide 23-The Phoenix, Gold Before Blooming) Other pieces

are influenced by places I have visited. Still others are conceptual. (Slide 24-Master's House) In my "Metaphysical Pots" I picture water coming out from the inside at the opening on the top, running down into water, the ocean, at the bottom, focusing on the dual themes of the Water of Life, or the source of creation, running out and into the Infinite Ocean, or the goal of mystical transcendence. (Slide 25-In the Reed Bed #2)

Though working with clay is a huge departure from painting with gouache, my method is similar. I often wake at 4:00 A.M. and think about pots. I see them clearly in my mind—the shape, the details, the colors. I almost never sketch their shapes because I have the pot more firmly in my mind if I do not draw it. Somehow in physically shaping them on the potter's wheel, I can connect more freely with the image in my mind's eye than with a drawing. Interestingly, when I do several similar pots I find that often the first in the series is the best, simply because it is most directly linked to my imagined model. Once I have a pot completed, I can see it with my eyes and am therefore compelled, in spite of myself, to lessen the internal connection to the image in my mind. Subsequent versions become bound by the concrete examples of their already-completed siblings.

I have described my method of seeing the image in my mind's eye and then bringing it into the material world through the process of art. If I prefer to rely on what I see in my imagination rather than on a physical model, that is certainly not true of many other artists. In fact, for most of western art history since the Renaissance, the focus was increasingly on what was seen by the physical eye. (Slide 26-Pamuk cover; Bihzad)

The Nobel Prize winning author, Orhan Pamuk, in his novel *My Name is Red*, describes the tension in the Ottoman ateliers after the

introduction of European painting. The traditional book illuminators in Pamuk's story defend the idea that art originates in the "mind's eye" and is then brought into material form as an ideal. Their rivals, the modernists in his story, want to follow a European model and paint what is seen by the physical eye. In his colorful novel, this ongoing argument plays out across the backdrops of love, murder, intrigue, power, politics and art. (Slide 27-Bellini Sultan Mehmet II)

In a chapter of Pamuk's titled "I am a Tree", a tree pictured in a painting speaks and says, "A great European master miniaturist and another great master artist are walking through a Frank meadow discussing virtuosity and art. As they stroll, a forest comes into view before them. The more expert of the two says to the other: "Painting in the new style demands such talent that if you depicted one of the trees in this forest, a man who looked upon that painting could come here, and if he so desired, correctly select that tree from among the others."

[The tree remarks] I thank Allah that I, the humble tree before you, have not been drawn with such intent . . .I don't want to be a tree, I want to be its meaning."[3] (Slide 28-Bellini people; barber scene)

Later, Pamuk acerbically writes, ". . . the master Seyyit Mirek. . . used the example of the illustrator who wanted to draw a horse. He reasoned that even the most untalented painter—one whose head is empty like those of today's Venetian painters—who draws the picture of a horse while looking at a horse will still make the image from memory; because, you see, it is impossible, at one and the same time, to look at the horse and at the page upon which the horse's image appears. First, the illustrator looks at the horse, then he quickly transfers whatever rests in his mind to the page. In the interim, even

if only a wink in time, what the artist represents on the page is not the horse he sees, but the memory of the horse he has just seen. Proof that for even the most miserable illustrator, a picture is possible only through memory."[4] (Slide 29-Bellini scribe & Doge; miniature painters)

In spite of the distain expressed by the traditional miniature painters in Pamuk's book for this "Venetian" style of painting, we know historically that painting came to be dominated by realism, by capturing what the eye sees. Why did this shift occur? Artist David Hockney has offered one intriguing, controversial explanation. If we are to believe books such as his *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters*, Seyyit Mirek's reasoning that a picture is possible only through memory leaves out the possibility of optical devices to aid the artist in drawing. (Slide 30-Giotto, Pisanello, and Moroni women) Hockney and others argue that as early as the 15th century, painters used optical aids to project images onto canvas or paper in order to quickly get proportion, details and perspective captured as the eye sees them. (Slide 31-Giotto, Cranach & Moroni men) He asserts that the camera obscura was the earliest device used, first with a convex mirror and then with a more sophisticated lens, and was later replaced by the camera lucida.

