Archival Bodies

By: Whitney Brennan

Popularized during the late nineteenth century in Western Europe, the photographic archive contributed to an ethnographic bias in the analysis of human bodies. This included the documentation of tattooed bodies. The use of photography as a tool for documentation acted as an extension of what post-structuralist theorist Michel Foucault termed, "biopower."[1] Biopower referred to a nation state's regulation of their subjects through "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations."[2] Through this regulatory practice, the individuality of subjects became a primary means to "identify, label, and manage the psyche."[3] Photography was a medium in which these controlling techniques were used. By producing optically 'truthful' images of individuals, photographs perpetuated cultural prejudices by categorizing subjects according to their appearance. These 'truths' were verified by scientific analyses developed to generalize characteristics or marks upon a person's body; allowing for racialized and other superficial prejudices to proliferate under the guise of a scientific authority. The body was understood as "a site of basic social classifications, associated with gender, birth, sexuality, or rites of passage."[4] American theorist and critic Allan Sekula stated that in the authoritative 'truth' credited to photographic images there was a "new instrumental potential in photography; a silence that silenced."[5] These images were used, as he explained, to "establish and delimit the terrain of the Other . . . [and] define both a generalized look (typology) and contingent instance of deviance and social pathology."[6] The photograph permitted viewers to stereotype and stigmatize subjects, while being reassured that this image of them was in fact, a 'true' representation of their likeness.

The concept of the archive, broadly defined as the collecting and organizing of objects and materials, has been incorporated more holistically into contemporary tattooing practices, by embracing the photograph's recording function as a means to capture and share their artwork. Tattooists use photographic methods of documentation to record and archive their art, using close-up scaled images, similar to early ethnographic photographs, but with a contemporary function that emphasizes the tattoo as artistic, not anthropological. By viewing the tattoo as a work of art, the tattoo artist emphasizes their technical and artistic skills, as opposed to a visual documentation of de-personalized body art. The transformation of the photographic archive has come to hold new, positive meaning for tattooing and the representations of tattooed bodies. As this paper will demonstrate, archival practices have undergone a dramatic shift in intent and representational techniques within specific cultural contexts. In contemporary Western tattoo communities, the photographic documentation of tattoos is pursued from a perspective that values the aesthetics of tattooing. Moreover, in many circumstances the practice of tattooing has ritualistic or commemorative elements that point to non-Western influences.[7]

Popular in the early twentieth century, Austro-Czechoslovak architect Adolf Loos' essay "Ornament and Crime" defined tattoos as markers of criminality and primitiveness.[8] His work drew on the writings of Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso, who proposed a biological explanation of crime in the late nineteenth century.[9] Scholar Victoria Pitts suggests that there is still a societal predisposition to judge and persecute tattooed bodies. That "body modifiers have been understood as perverse, criminal and offensive" and tattooed persons are depicted as "more psychopathological than other groups."[10] In "The Body and the Archive," Sekula examines the emergent methods of European photography in the nineteenth century and the categorizing of bodies that had been scientifically diagnosed as criminal. While photographic portraiture held a novel fascination for the pub-

lic, it also "introduced the panoptic principle into daily life . . . [where] every portrait implicitly took its place within a social and moral hierarchy," establishing visual indicators of wealth, status, and superiority.[11] The photographic subject was thereby socially classed and categorized based on their appearance in a portrait. Additionally, these ethnographic and scientific photographs gave the viewer the power to "look down at [their] inferiors," instilling a social hierarchy based on photographic representation.[12] Interestingly, French biometrics researcher and police officer Alphonse Bertillon argued in 1893:

The criminal body expressed nothing... scars and other deformations of the flesh were clues, not to an innate propensity for crime, but to the body's physical history: its trades, occupations, calamities.[13]

Bertillon's argument is incongruous with common nineteenth century discourses and long-held opinions of body markings and deformations.[14] Indeed there were and still continue to be medical and scholarly studies which link tattoos to high-risk behaviour and psychological illnesses.[15] The photograph's function as a repressive tool is evident in early photographs that classified persons with superficial markings or deformations as deviant and socially inferior, as illustrated in Lombroso's drawing of the "criminal body," identified by its tattoos. Sekula explains that there is a duality within photography, which has both honourific and repressive functions. He argues, even as it functions to document repeat offenders for future identification, the archive also reflects the two branches of scientific enquiry that shaped the categorization of the human body, physiognomy and phrenology. He posits that these two methods of analysis "both shared the belief that the surface of the body... bore the outward signs of inner character."[16] For this reason, Bertillon's methods in the 1800s were extraordinarily unique in their refusal to conform to these systems of diagnosis.

It is more commonly understood today that the human body is culturally and politically shaped and constrained. Professor and author of *Tattooed Bodies: Subjectivity, Textuality, Ethics, and Pleasure* Nikki Sullivan states, "body marking is read ideologically as a message of harm that reveals the essence of the individual self and mental health."[17] Pitts quotes psychologist Susie Orbach as saying that "there is a projecting onto your body of an absolute hatred" which speaks to the view of tattooing as an act of violence towards the body.[18] This view denies the tattoo wearer any agency in their decision to get tattooed. Significantly, there are a diverse range of perspectives pertaining to the self and the body. Pitts argues that the body "is positioned in multiple ways" influenced and altered by social and cultural norms.[19] With regard to photography, there was a visual authority allotted to images of the body, which as Sekula states "operated as the image of scientific truth."[20] Markings were considered evidence of a propensity to criminality, and they imposed an ethnographic prejudice in the examination of tattooed bodies.

As theorized by Lombroso, and later incorporated into Loos' discussion on tattoos, criminal anthropology was a prevailing source for theories on non-Western peoples, and defined them as primitive and inferior in the 1800s. Loos took up Lombroso's connection of primitiveness and ornamentation and connected these two factors to criminality, arguing that both the primitive and the criminal "shared an urge for ornamentation."[22] His notion of the 'primitiveness' of ornamentation is consistent with his earlier writings on architecture, as is his proposition on the 'evolution' of civilization away from ornament and architectural decoration. Loos later included this position in his analysis of tattoos, asserting that "a modern person who is tattooed is either a criminal or a degenerate."[23] This discourse continued throughout the twentieth century, perpetuating stereotypes against tattooed persons and marking them as societal delinquents. It is worth noting, as there continues to be a strong connection

between tattooing and criminal organizations, that this statement is taken into consideration in critical discourse even today. Non-criminals have at times been ostracized or misjudged on the basis of their tattoos. A well-known example took place in the 1920s in Boston, where a woman's rape case was dismissed on account of her having a small butterfly tattoo on her ankle. The prosecutor concluded that "the tattoo needle's penetration of her skin had already violated her virginity."[24] This argument is not to excuse all tattooed individuals from criminal behaviour, but whether the tattoo in question is relevant to the issue at hand.

When considering archives, it is important to maintain a critical awareness of the context and the intended audience when observing historical photographs of tattooed bodies. These bodies, particularly in a non-Western context, were often marked for ritualistic purposes, and as scholar Kirsten Wright affirms, "tattoos cannot be understood from mere recording of the design... [it requires] extensive knowledge of a society's belief structure and cultural practices."[25] The functions of the archive are connected to a myriad of discourses and contextual uses. Because of this, its purpose is complex and often biased in terms of structure, categorization, and intended function. Citing Foucault, Professor Mark Joseph Calano states that "the archive refers to something more than 'the sum of all the texts that a culture has kept upon its person as documents attesting to its past, or as evidence of a continuing identity.'"[26] In his discussion of the tattooing practices of the Kalinga people of the Philippine Cordilleras, Calano posits that"[t]attoos are more than these external traditional intricate patterns and designs," and associates the functions of the *batek* of the Kalinga to the numerous functions of the Western archive.[27] For the Kalinga, tattooing practices are their cultural archives. Their body modification practices are further articulated by Alfred Gell, author of *Wrapping in Images: Polynesian Tattooing*, who states "the body is not only a vehicle but also an important source of symbolic readings of embodied experience."[28] In referencing Gell, Calano argues that for societies outside of Western archival practices, "the body becomes a repository of significant life events and rituals tangibly and symbolically expressed by traditional tattoos."[29] An example of this are the chest tattoos worn by a man in the Kalinga community. These tattoos identify the manas a warrior within his community, and signifies his high tolerance for pain. The tattoos also demonstrate the design's detailed symmetry which required a skilled hand, and time and patience to create.[30]

Wright, in "Recording 'A Very Particular Custom': Tattoos and the Archive," explores the Western colonizer's documentation of indigenous tattoos through ethnographic photography and drawings, as well as the personal tattoo collections of explorers and sailors in the South Pacific. She affirms that "tattoos are inherently physical records" and that they "also functioned as records within a broader cultural context of different societies," referring to the individualism of tattooing practices and stylistic motifs among neighbouring indigenous communities.[31] The incompatibility of Western archival practices and non-Western cultures' use of tattooing highlights the inadequacy of the Western historical archive as an objective resource for information on tattoos. Calano quotes theorist and philosopher Jacques Derrida, stating that the archive "carries a certain untranslatability that makes it disjointed and incomplete."[32] Calano's argument is further articulated by the biased 'silencing'[33] that Allan Sekula proposes photography imposes on its subjects. Sekula further clarifies that the archive, in the case of the Kalinga *batek*, "is also where meaning is deposited," analogous to a photographic archive.[34] This notion suggests that the symbolic meaning of an 'archive' transcends the cultural differences between Western and non-Western cultures.

Through this comparison it becomes clear that the collecting and recording of memo-

ries and events is a universal, human characteristic and what must be respected, as explicated by both Wright and Calano, are the cultural and ritualistic aspects of tattooing that distinguish it from photography. Tattoos are not merely a visual record; they provide intrinsic and memory-specific documentation that is unique to each individual. Furthermore, the act of photographing tattoos as they appear on the body disengages the tattoo from its intrinsic meaning and symbolism for the wearer. For example, the uses of tattooing for the Indigenous people of Papua New Guinea include women receiving tattoos at puberty, as well as other rituals associated with social rank or chiefdom.[35] As a comparable example, Calano provides an image of a young Kalinga woman receiving her *batek*. The photograph demonstrates the communal, social aspect of tattooing for the Kalinga and highlights the importance of the process as creating memory for the group as a whole, not just the individual receiving the tattoo. Wright explains that the images created by explorers, anthropologists, and missionaries "recorded disembodied body parts" and "much or all context regarding the tattoo is lost through the necessarily representative recording of a specific tattoo."[36] This further iterates the insufficiency of photographic archival practices for recording tattoos. Wright's analysis of the documentary processes of early explorers in the South Pacific proves that these recordings are "evidence of contact between two cultures and the interpretation of one [Indigenous] by another [European]"; however, that context and ritual significance are lost through these records, and the importance of the relationship between the individual and the tattoo is not represented.[37] As a solution to these archival inadequacies, Wright suggests an inclusive online archive in the form of "folkonomy. . . a new phenomenon of users labeling or tagging websites and photos with their own words."[38] She states, "using an inclusive archive in relation to tattoo records will also allow a more holistic view of records and tattoos."[39]

By definition, folkonomy is "a classification system derived from user-generated electronic tags or keywords that annotate and describe online content."[40] A folkonomistic archival system would help alleviate the 'repressive' quality of historical photographs identified by Sekula, which segregates and classifies tattooed bodies, and would also work to subvert the 'objective' position of the archive. Wright further suggests that a folkonomistic archive might "allow cultural structures and rituals to be described... [to] better understand the context in which the tattoo was created." Indeed, in summation of her argument she asserts, "conventional archival arrangement and description may not be sufficient for some types of records" and "tattoos are always mediated in some way... other techniques should be used to allow greater understanding of creation, context and surrounding rituals and how they function as a form of record keeping."[41] This argument is also supported by Calano, who, in reference to the Kalinga batek, states that it is "important to take into account the rituals associated with practice of tattooing" and consider the identity-making capacity of tattooing.[42] Again, Calano cites Derrida, who "sees the archive making process coupled with 'the function of unification, of identification, of classification.'"[43] Another significant issue in relation to discussions and theories on tattoos is gender. Historically, the tattooed bodies discussed by Loos, Lombroso, and others in the late nineteenth century were condemned as "feminine, primitive and criminal."[44] These qualities perpetuated the demonizing discourses on non-Western cultures, while simultaneously encouraging a view of women, particularly tattooed women, as primitive and sexually promiscuous. These systems of thought are explained in relation to the Foucauldian concept of biopower; the use of power through various institutions by the modern nation state to control its citizens' bodies.[45] In *In The Flesh*, Pitts states, "the body is positioned in multiple ways... a site for establishing identity that is read by the self and others... [and] a space of social control and social investment."[46] She pursues a post-essen-

tialist framework that looks beyond the socially prescribed 'natural' characteristics of gender, sex or race and acknowledges the body as being shaped "by and through cultural practices."[47] Using this definition, it can be argued that Bertillon was also subscribing to a post-essentialist view in his argument against persecuting the body of an individual based on their outward appearance.[48] Pitts' discussion of body projects, such as tattoos, piercing, and scarification, addresses the naturalized societal perspectives on bodies and identity. She posits:

When bodies are understood as social and political, as inscribed by and lived within power relations... anomalous body modifications do not appear as inherently unnatural or pathological...[49]

Positioning the notion of a politicized body as also being an *archival* body suggests that there are no 'natural' sites of documentation, just as there may be no 'natural' archive, exempt from bias and objectivity. Gender theorist Judith Butler, in reference to body projects as a site of expression argues that these acts are "not necessarily wilful, conscious or chosen."[50] This further articulates the politicization of the body, and how the actions of individuals may occur only as a reaction to their social and cultural surroundings and influences. With this statement, Butler reveals that all actions and choices made to or by the body are politically inflicted and mediated. Pitts also proposes a post-structuralist view, citing Foucault on the nature of bodies and power: The selves and bodies we construct in body projects are not 'outside of power', but saturated with it."[51] In relation to gender, this statement suggests that there is no 'natural' state of gender presentation or identification and that tattooing, like other body projects (i.e., piercing, scarification) is subjective and does not illustrate a clear demarcation between genders. As such, the wearing or possessing of tattoos is not an indication of femininity or masculinity, but of "how individuals and groups negotiate relationships between identity, culture, and their own bodies."[52]

In conjunction with the societal and cultural influences imposed on individuals, scholar Mary Kosut applies a Bourdieusian perspective to analyze the transformation of the valuation of tattoos within the tattoo community. She states that, much like the external influence of social forces, the "artification" of tattooing "demonstrates how individual actors and institutional shifts have an impact on the construction of aesthetic categories."[53] Increasingly, tattooists are often academically educated as fine artists before pursuing a career in tattooing. The "deliberate self-positioning of tattooists as tattoo artists, coupled with the increase in academy-trained artists within the tattoo profession, reinforces the increasingly commonplace idea that some tattoos are indeed art, rather than craft or commonplace bodily decoration."[54] This follows what Kosut explains is a Bourdieusian aesthetic of the cultural 'fields' of production, which is described as being "conditioned by both class relationships and legitimating ideologies which are created within a particular field."[55] This shift in artistic value has seen tattoo artists using archival formats of photographic documentation to record their tattooed artwork. For example, tattoo artist Alison Woodward and her colleagues at The FALL Tattooing and Artist's Gallery in Vancouver each have an artist portfolio containing "disembodied" images of their tattoos. The images are referential in both style and scale to early ethnographic photography taken of individuals in the South Pacific by Western explorers such as Captain Cook. The significant difference in Woodward and other tattoo artists' portfolios is the intention to demonstrate their skills as tattooists and not to dismember or decontextualize tattooed bodies for the sake of an ethnographic inquiry. When a specific image is cropped or scaled to isolate the tattoo, the purpose is to show the detail of the artwork itself. The individual's identity is not diminished for the sake of promoting the art. Many tattoo patrons are happy to be featured in an artist's portfolio, knowing their piece is contributing to the marketing of their artist's work.