In terms of the dynamic between vision and sight, the artist using a camera obscura could and in many cases would still start from a strong conceptual image in the mind's eye and then use these tools to fill it out in physical form, a sort of montage-like use of individual drawings done with the aid of optical devices. (Slide 32-Ghent alterpiece & Hockney) Hockney discusses this possibility, focusing especially on Van Eyck's *Ghent Altarpiece* (1432) as an example of montaged optically-generated images that are pieced together with an overarching conceptual plan as a basis for its composition. He visually

compares it to his own photo collage from the 80's, *Pearblossom Highway* in which he tried to create simultaneously both depth and closeness to everything in the picture.[5]

Hockney does not claim that optical aids were used everywhere, all the time. But he says "the devices established a standard, they dictated a look."[6] This "look" was focused on how subjects appeared to the physical eye, in all of the minute detail of clothing, decoration, and difficult perspective that we see in some of the masterpieces from this era. The use of optical devices, focusing as it did the concentration of the artist on what the eye sees, would have helped to move artists more and more out of the "mind's eye" toward optical realism in their painting.[7] (Slide 33-Still Life) Hockney goes on to assert that because of the inherent limits of the devices to easily capture multiple subjects, especially human subjects that had the unfortunate tendency to not sit still, "from the late fifteenth century. . .and increasingly through the sixteenth century, the still life gradually became established as a genre in its own right. Inanimate objects do not move (though they may decay), and can be carefully scrutinized for a long time. They are perfect subjects for optical projection, and for artists who used projections."[8]

Hockney received a lot of criticism, especially from the art historical community. In Lawrence Weschler's follow-up piece to his 2000 article from the *New Yorker*, he quotes Hockney as saying about his critics, "They just don't get it," he said. "They go on and on as if the artists of that time would have been too unsophisticated or too ashamed to have been using optical devices, whereas on the contrary, these weren't stupid people, they were keen to make pictures! They weren't art historians, for god's sake." He went on to note how [Martin] Kemp had commented to him how for the painters of that era,

who after all hadn't yet divided off from scientists–we are speaking of a time before that artificial division–far from being a matter of shame, proficiency with optical devices would have been a matter of pride among them: they'd have been ravenous to deploy any new aid."[9]

(Slide 34-Seurat)

Back to our vision/sight paradigm, whatever role the use of optical devices had in bringing about this change, it is certainly clear that for several hundred years artists were obsessed with subjecting the physical world to exacting visual scrutiny and then recreating it on canvas. In the late 19th century the impressionist painters emerge, perhaps, as Hockney points out, as a response to the development of the camera in 1839, allowing detailed reality conveyed so dramatically by artists up to that period to be fixed by chemicals on paper. (Slide 35-Seurat Grand Jatte)After that we have painters like Renoir, Seurat, and Monet experimenting with capturing light, the most subtle aspect of what the eye sees. (Slide 36-Renior) Indeed, Monet's more atmospheric paintings, (Slide 37-Monet) like the haystack series, seem to be paintings of reflective light itself rather than paintings of the objects reflecting the light. But still he is painting with great attention to what he sees with his eyes, though striving for ever more subtlety in his sight.

As the pursuit to create "optical reality" on canvas starts to show signs of disarray, several influences combine to begin to change artists' approach to their subjects, to change the dynamic between vision and sight. In the late nineteenth century artists like Paul Gauguin start to look for inspiration at a range of sources outside of the European mainstream of academic art, a move unsatisfactorily referred to as Primitivism.[10]

The concept of the fourth dimension, which was an outgrowth of 19th century advances in geometry, was widely discussed by artists in both philosophical and mystical terms as perhaps being a truer reality than that which is seen by the eye. Initially understood spatially, after Einstein's Theory of Relativity became widely known after about 1919, it also was understood as time.[11] (Slide 38-Cezanne & Picasso) When Cubism finally emerges with paintings by Picasso and Braque in 1907 and 1908 respectively, it is as if optical reality is being deconstructed by the use of multiple, shifting viewpoints. (Slide 39-Cubists Braque, Gris, Duchamp)The later (1912) iconic cubist painting by Marcel Duchamp, "Nude Descending a Staircase", adds the element of time (not because of Einstein's theories, but because of stop-time photography). Ironically, in spite of interest by Picasso and many others in so-called "Primitive Art"[12], understood to "represent the figure emblematically rather than naturalistically," the critic Maurice Raynal, a supporter of Cubism, could argue that "the mind now directed the optical exploration of the world **as never before**. Art was no longer merely a record of the sensations bombarding the retina; it was the result of intelligent, mobile investigation."[13] Later Cubist artists, those showing after 1911, incorporated subjects with literary and philosophical content, focusing especially on the work of Henri Bergson, including the notion of simultaneity, which artists showed by painting differing events from different times simultaneously in the same time frame.[14] This same kind of collapsing of time into one montage is also seen in Persian painting and Indian miniature painting at least from the time of Akbar if not earlier.

So what is happening to our notion of sight/vision in this tumultuous time of scientific, philosophical, and artistic ferment? My purpose is not to reduce this complicated picture of individual styles,

interests, and artistic eccentricities to a simple formula, but to point out a few trends beginning during this time. One is the deconstruction of what is seen by the eye so that the subjects become abstracted. Another is a focus back into the mind, Reynal's notion of "intelligent, mobile investigation." Still another interesting notion emerges at this time from popular mystical ideas of the fourth dimension, theosophy, hermeticism, the occult and alchemy, cabbala, and Greek myth. It is the sense that color, form and line can carry with them an innate inner meaning beyond that which is imparted by artistic intention.[15] Artists were also keenly interested in asserting the notion of the self-sufficiency of their pictures and sculptures as objects in their own right, which assumes a power or meaning again not necessarily dependent on artistic intention.[16]

As the twentieth century progresses, other influences come into play as well. Freud's free association and ideas about the subconscious mind, ideas about automatism[17], championed especially by the Surrealists (this is the idea that the subconscious can automatically speak through the actions of the body, not filtered through the conscious mind), and later developments by Jung on the collective unconscious, these all create an environment in which focus on the conscious mind as the source of creation is questioned. On both ends of our sight/vision paradigm, the ground has now shifted. By the time Paul Klee in 1918 pens the famous sentence "Art does not reproduce the visible but makes visible"[18], a legitimate question must be, "Makes **what** visible?"[19] In a later lecture, Klee argues that "the process of creation holds far greater importance than the forms which are the outcome of the artist's work.[20]

With the term "Concrete Art", invented in 1930 by Theo van Doesburg, all connection by the artist with what is seen in the visible

world is gone.[21] (Slide 40-Pollock & de Kooning) By the time we get to the New York action painters Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, the medium (i.e. paint and canvas) seems to have supplanted that which is seen by the eye, and that which is seen by the mind's eye has been replaced by a faith in access to a subconscious transmitted unerringly by the body and its automatistic possibilities.

So where does that leave us? Considering the artistic scene in the United States alone, much has happened since the hay day of the action painters. With our present globalized environment where anything and everything is possible on all artistic fronts, it is impossible to characterize or summarize artistic movements with any coherency. Certainly that is not my purpose here. But I do want to describe ideas and attitudes that characterize many artists today, people who have imbibed perhaps uncritically the "climate of opinion" swirling about these notions of Art and the Artist. It is common for artists now to start without any mental image, or any idea of where they might be going with their medium. It is as if the medium becomes the vehicle through which the artist, by means of random association, dreams, and the subconscious, experimentally plots a course into an interior mindscape which is often thought to be transformative, or at least self-elucidating. Though their efforts would not necessarily be characterized in this way, it is like alchemy, the transmutation of base elements to something of a higher nature, and the process is seen as somewhat magical and significant, both for the artist and for the viewer.

To conclude, we have come full circle. I have described the process of holding a vision in the mind's eye while pulling it out to be seen in the material world via the process of making art. We have considered the encounter described by Orhan Pamuk between those

who wanted to paint visions from the mind's eye and artists who wished to paint that which the eye sees. We have gone with David Hockney on his ruminations about the intense focus on "optical sight" by painters after the Renaissance. We have considered how this starts to change with the Impressionist painters, and then is thoroughly turned on its head in the first half of the twentieth century. And finally, I have described a process by which the medium becomes a vehicle for once again going back inside the mind, albeit somewhat randomly and without direction, so that the process between Coomarswamy's "free" and "servile" is reversed: the "servile" becomes the vehicle to discover the elusive "free".

Why is it important for us to think about the relationship between vision and sight, between what is seen by the "mind's eye" and what is seen of the visible world by the physical eye? If art is indeed a form through which our humanness is expressed, then these issues have other implications. What part does our modern materialistic culture and the loss of an acknowledged route to an inner life play in changing the ways in which vision and sight interact in the artistic process? We are now in a period when everyone at least theoretically has access to art made anywhere, at any time in history. What does it mean that artists can see so much and choose what they wish from this potpourri of images, often without reference to content or context? What roles have a perhaps superficial understanding of influences like Zen Buddhism[22], or New Age approaches to spirituality had in setting agendas for artists? How does the trinity of artist, critic, and dealer determine what is created, what styles and mediums are favored, and how work is defined in the hierarchy of the art market?[23] Do new technologies change the dynamic between sight and vision?