Ethnographic photography historical-

ly established a racialized Western perspective, particularly where the subjects were of non-Western origin.[56] While early Western photography focused on documenting tattooed bodies, and the 'evidence' of deviancy they supposedly provided, numerous non-Western societies utilized the very practice of tattooing to record and archive their social and cultural experiences.[57] These practices have redefined the function of tattoos as symbols of identification; what were historically used to classify persons of supposed criminal intent have now expanded to include a morphing art culture of self-expression and artistic talent.[58] The current use of photographic archival practices by Western tattoo artists demonstrates an amalgamation of both Western techniques and non-Western ritualistic intentions. This practice is not limited to the connection between Western and non-Western cultures, as the tattoo community has grown into a global phenomenon, with photographic technology bridging cultural and geographic divides. Notably, books on photography and tattooing have become popular resources to view tattooed bodies, such as *London Tattoos* by Alex MacNaughton. Such books allow the reader to view the wearer's tattoos, and hear the motivations, symbolisms, and purposes behind their ink. This technique of documentation incorporates the identity of the tattooed person, unlike the ethnographic tendency to separate the tattoo from its context on the wearer's body.[59]

The function of the archive and its relation to tattooing has transformed over the course of the twentieth century. Today, tattoo artists are able to archive their art through photography and their human canvases now act as living advertisements for their art. The use of photographic archival practices has thusly evolved with and throughout tattooing, and in turn has shifted its function as a tool for documentation. It is of continued importance to consider tattoos within their respective cultural and historical contexts and to incorporate intrinsic definitions and individual significances into their analysis and discussion. Moreover, tattoo culture does not exist within a definitive framework, and it continues to hold a morphing and often controversial position within social and political fields.

Notes:

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32. Calano "Archiving bodies: Kalinga batek and the im/possibility of an archive," 108.
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35. See Wright, "Recording 'a very particular Custom': tattoos and the archive," 101.
36. Ibid., 103-105.
37. Ibid., 105.
38. Ibid., 106.
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Photographs taken by author, November 2014.

Figure 1. UBC Museum of Anthropology shop entrance

Figure 2. UBC Museum of Anthropology, 'Mexico' Shelf

Figure 3. *Spruce Root Basket*, Rena Point Bolton, Museum of Anthropology

Figure 4. *Haida Hummingbird Magnet*, Museum of Anthropology

Figure 5. *Frog*, Terry Starr, Museum of Anthropology

Figure 6. *Bath Toys*, Museum of Anthropology

Figure 7. Silver and 24k Gold Sun Plates, Harold Alfred, Museum of Anthropology

Figure 8. *Seachange Smoked Salmon Pâté*, Front, UBC Bookstore

Figure 9. *Wild Coast Cooking Mitt, Raven*, UBC Bookstore

Figure 10, *Haida Copper Shield Charm Bracelet*, Museum of Anthropology

Displays of Northwest Coast Art: Imagined Spaces of Unity and Diversity in the UBC Bookstore and the Museum of Anthropology (MOA) Shop

By: Irene Choi

The University of British Columbia (UBC) holds a unique position as an academic institution and diverse community built on traditional First Nations' Musqueam territory.[1] As a public research university, UBC supports many fields of study and research and acknowledges the diversity of cultures and people they represent. Such attempts to acknowledge diversity and openness can be found in many buildings and spaces within the UBC campus. The Walter C. Koerner library, located on the Main Mall, is one example of how the campus emphasizes diversity, accessibility, and equality. The building's rusticated stone base — with its undecorated façade that speaks to frankness and openness — could be said to quote Roman Republican architecture and its public quality. Another example is the First Nations House of Learning, which provides academic and community support for the study of Indigenous cultures. It contains a great Longhouse that holds various community events with four carved, wooden welcome posts by different Northwest Coast artists. Such buildings and spaces within the UBC campus celebrate openness and diversity by allowing diverse, open conversations to occur throughout these built environments.

The campus spaces I will focus on in discussing diversity and accessibility are ones that also hold another level of social interaction — a commercial one. The UBC bookstore and the Museum of Anthropology gift shop (MOA Shop) are the main focus of this paper, and they demonstrate how the commercial availability of Northwest Coast art is used by UBC as part of a discourse on diversity. This paper will then explore how the visual availability of Northwest Coast art or pieces through various display methods — display windows and tables — works to blur the relation between art and commodity, thus contributing to the idea of harmony and diversity that UBC aims to achieve. Following my analysis of the visual accessibility of Northwest Coast art or objects in both sites — the UBC bookstore and MOA Shop — I will focus on how such commercial display methods, solely constructed to present Northwest Coast imagery as commodity, create an imagined space of harmony, unity, and connection to the Northwest Coast culture at UBC.

When entering the bookstore or MOA Shop during the holiday season, one is faced with a pleasurable excess of things displayed within the overall festive atmosphere of holiday decoration (Fig. 1). The objects for sale are familiar and mundane: clothes, coasters, pencil cases, Christmas decorations, key holders, rain boots, and tumblers all nicely displayed on tables or in rectangular glass display cases. Within these displays, there are also different sections categorized according to the objects' nature (i.e., coffee mugs are groups with other coffee mugs at the MOA Shop) or even according to certain cultural styles. In both the MOA Shop and the UBC bookstore, objects of Northwest Coast art and imagery are kept together with other souvenirs that are considered typically Canadian (i.e., maple syrup in the bookstore). In the MOA Shop, the displays of Northwest Coast art and imagery are both similar and different from those of the bookstore in that they are categorized in terms of culturally distinct styles. For example, a section of a display shelf at the MOA Shop contains an array of merchandise ranging from T-shirts to coin purses with painted skeleton decorations and a book on Mexico (Fig. 2), explicitly stating its origins, while another display section contains a hanging scroll of a painted Buddha and other Chinese paintings; thereby, clearly dividing each display into cultural sections. The MOA Shop also

houses glass display cases containing specific Northwest Coast objects listed with a heavy price tag next to them, separating them from the rest of the objects that share Northwest Coast imagery. One of these cases contains Stó:lo artist and craftswoman Rena Point Bolton's *Spruce Root Basket* (Fig. 3) with a five thousand dollar price tag beside it. Apart from the artwork of Rena Point Bolton, the objects displayed in the glass display boxes are not necessarily Northwest Coast art but rather (commoditized) objects that carry Northwest Coast imagery; imagery that still offer the of "aura" of artwork.[2] Across from the glass case with Rena Point Bolton's Spruce Root Basket stands a display rack with small purchasable goods like refrigerator magnets with Northwest Coast imagery. The refrigerator magnet with a Haida Hummingbird on display (Fig. 4) is perceived as being somehow less important or valuable to the viewer when juxtaposed with the Frog serving spoon inside a glass box (Fig. 5). While the Hummingbird refrigerator magnet is displayed with other small merchandise, within the viewer's reach, the glistening Frog serving spoon encased in a glass display, and is endowed with a sense of greater importance, as the viewer can see it but not touch it. The displays at MOA Shop therefore create a hierarchy of objects within the sphere of Northwest Coast art.

Although the visual element as significant quality of art is prominent in Northwest Coast objects sold in both the bookstore and MOA Shop, and there are indeed Northwest Coast "art" objects such as carved miniature totem poles, wooden plaques, and masks, it is difficult to say that these pieces are Northwest Coast art. In fact, the term "art" is problematic when encountering Northwest Coast pieces and images. As artist and UBC visual art professor Dana Claxton notes, the objects that hold Northwest Coast imagery "[are] not danced, sounded, or used in any capacity according to the original intentions of the belonging,"[3] and they lose their essences when turned into artwork.[4] This is the starting point for this paper's discussion of the consumption of Northwest Coast objects that blur the boundary between art and commodity. In the course of this paper, I will argue that the Northwest Coast designs readily available at the UBC bookstore and MOA Shop are art because these objects, "such as drum/rattle/mask or installation, become art when the reception is outside the original intention of cultural or ceremonial use."[5]

Since the objects sold are not meant to be "danced, sounded, or used" in any original cultural or ceremonial use, but purchased by an unspecific consumer, they turn into works of art with quantifiable aesthetic value. These Northwest Coast works are both easily available, inexpensive, and mass-produced, such as the Tshimsian Killer whale bath toy (Fig. 6) and limited and expensive, such as the Frog serving spoon by Tsimshian artist Terry Starr (Fig. 5) or the silver and gold Sun plate by Kwakwaka'wakw artist Harold Alfred (Fig. 7). These types of Northwest Coast art are nonetheless actively engaged with the commercial. Though they are acting as commodities, there is still a sense that some of the Northwest Coast works displayed are more important or more valuable than others due not only to their quantity and mass-produced quality, but also in how they are displayed. Certainly, the bath toys with Northwest Coast images on them are more easily accessible to the consumer than Alfred's Sun plate. It could be partly due to the "situations in which the product of mechanical reproduction... [provide] always depreciated quality of [the artwork's] presence"[6] that the bath toy strikes as an artificial,[7] inexpensive technical reproduction devoid of authenticity to the viewer. On the other hand, Alfred's Sun bowl appears to be more important than the Killer whale bath toy with its "whole sphere of authenticity"[8] that seems to avoid "technical-reproducibility."[9]

However, there is another dimension of visual display that affects the reception of the Northwest Coast artworks in the bookstore and MOA Shop. Particularly in the MOA Shop, the

glass display windows work to accentuate the commodification and desirability of Northwest Coast art. Although the Tsimshian bath toys on the display table all equally invite the visitor to consume, the commodification of the Sun bowl is achieved differently, through its display under lights in an important-looking, tightly sealed glass box. Charles Baudelaire explains the pleasure of looking through the window from the outside:

He who looks from the outside through a window open never sees as much as he looks through a window closed. No deeper, more fertile, more obscure, more dazzling object exists than a window lit by a candle. What you can see in sunlight is always less interesting that what transpires behind a windowpane. Life lives, life dreams, life suffers in the black or luminous hole.[10]

Walter Benjamin also notes the entertainment value of display and exhibition of a commodity. He observes:

The world exhibitions glorified the exchange-value of commodities. They created a framework in which their use-value receded into the background. They opened up a phantasmagoria into which people entered in order to be distracted. The entertainment industry made that easier for them by lifting them to the level of the commodity. They yielded to its manipulations while savoring their alienation from themselves and from others.[11]

The display of commodities under glass, so that they can be seen but not be touched therefore creates a pleasant curiosity and desire to consume, as this display "framework" implies that its contents are of greater value. Therefore the acquisition of such a valuable commodity — with its seemingly "authentic" aura of art — would provide the consumer with a pleasure or sense of superiority, reinforcing their desire to consume. This specific display of Northwest Coast art thus shapes the visibility, viewing experience, and perceived value of the objects presented. Another way in which the consumption of goods provides customer satisfaction is that it defines the identity of the buyer. Consumption of certain objects builds identity; and desire is an investment of meaning in things in a process of building the self.[12] In the context of the bookstore and MOA Shop as sites of Northwest Coast art, consumption is specific in building the buyer's identity.

The UBC bookstore carries a diverse abundance of consumable goods ranging from clothes to water bottles, key chains, refrigerator magnets, and coffee mugs that all bear a prominent 'UBC' logo. The objects are commodities that allow the consumer access to an identity; in this case, the identity and idea of UBC. Northwest Coast art is similarly displayed to associate its identity with that of UBC. Along with various items of Northwest Coast art, a cedar box containing smoked salmon pâté with a salmon design by Haida artist Don Yeomans (Fig. 8) and oven gloves with raven designs (Fig. 9) are displayed within the same space as all other available goods bearing the 'UBC' logo. Such objects of Northwest Coast design share a warm, welcoming aspect for a visitor or consumer: the cooking gloves, pâté (food), blankets, coffee mugs for hot drinks, and puppet toys are all associated with warmth and hospitality. The Northwest Coast art pieces are also carefully chosen to fit into the discourse of welcoming 'openness' that UBC merchandise aims to portray. The salmon design by Don Yeomans for the salmon pâté box shows two salmon, one female and one male, with their tail fins conjoined to hold their young in the center. The balanced composition and idea of unity seen here provides the buyer with a sense of pleasure and acceptance, allowing them to feel as though they are participating in this unity and harmony when purchasing the good.[13] The bookstore thus provides a very careful selection of Northwest Coast art to work in tandem with other merchandise with UBC logos to give the buyer of Northwest Coast art a sense

of harmony, hospitality, belonging, and even diversity.

The MOA Shop works in similar way but contextualizes Northwest Coast art not only within UBC but also within the anthropological study of different cultures. Northwest Coast art here is not only part of UBC but also part of the cultural diversity that the MOA stands for.[14] Like in the UBC bookstore, the Northwest Coast art here is also displayed as part of a larger discourse of diversity, harmony, and hospitality with other objects of different cultures. Goods and artwork representing various cultures such as those of Chile, China, Tibet, and many Northwest Coast peoples all come together under the term "anthropology." It is worth noting that goods representing Western culture are omitted from the collection; thereby, standing for something diverse but also something that is non-Western, something that needs to be bluntly called "anthropological."[15] The bookstore and MOA Shop convey a sense of imagined unity and diversity through their respective visual selections of Northwest Coast art. Returning to the glass window containers that engineer certain consumer experiences, the display of Northwest Coast art in this way also works to support the concept of UBC as a space of harmony and diversity. An art critic Ralf Christofori noted:

If you stand in front of the shop window long enough you realize that the seemingly opposite images of culture and counter-culture, of system and revolt, of social conditioning and refusal to conform are in fact pursuing one and the same aim. They both intend to use every means at their disposal to create an identity and gain the broadest possible collective base.[16]

By putting objects made by different peoples — Kwakwaka'wakw, Tshimsian, and Haida (Fig. 10) — under the label of "Northwest Coast" together in the same glass case with similar price tags, the glass display window constructs another imagined identity of harmonious, unified, and silenced diversity of Northwest Coast art.

Both the bookstore and MOA Shop sit on traditional First Nations' Musqueam territory and are thereby products of invaded space. Trying to reconcile with the past, they are in many ways contributing to the whole UBC community in their efforts to promote awareness of the diversity, openness, and flourishing of different cultures through their offering of Northwest Coast art for sale. Although a great deal is lost when Northwest Coast cultures and pieces are turned into commoditized art, the Northwest Coast community cannot ignore the commercial benefit of their traditional motifs and imageries on the objects sold at the bookstore and MOA Shop.[17] Kwakwaka'wakw artist Ellen Neel recognizes the reproduction of Northwest Coast designs for commercial uses and asks her people to:

be allowed new and modern techniques... new and modern tools... new and modern materials without being accused of not being true to their culture and apply this art to everyday living by using it to stunning effect on tapestry, textiles, sportswear and in jewelry as well as pieces of furniture, public buildings, large restaurants and halls.[18]

The Northwest Coast art in both locations is commoditized and as such, it shapes the identity of UBC as well as those of viewers and buyers. However, it is important to remember the limits of creating (or perceiving) an identity or message of harmonious diversity and unity through certain displays of visual material. Like the physical characteristics of glass — transparent yet reflective, visible yet disconnected — the UBC bookstore and the MOA Shop exercise power over the visitor or consumer by including and excluding certain Northwest Coast art at the same time through specific display choices; they provide a model of idealized diversity and unity but with inherent shortcomings.