It is not my intention to be critical of “modern” art or modern abstract approaches which can be beautiful and quite moving. In fact, “modern art” is so diverse that it encompasses every possible mode of visual expression. Artists can now choose whatever approach fits their unique sensibilities. Does it really matter what process is used if it results in an epiphany for the viewer? I guess what I personally favor is intentionality, content, and purpose, a self-awareness that sometimes seems lacking. I remember how frustrating it was for me when I was taking art classes in college, where there seemed to be an unstated agreement that basic questions about content, about why we make art, about the connection between art, life, society, and the spirit —basic questions of value and purpose—simply were not to be asked. Perhaps if we all, artists, collectors, and viewers, could more often ask these questions, we would start to see, and to create, better art.

[1] Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "The Intellectual Operation in Indian Art," in *Selected Papers*, vol. 1, *Traditional Art and Symbolism*, ed. Roger Lipsey (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 131.

[2] Ibid., p. 131.

[3] Orhan Pamuk*, My Name is Red,* trans. Erdag M. Goknar (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), p. 51.

[4] Ibid., p. 80

[5] David Hockney, *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters* (New York: Viking Studio, 2001), pp. 94-95.

[6] Lawrence Weschler, "The Looking Glass," *The New Yorker*, January 31, 2000, p. 64-75; Weschler, "Through the Looking Glass: Further Adventures in Opticality with David Hockney," Artkrush.com (2002), available online (accessed March 30, 2008) at <http://www.believermag.com/hockney/lookingglass/>.

[7] For a discussion of how a change in medium or tools can have an impact on style beyond that of artistic intention, see Judith Ernst, "The Problem of Islamic Art", *Muslim Networks: From Hajj to Hip Hop,* ed. Bruce Lawrence & miriam cooke, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), pp. 107-131.

[8] Hockney, *Secret Knowledge*, p. 103.

[9] Weschler.

[10] The work of Paul Gauguin, the exemplar of the modern primitivist, was shaped by his passions for medieval Breton stone-carving, Japanese prints and the wide variety of forms of Polynesian art. *Der Blaue Reiter Almanach* (1912) is a veritable album of avant-garde aesthetic pluralism, a visual manifesto of primitivism in its deliberate juxtapositions of contemporary art, child art, naive art, medieval German woodcuts, Russian folk prints and Bavarian votive paintings, as well as assorted exotica. Roger Cardinal, "Primitivism, 2: Sources outside the European fine art tradition," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.069588.2>.

[11] Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "Fourth dimension," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.029139>.

[12] This corresponds to the opening of a number of ethnographic museums and the popularization of art from other cultures.

[13] John Musgrove, "Cubism, I: Painting, Sculpture, and Collage, 3: Technical and stylistic innovations," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.020539.1.3>.

[14] "Cubism, I: Painting, Sculpture, and Collage, 4: Meanings and interpretations," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.020539.1.4>.

[15]This seems to come out of a mysticism informed by the notion of the fourth dimension, theosophy, hermeticism, the occult and alchemy, cabbala, and Greek myth and its adherents include not just the Cubists, described below, but also Kandinsky and Mondrian. "Just as the Salon Cubists were linked with the Abbaye de Creteil group, so the early Cubist work of Picasso, Braque and Gris was associated with the post-Symbolist and sometimes proto-Surrealist poetry of Apollinaire and Jacob, and also with 19th-century Symbolist poetry, especially that of Stephane Mallarme. Their interest in Mallarme has often been corroborated, and the obscurity of their 'hermetic' Cubism of 1910-12 has been related to Mallarme's late poetic practice, by which things are not named but evoked through the images or sensations stimulated by their presence. Apollinaire's lyrical variant on these methods, arising from his ability to take ordinary things as a starting-point for series of images possessing 'supernatural' qualities, clearly relates to the use of banal subjects by Picasso and Braque as the springboard for arcane yet suggestive clusters of lines and planes. Indeed the poet Pierre Reverdy, who was also close to Picasso, Braque and Gris, could claim that the importance of Cubism lay essentially in the fact that it had consolidated changes wrought first in poetry by Mallarme and Arthur Rimbaud. It is also clear that the emphasis placed by these painters on the autonomy of the elements of their art (colours, lines, forms) and their belief in the directing role of the subjective imagination were extensions of Symbolist attitudes." "Cubism, I.4: Meanings and interpretations," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.020539.1.4>

[16] Christopher Green, "Cubism, I, 5: Late Cubism," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.020539.1.5>.