Japan's Shifting National Identity: Shōmei Tōmatsu's Postwar Photography

By: Jacqueline Hunter

After the world saw the first atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August of 1945, any return to a semblance of normalcy seemed impossible. The grief over the colossal loss of life as well as the profoundly changed nature of Japanese society at large left the country reeling from the shock of this unprecedented conflict for generations to come. While the United States (US) Occupation officially came to an end in 1952, the presence of American forces remained a major influence on the social landscape into the 1970s – and indeed, it is still a point of contention today. Scholars have noted the "abnormal interlude of silence" that characterized Japanese postwar society in the decades that followed the atom bomb.[1] The Japanese government as well as US occupying forces issued various measures of censorship and control to restrict representations of war. The effort made by both Japan and the US to prevent the history of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from entering pervasive popular discourse, that is, to forge an officially sanctioned memory, often left experiences of authentic human tragedy isolated and mute.[2] For renowned Japanese photographer, Shōmei Tōmatsu, the recovery of memory within the transience of postwar society proved to be a captivating subject. Tōmatsu's desire to photograph US military bases stationed in Japan and the gritty entertainment districts that surrounded them was part of a larger project to capture the shifting national identity of Japan before its evidential overthrow and transformation.[3] Published sporadically between their conception in 1958 and 2014 when they were ultimately published as a series, Tōmatsu's series of photographs titled *Chewing Gum and Chocolate* encompassed the startling and complex changes he observed in Japanese culture.[4] He originally titled the series *Occupation*, but re-titled it *Chewing Gum and Chocolate* to reflect the treats handed out to Japanese children by American soldiers – "sugary and addictive, but ultimately lacking in nutritional value."[5] Tōmatsu photographs specific sites and scenes, signifiers of war and American presence such as off-duty naval officers, seemingly carefree interracial children and dizzying neon signboards that stand unobtrusively against a rapidly expanding and Westernized Japan. His photographs fix a memory of the past in the dialectic space of historical discourse. These images act as disjointed perceptions and discomforting realizations that frame questions of the American invasion within the gradual shifts of Japanese culture over time. This essay, therefore, will examine the use of Shōmei Tōmatsu's photography as a mediator in the seismic mutations of Japanese postwar society. It will be argued that Tōmatsu's photographs act as a fragment, a fissure against a reified, officially sanctioned historical narrative. This essay will focus in particular on Tōmatsu's *Untitled* (Yokosuka) 1959, from his larger *Chewing Gum and Chocolate* series, to reflect on the nuclear defeat and atomized history of this early postwar era.

As the German philosopher and sociologist Theodor Adorno once wrote: "to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric."[6] The same could be said of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the midst of psychological aftermath and trauma, how do representations of the world's most unimaginable atrocities reveal an understanding of history that allows one to conceptualize it within the present?[7] Adorno's article, "What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?" originally given as a lecture in 1959, raises issues of surviving fascist tendencies, collective guilt and the potential of psychoanalytic re-education.[8] What Adorno observed in the period following the Nazi occupation was that people moved past the loss rather quickly, leading to the "persistence of a weakened memory."[9] Similarly, following the atom bomb and the country's military defeat, Japan sought to both forget and transcend the past, aligning with the democratic and capitalistic

ideals of the Western occupiers in an unexpected embrace. Both the paralyzing and alluring effects of American consumerist culture wiped out many forms of traditional Japanese culture. The weakened memory and partial acknowledgment of wrong-doing, according to Adorno, reinforces the pathological apparatuses and structural frameworks that underpin any oppressive regime.[10] With this, *working upon*, rather than *working through*, becomes the only means possible to reevaluate the processes by which history is sustained.[11] By the same token, art historian and feminist theorist Rosalyn Deutsche refers to this strategy as a "warlike anti-war criticism."[12] In her study of three separate politically engaged video projects centered on Hiroshima, she characterizes the type of vision necessary to triumph over the latent apathy of historical disaster.[13] She makes a claim against the melancholic attitude that all too often accompanies representations of the most horrific episodes of the past.[14] Deutsche writes that "the past isn't simply there to be recovered; past events and actions are what will have happened as history mutates."[15] As such, Tōmatsu captured a more personal and ambiguous vision of Japan that catches the tense and unsettled spirit of the postwar psyche. Choosing fragments of life that describe a sense of alienation, excitement and neuroses, his images pose questions about the nature of history and the role of the individual in recording and responding to the effects of conflict. His deep and spirited images not only reflect on the past, but also remind viewers of the ongoing effects on Japan's postwar generation. The viewer thus discovers different ways of looking backwards through Tōmatsu's own alternative vision of history.

Like most of his generation, Tōmatsu's coming of age was subject to American democratization and foreign military occupation. His journey from childhood to adulthood revolved around the legacy of the August 1945 bombings, with a US naval base stationed a few steps away from his front door.[16] In his book, *Traces* (1999), he writes: "the mountain of supplies behind the forces and barbed wire that surrounded the American base made it appear to be heaven in our eyes, while this side of the fence was a hell of suffering, poverty and hunger."[17] Despite this devastating upheaval, a wounded Japan seemingly embraced the distinctly foreign culture with apparent ease and "historical amnesia."[18] Cultural anthropologist Lisa Yoneyama argues that the recollection of Hiroshima and Nagasaki went through different processes of renewal, a way of life prescribed by ambivalence and urban psychosis.[19] She asks how "acts of remembering can fill the void of knowledge without reestablishing yet another regime of totality, stability and confidence?"[20] Shomei Tōmatsu attempts to resolve this by portraying the complicated and ambiguous atmosphere created in the clashes between traditional Japanese conventions and Western modernity. In effect, the repressed trauma of the nuclear attack fuels the tension implied in Tōmatsu's photographs. His image, *Untitled* (Yokosuka) 1959, creates a visual narrative interwoven within the composition of layered surfaces. The image captures the viewer's attention immediately, while provoking the search for further contextual depth below the image's surface. A deeper examination uncovers layers of meaning that intrigue and unsettle, taking the viewer into an unfamiliar terrain that moves far beyond the parameters of reportage. The photograph reveals a biracial Japanese child curiously blowing into what appears to be a speckled chewing gum bubble in the foreground of a US naval base in Yokoshuka, Japan.[21] Partially filtered through the double exposure of the translucent bubble, the scene offers a glance into the grit and seediness of the American invasion.[22] The grainy quality of Tōmatsu's image highlights the electric tension of military base life. Carefully framed, the viewer's eye is guided by the perfect geometric curve of the bubble, drawing attention to an African American naval officer seen carousing in the distant horizon of eclectic Japanese and English signage. American troops were well known for tossing sticks of chewing gum to starving Japanese children or buying favours of local women

with a pair of nylon stockings or a Kit Kat bar.[23] It is, in accordance with Yoneyama, an aesthetic that "dislodges the conventional forms of Hiroshima narratives... and explores alternative historical trajectories that were never fully realized."[24] The very title of the photographic series itself, "Chewing Gum and Chocolate," alludes to the scope of Western expansion – or as Tomatsu phrases it, the "Coca-Colonization"[25] of Japan. The American military presence helped shape a new, consumer-driven nation, fueled by the promise of democracy and a competitive economy. Mark Holborn, noted editor, writer and publisher, investigates the ambiguity of Americanization within Tomatsu's photography in his book on Japan's postwar creative climate, titled *Black Sun: The Eyes of Four*. He focuses particularly on the "black serviceman,"[26] who he argues, "carried the weight of a culturally displaced culture."[27] The alien-presence of the lone soldier headed in the direction of the sleazy bar signs that form the backdrop of the photograph intrigues and unsettles the viewer. He stands tall, enduring against his jittery yet languid surroundings. Like the biracial child in the foreground, he leaves a void for the viewer to participate in, creating a desire to find and initiate a questioning of its source. Yet both figures are presented without any sort of resolution or redemption. At a moment when traditional Japanese life had largely dissolved in the face of Western expansion, this image of disjointed cultural identities is anxiety inducing. Despite the amalgamation of the two cultures and the estimated 100,000 mixed-race children born by 1952, postwar Japan largely banished any evidence of interracial relations from public record.[28] In fact, biracial children were often considered stateless as paternal blood determined Japanese citizenship until 1985.[29] The bracketing of difference in Tomatsu's image thus undermines the supposed homogeneity of postwar Japan. The plurality of participants, who appear precisely as different from each other, stirs the viewer to identify the significance of their inter-relationship. This image therefore carries with it a subtle, yet discomforting undertone that signals the uneasy inevitability of the global turn.[30] The interplay between the implied anti-American rationale with the underlying desire for hope and recovery complicates the photograph's visual acknowledgment.

It is difficult to ignore the almost neo-Dadaist impulse that resonates within the temporal unfolding of the photograph. The piecing together of discontinuous forms and figures create a lapse or "slippage"[31] within the viewer's visual perception, allowing for a moment of critical self-reflection. Indeed, a surreal juxtaposition lies beneath the surface of Tōmatsu's image that resists a simply documentarian intention.[32] Tōmatsu's imagery was published in numerous publications in Japanese catalogues and photo-journals from the 1950s and into the 1970s. Yet he and others continued to re-edit, re-sequence and re-title parts of his work in different contexts in the years following their original publication, making his photographs become more complex and considered with time. As Japanese scholar and cinematic thinker Akira Lippit writes, "there can be no authentic photography of the atomic war because the bombings were themselves a form of total photography that exceeded the economies of representation."[33] Instead, only traces, shadows and remnants that bear witness to the intangibility of past catastrophe, provide an archive of what has taken place. As art historian and critic Hal Foster famously observed, "artists are often drawn to unfulfilled beginnings and incomplete projects."[34] The ongoing reformulation of history, Foster argues, "serves as found arks of lost moments in which the here-and-now of the history functions as a possible portal between the unfinished past and a reopened future."[35] Tomatsu's approach hovers between pure description and an expressionistic use of chaotic overlay and carefully embedded symbolism. These remnants capture the gaze of the viewer and stimulate a questioning of historical knowledge, creating an awareness of the structural forces that shape the way the past is perceived and allow for changing perspectives

in the present.[36]

By making multiple fragments of Hiroshima historical discourse visible and accessible, Tōmatsu illustrates a memory that is heterogeneous, disoriented and incomplete. It implicates the spectator as a witness, making, in the words of Rosalyn Deustche, "distant viewers into vicarious victims."[37] The disarticulation between the myriad of advertising logos, military personnel and childlike innocence index the metamorphosis of Tōmatu's image and illuminate the mediated and constructed nature of history. There exists a meticulous eloquence in the way he frames these chance encounters within the composition of the photograph. Here, the young girl, whose racial ambiguity might signal a compromise of global flows, becomes a narrator of history.[38] The reflection of her chewing gum bubble literally envelops the only Japanese sign seen in the far distance, perhaps providing a "looking glass" into the last vestiges of a once unadulterated society.[39]

Americanization, as art historian Ian Jeffrey argues, "meant a new style, not only characterized by gigantic, ill-shaped letters, haphazardly displayed, but also indicating a new mode of being."[40] All gesture and representation would inexorably be linked with a new register of advertising, publicity and spectacle culture.[41] In the midst of rapid urbanization and industrialization, Japan's identity crisis was compounded by the great incentives that came with the growing currents of contemporary international culture.[42] Perhaps Tōmatsu's photograph could be understood as a paradoxical coexistence, one where peace is achieved through the integration of both nations. Conversely, this could imply the subjugation of Japan at the hands of a Western elite, mourning the loss of its esoteric condition in the process. Nonetheless, the contradictions that arise in this photograph are likely to refer to incomprehensibility of Japan's "coming to terms"[43] with its postwar recovery. The purity of the innocent child humanizes the consolidation of the two cultures and allows for the tensions of this early postwar period to rise to the surface. Spectators are made to witness the past, as it is literally unfolding in front of them, collapsing the assumed distinction between lived memory and official historical discourse to an even greater degree. In effect, Tōmatsu's image works against, in the words of Adorno, "a forgetfulness that all too easily goes along with what justifies what is forgotten."[44]

This essay has sought, in part, to examine the dialectical nexus that stands in between history and memory in Shōmei Tōmatsu's *Untitled* (Yokosuka) 1959. It has attempted to argue that Tōmatsu's photography is not reducible to a reified totality, but instead offers a complicated and nuanced view of Japan at the crux of transition. Tōmatsu contemplates the erosion of memory and the structure of aesthetic production by questioning the ambiguity and indifference that remains at the very core of historical understanding of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. His images thereby act as a source of irrefutable indexicality that increases the scope of historical narrative. The tension in his imagery bears witness to the lives of those who were obliterated by the atom bomb, those who survived, and those who continue to evolve. Still, Tōmatsu is not the first to declare this conflict in the recuperation of memory and his means to resolve it should be thought of within a larger context of contemporary visual expression. Yet his image combines social documentary with a search for personal identity. The results remain blurred and visceral, imbued with all the contradictions he felt about the seismic impact of the American victory and occupation. As such, he creates an arena for critical rethinking by forcing his audience to recognize a history that extends beyond his photographs.

Notes:

1. Michael J. Hogan, *Hiroshima in History and*

Memory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 127.
2. Ibid., 137.
3. Leo Rubinfien, Shōmei Tōmatsu, Sandra S. Philips and John Dower, "Contested Ground: Tōmatsu and the Search for Identity in Postwar Japan," in *Shomei Tomatsu: Skin of the Nation* (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in association with Yale University Press, 2004), 65.
4. Ibid.
5. John Junkerman, Leo Rubinfien, *Shomei Tomatsu: Chewing Gum and Chocolate* (New York: Aperture, 2014), iv
6. Theodor Adorno, Prisms 1st ed (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), 34.
7. Theodor Adorno, "What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?" in *Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective* (Indiana UP, 1986), 114.
8. Ibid., 114-119.
9. Ibid., 117.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., 128.
12. Rosalyn Deutsche, *Hiroshima After Iraq: Three Studies in Art and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 5.
13. Ibid., 64.
14. Ibid., 7.
15. Ibid., 22.
16. Mark Holborn, "Nippon," in *Black Sun: The Eyes of Four: Roots and Innovation in Japanese Photography* (New York: Aperture, 1986), 35.
17. Shōmei Tōmatsu, *Traces: 50 years of Tōmatsu's Works* (Tokyo: Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, 1999), 183-187.
18. Lisa Yoneyama, "Introduction," in *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space and the Dialectics of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 15.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., 5.
21. Leo Rubinfien, Shōmei Tōmatsu, Sandra S. Philips and John Dower, 67.
22. Ibid., 66.
23. Leo Rubinfien, Shōmei Tōmatsu, Sandra S. Philips and John Dower, 65.
24. Lisa Yoneyama, "Part Two: Storytellers," in *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space and the Dialectics of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 128 – 133.
25. John Junkerman and Leo Rubinfien, 134.
26. Mark Holborn, 36.
27. Ibid., 37.
28. Leo Rubinfien, Shomei Tomatsu, Sandra S. Philips and John Dower, 66.
29. Sarah Kovner, *Occupying Power: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Postwar Japan* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2012), 69.
30. Ibid.
31. Lisa Yoneyama, "Introduction," 33.
32. Mark Holborn, 37.
33. Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Atomic Light* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 95.
34. Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse," in *October* 110 (2004), 5.
35. Ibid.
36. Lisa Yoneyama, "Introduction," 33.
37. Rosalyn Deustche, 46.
38. Jeremy Chang,"Exhibit :: Disasters and Rebuilding in Japan: Perspectives and Testimonies from the Tri-Co Collection," last modified October 14, 2012, http://www.swarthmore.edu/library/exhibitions/japan/gallery/tomatsu.php
39. Leo Rubinfien, Shōmei Tōmatsu, Sandra S. Philips and John Dower, 66.
40. Ian Jeffrey, *Shōmei Tōmatsu* (London: Phaidon, 2001), 21.
41. Ibid.
42. Mark Holborn, 8.
43. Theodor Adorno, "What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?" 115.
44. Ibid., 123.

Reclaiming Fragmentation: the Double Negative of Modernity in Baudelaire, Benjamin and Eliot

By: Emma Potter

The blow-flies were buzzing round that putrid belly,
From which came forth black battalions
Of maggots, which oozed out like a heavy liquid
All along those living tatters.
All this was descending and rising like a wave,
Or poured out with a crackling sound;
One would have said the body, swollen with a vague breath,
Lived by multiplication.
And this world gave forth singular music,
Like running water or the wind,
Or the grain that winnowers with a rhythmic motion
Shake in their winnowing baskets.
The forms disappeared and were no more than a dream,
A sketch that slowly falls
Upon the forgotten canvas, that the artist
Completes from memory alone.[1]

"All that is solid melts into air," said Marx of modernity.[2] As Marx's writings show, modernity has famously been characterized by a sense of disintegration and fragmentation. This paper will use the *passages couverts* — the Paris Arcades — as an aesthetic metaphor for the changes wrought, both physically and psychologically, by modernity's explosive arrival.