[17] "Term appropriated by the Surrealists from physiology and psychiatry and later applied to techniques of spontaneous writing, drawing and painting. In physiology, automatism denotes automatic actions and involuntary processes that are not under conscious control, such as breathing; the term also refers to the performance of an act without conscious thought, a reflex. Psychological automatism is the result of a dissociation between behavior and consciousness. Familiarity and long usage allow actions to become automatic so that they are performed with a minimum of thought and deliberation. Pathological automatism, also the consequence of dissociative states, ensues from psychological conflict, drugs or trance states; automatism may also be manifested in sensory hallucinations. . . While psychiatry considers automatism reflexive and constricting, the Surrealists believed it was a higher form of behavior. For them, automatism could express the creative force of what they believed was the unconscious in art." Jennifer Gibson, "Automatism," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.005221>.

[18] Ann Temkin, "Klee, Paul," 1(ii): "1911-20," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 07 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.046818.1.2>.

[19] John Elderfield, "The Adventures of the Optic Nerve" in *The Promotion of Knowledge: Lectures to mark the Centenary of the British Academy 1902-2002 (Proceedings of the British Academy),* ed. John Morrill, (British Academy, 2004), pp. 60-61. "He [Klee] seems to have meant that painting does (or should) not reproduce what we see, but rather, manufactures what we see. Under this interpretation, a painting is not a machine to capture and display existing visible data, but is a machine to create new visible data. Furthermore, if a painting can be said to make visible, it may be said to do so for a beholder. Thus, although the artist makes the machine that makes visible, it is the beholder who turns it on, and keeps it running, by being a beholder. But Klee means something more than this. When he talks of the visible, he seems to be using it in its two senses of what is commonly seen and whatever *can* be seen. Thus, art does not reproduce the visible (what is commonly seen), but makes visible (what commonly is not seen). This links Klee's statement to the long-standing thematisation of painting as a release from blindness—the re-presentation of a nature that can never be seen as a whole but only be caught in glimpses. In so far as the beholder's accumulated glimpses of the painting, along a route constrained by the painter, shapes its appearance, the capacities of perception may be thought to be as much a part of the medium of painting as the canvas and the paint."

[20] Temkin, 1(iii): "The Bauhaus years, 1920-33," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 07 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.046818.1.3>.

[21] "Concrete art" was a term coined by Theo van Doesburg in 1930 to refer to a specific type of non-figurative painting and sculpture. Van Doesburg defined the term in the first and only issue of *Art Concret*, which appeared in April 1930 with a manifesto, *The Basis of Concrete Art*, signed by van Doesburg, Otto G. Carlsund, Jean Helion and the Armenian painter Leon Tutundjian (1905-68). In the manifesto it was stated that 'The painting should be constructed entirely from purely plastic elements, that is to say planes and colours. A pictorial element has no other significance than itself and consequently the painting possesses no other significance than itself.' Natural forms, lyricism and sentiment were strictly forbidden. Taking a narrow sense of the word 'abstract' as implying a starting-point in the visible world, it distinguishes Concrete art from Abstract art as emanating directly from the mind rather than from an abstraction of forms in nature. For this reason the term is sometimes applied retrospectively to the more cerebral abstract works by such other artists as Mondrian, Kandinsky, Malevich and Frantisek Kupka. "Concrete art," *Grove Art Online* (Accessed 06 March 2008), <http://www.groveart.com/shared/views/article.html?section=art.018994>.

[22] For a discussion of the misunderstanding of Zen by members of the so-called "Beat Generation", see Alan Watts article "Beat Zen, Square Zen, and Zen", originally published in the *Chicago Review*, spring issue, 1958. (accessed April 3, 2008) http://www.bluesforpeace.com/beat_zen.htm

[23] For a discussion of the symbiotic relationship between critics, dealers and some of the abstract expressionist painters of the 1950's, see Tom Wolfe, *The Painted Word* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux; First Edition, January 1, 1975).