Despite being built in the 1920s-40s, to our eyes, the Paris Arcades are still a spectacular sight. Yet it is impossible for a contemporary viewer to understand just how innovative these buildings were for their time without a certain amount of context. Prior to the nineteenth century, most buildings communicated a sense of solidity, heaviness, and darkness. Constructing a building of stone or wood involves the sculpting of mass: the physicality of the building is measured, decorated and shaped in relation to the amount of light that is let in — light being the exception in these dark, solid spaces. However, the availability of new technologies in the nineteenth century provided architects with an entirely new palette of materials. In Paris, the most popular new materials were glass and iron. The use of compressed air in glassmaking meant that the size and clarity of glass was no longer limited to the power and cadence of the human lung.[3] Because of this, glass — which was previously an artisanal item, used only in small quantities and sizes — could now be used in great swathes. Similarly, steam power allowed for cast iron to be produced more quickly, more cheaply, and in large enough quantities that it could be used as a primary building material rather than in a limited, decorative role. The sheer power of these materials — iron being forty times the strength of stone and ten times the strength of wood, despite being much more condensed and therefore appearing much lighter than both — forced people to reappraise their conceptions of strength and mass. Buildings like the Paris Arcades or the Crystal Palace, which let in an abundance of light through their pane glass walls, sculpted not mass, but light. In these new buildings, the traditional relations of mass in space were inverted — it was now mass, rather than light, that was the exception. The goal of the architect became how to sculpt light in the absence of mass:[4] "All that is solid melts into air..."

Just as the aesthetics of the city were becoming lighter and more ephemeral, the traditions within society were also quickly becoming "antiquated before they [could] ossify".[5] In particular, the role of the home in society was now less and less essential. Citizens became consumers who ventured outside of the home to purchase entertainment. A few decades prior, it would have been unusual to see any family — particularly a middle class family — eating in a restaurant. In

the nineteenth century, however, the practice of eating, drinking, visiting, and spectating outside of the home became normative, essential to city life. Many public spaces blossomed at this time: theatres, cabarets, department stores, shopping arcades, exhibitions, museums, and the boulevards of Paris themselves were important spaces of entertainment that reached a wider audience than ever. These spaces which were typically open to every social class allowed for a democratic mixing of classes never before seen in such frequency and size. The amount of cheap, mass-manufactured goods made available by industry — clothing, for example, which previously would have been tailor-made — ensured that creating an accurate *petit bourgeois* costume would be a cinch. It became more and more difficult to tell which class one originally 'belonged' to. The entertainment value of these social spaces became predicated on the idea of 'reading' the class and social type of others based on miniscule differences in their clothing and behaviors; it is no surprise that the detective novel became very popular in this era. This sort of real-life masquerade was once a form of entertainment that was confined to the baroque *fêtes* of aristocrats; yet in the nineteenth century, the city became a never-ending show of mass-entertainment: all of social life now either performance or spectacle. Not surprisingly, the continuous 'performance' of city life famously created a social experience for city dwellers characterized by a sense of separation and isolation.[6] These were not the communal, known spaces of one's neighborhood village. Although the crowds of the new Paris brought different classes of people physically closer together, their psychic, interior experience seemed to become more and more alienated. Modernity was forcing people to reassess their "fixed, fast frozen" conceptions — of *stone* symbolizing *strongest*, of *tradition* symbolizing *timeless*, of *crowd* symbolizing *community*.[7]

The Paris Arcades provide for us an apt metaphor for Marx's sense of capitalism as disintegrative, and of modernity as a time of "things falling apart... and yet, at the same time, merging together" into the entirely new.[8] The Arcades were walkways constructed in the early nineteenth century over several commercial areas of Paris. They were one of the new buildings that inventively used iron and glass to create crystal webs above the crowds below, creating a space that felt both indoors and outdoors — an evaporation of the monumental permanence of neoclassical marble and stone.

Likewise, the Arcades blurred the lines between interior and exterior in inventive new ways which were characteristic of modernity. A private space like a commercial gallery that was open to the public as a passageway constituted such a conflation of the subverted interior and exterior on both an aesthetic and social level. Just as being in the glass-lined Arcades made one feel as though one was physically inside and outside, so too did joining the crowd of the Arcades make one feel as though one was both a member of the crowd yet simultaneously an outsider. The gridded, modular windows share this paradoxical sense of being at once interior and exterior — of bodies in close physical proximity but lacking interpersonal psychic connection. The windows, as identical shapes that reiterate and echo one another, are related through a formal relationship, and help constitute an aesthetic whole. However, their relationship is not one that evokes any feelings of human or narrative connection.[9]

The freshly-invented cast iron which holds the windows together evokes a sense of newness, of the modern.[10] The windows, as mass-produced shapes held together by this sense of the modern, relate formally but not emotively, an allegory for the relationships existing between members of the crowd below.

The crowd can be taken as an aesthetic whole, the individuals of which mimic the windows. They too can be considered mass-produced shapes, inorganic units in their mass-pro-

duced costumes. The crowd and the Arcades both have a naturally reflexive nature — the fashions or aesthetics of the crowd are reflected and reiterated amongst its members over time, rendering them fleeting and amorphous. The transparent and reflective nature of the Arcades' glass construction allows *it itself* to become a part of the crowd, its "vaporous iridescence" alternately revealing and suggesting at the "partial and half-dissolved body parts" of the crowd below.[11] Together, the crowd and the Arcades merge into one ephemeral, sparkling kaleidoscope of movement. This is Baudelaire's *modernité*: a time and place that embodies "the heart of the multitude... the ebb and flow of movement... in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite."[12] But is it as beautiful and sparkling as all of that? It could be argued that the Paris Arcades are merely another example of the penetration of capitalism and industry into human life. Perhaps the industrial glass is not reflecting the crowd but is rather embedding itself into their flesh. Perhaps the self-fashioned costumes are merely a reflection of the shallow exteriority of capitalist society. Perhaps the Arcades, rather than symbolizing a kaleidoscope, merely symbolize the glass cases inside of which a consumer society insists on framing its commodities.[13]

Certainly, a lot of early modern scholarship sought to confirm the trope of the experience of modernity as an experience of pure *anomie*, the modern individual rationalized and shucked of its spirit. Much of late modern and postmodern scholarship takes up this anti-modernist slant; such scholarship is heavily oriented towards those sociological theories of modernity by which a burgeoning hyperrationalization could only result in a loss of meaning and control for the individual.[14] French philospher and literary theorist Jean François Lyotard explains that we most frequently view modernity as a failure in that it allowed for the "totality of life to be splintered into independent specialties which are left to the narrow competence of experts" while leaving "concrete individual experiences desublimated [of] meaning and destructured [in] form".[15] Thus what remains is not necessarily a sense of liberation but of *ennui*.[16] While such a pejorative treatment of modernity certainly has its truths, the sensationalist idea that the changes of modernity are an irrevocable loss discounts many of the positive changes in experience that capitalism and industrialization inaugurated.[17] More importantly, the idea of our looking at modernity as an irrevocable loss assumes that life was, once, at some point in history, whole and full of meaning to begin with.

Perhaps it is our contemporary viewpoint — that of the angsty and cynical postmodern, located unhappily in an increasingly agoraphobic social topography — that is causing us to look at the past with such a naïve, nostalgic gaze. Art historian Linda Nochlin in her book *The Body in Pieces* draws parallels between the artist depicted in Henry Fuseli's 1778 "The Artist Overwhelmed by the Grandeur of Antique Ruins" and post-nineteenth century society. Nochlin argues that both the artwork and the time period carry a sense of being overwhelmed by the aforementioned sense of "an irrevocable [*loss*], [a] poignant regret for [a] lost totality, a vanished wholeness."[18]

In this image, an artist is pictured next to the monumental fragments of the great and monumental works of creators from a classical past. From the postmodern viewpoint, this image is tragic, mirroring a postmodern struggle which feels irreversible and hopeless. However, from the point of view of Fuseli and the Romantics of the period, the idea of a fragmented past is bittersweet. While the fragments of the ancient classical statues give the artist a postmodernesque feeling of inferiority (the notion that 'all that is good has already been done') these fragments also give to the artist the urge to wield his melancholy and forge them into something entirely new. Rather than aiming for neoclassical perfection, Romantic artists accepted their new role as alchemists or bricoleurs who had the power to generate beauty out of the bleak,

the macabre, and the painfully self-aware. They were Victor Frankensteins in a morgue full of Colossi of Rhodes. Nochlin recognizes this aspect of Fuseli's image, noting that in the image it is the classical statues, not the figure of the artist, which are broken.[19] For the Romantics, the artist remained a total entity: he was aware of his place in history, he mourned the purported sublimity of the past, but he was still in control of the future. This is more than relevant to our contemporary moment: although we are steeped in a multiplicity of nostalgias, the notion that we are somehow 'broken' is false and counterproductive. Indeed, it is rather our belief in a lost utopian wholeness which leaves us grieving.

In fact, considering our contemporary association of fragmentation with self-loss, social instability, and psychological malady, it might be surprising to learn that fragmentation, as an aesthetic and social theme, did not begin as a negative trope. For the French Revolution, the fragment symbolized not a nostalgia for the past, but rather a deliberate destruction of it. The idea of 'becoming fragmented' communicated a breaking away from the constraints of an oppressive past rather than being ripped from its warm embrace. "Fragmentation, mutilation and destruction" were founding, positive tropes for the Revolution, representing the proud vandalism of the French aristocracy's repressive traditions.[20] The most obvious example of this is the guillotine, where the act of beheading served as a literal and figurative destruction of the previous rulership. These vandalized fragments of the past were often then 'recycled' for allegorical purposes that aided Revolutionary strategies. The heads of the executed would be remade in wax and put on display at Madame Tussaud's wax museum, providing citizens with a constant reminder of the Revolution's contempt for the past. While the fragment signified destruction for French Revolutionists, it simultaneously symbolized the notion of conservation and creation, as it was the task of Revolutionary France to weld the fragments of the past together to create a new sense of French nationalism and identity.[21] It is easy to extrapolate from this concept to our present situation: is the construction of the new out of fragments of the past not preferable to mourning over broken pieces?

I am not the first to propose this idea: Siegfried Kracauer, a cultural critic in the 1920s, wrote extensively on the increasing 'artificiality' of society which began with modernity. Yet instead of criticizing this artificiality, Kracauer saw that embracing it (à la the crowds of the Arcade) could be far preferable to a state of nostalgia. In fact, Kracauer saw society as being divided into two groups that reflected these two states of being. He defines 'nostalgic' individuals as those who are attached to hopelessly anachronistic modes of being: existence as a private individual or as a member of a community (think of the Pre-Raphaelites or Rousseaueans).[22] It is the artificial group, however, that he defines as 'the modern' — those who belonged to truly modern society were those subjected to and fragmented by modern processes of production.[23] Kracauer saw the second group as preferable; the embracing of modernity's adverse effects on one's self allowed for a unique kind of 'coming together' which could prove more community-oriented in its commitment to the present than a lonely pining for communities of the past.

An example of coming together which Kracauer endorses is that of moviegoers in nineteenth century Berlin. For many, the rapid stimulus provided by films was seen as evidence of a post WWI society becoming increasingly addicted to distraction — distraction from reality, from boredom, from politics, from one's own sense of self. New forms of entertainment like cinema provided "visual stimulation of the senses that proceeded with such rapidity that there was no room for thought between images."[24] Thus, they were works of externality: dialectics of pure sensation created for the purpose of pleasure. This isn't a surprising analysis. Art that contains no moral message has been looked at throughout

history as dangerous for providing stimulation without the tradeoff of traditional morality narratives. Yet Kracauer disagrees with this assessment, stating that although these "displays of pure externality"[25] have a definite artificiality or shallowness to them, it was this artificiality that made them authentic:

> *The emphasis on the external has the advantage of being* sincere. *It is not externality that poses a threat to truth. Truth is threatened only by the naive affirmation of cultural values that have become unreal and by the careless misuse of concepts such as personality, inwardness, tragedy and so on, terms which in themselves certainly refer to lofty ideas but which have lost much of their scope along with their supporting foundations due to social changes... Here, in pure externality, the audience encounters itself; its own reality is revealed in the fragmented sequence of splendid sense impressions. [This externality] convey[s] in a precise and undisguised manner to thousands of eyes and ears the* disorder *of society.*[25]

As we can see, Kracauer dismisses in one fell swoop the nostalgic ideologies of the first group. What use is it to cling to arbitrary manifestations of authenticity? If the modern individual and her society are isolated, fragmented, and melancholic, then let her embrace it and carve her own worth from these sentiments instead of becoming entrenched in the idea of a perfect and unattainable past ideal. Important to this reversal is the joining of fragments of society in the film-going process Kracauer describes: the individuals are joined in the audience, but not to the extent that their differences are erased. Kracauer disagreed with such an "amalgama[tion of] the multiplicity of effects (which by their nature demand to be isolated from each other) into an 'artistic' unity."[26] He saw this "coerc[ion] of [a] motley sequence of externalities into an organic whole" as an attempt to hide the disorder of society rather than reveal it.[27] This makes sense, as the melting together of disparate pieces starts to get uneasily close to an aesthetic totalitarianism, à la Corbusier's Algiers. It is the idea of maintaining a mosaic quality within an aesthetic totality that is important here: to create or transmute beauty from the factual reality of the bleak, the melancholic, and the broken.[29]

Charles Baudelaire, the French poet who coined the term *modernité*, also championed the paradoxically *authentic* nature of superficiality in his essay "The Painter of Modern Life": "*maquillage* has no need to hide itself or to shrink from being suspected; on the contrary, let it display itself, at least if it does so with frankness and honesty."[30] He states that the external self-fashioning so important to modern Paris' social life should not be seen only as low class or nouveau riche but also as an enlightened act: an "effort in the direction of Beauty, some kind of approximation [of an] ideal for which the restless human mind feels a constant, titillating hunger."[28] Anticipating Kracauer, Baudelaire provides a positive historical basis for externality by exploring why such forms of 'lowly' artistic expression as caricatures, makeup, and fashion were dismissed. He assesses that this distaste for superficiality had sprung from the eighteenth century's "antiquated idea" that nature was the source for all possible manifestations of the good and the beautiful.[29] Baudelaire dismisses this nostalgia de la boue, along with its resulting fetishization of non-Western peoples; he calls the idealizing of their 'state of nature' "perverted."[30] "Nature teaches us nothing," he claims, arguing that although it is nature that compels us to eat, drink, and protect ourselves against the elements, it is also nature that incites mankind to murder, cannibalize and torture one another.[31] Baudelaire asserts that crime is natural in origin, whereas virtue, found in philosophy and religion, is man-made and artificial. In essence, it is not nature, Baudelaire declares, that is the source of the beautiful and the good: it is the man-made. In the eyes of Baudelaire, the crowd of the Arcades could not be more beautiful.

As an artist, Baudelaire places these man-made environments in the aesthetic control of the modern artist, or the man of the crowd. Here, Baudelaire draws a parallel between the figure of the artist and the figure of the philosopher or prophet, between art itself and the Good: "at all times in all places gods and prophets have been needed to teach [the good] to animalized humanity, man being powerless to discover it by himself. Evil happens without effort, naturally, fatally; Good is always the product of some art."[32] This elevation of the role of the artist ties into Baudelaire's earlier analysis of the subject of his essay "The Painter of Modern Life." Baudelaire declares that the painter of modern life is a man for whom the crowd is habitat, as the air is to birds and water to fish. The modern artist, he describes, "enters into the crowd as though it were an immense reservoir of electrical energy. [One] might liken him to a mirror as vast as the crowd itself... a kaleidoscope gifted with consciousness, responding to each one of [the crowd's] movements and reproducing the multiplicity of life and the flickering grace of all [its] elements."[33] It is this artistic energy — that of nineteenth century social space, with its unprecedented mixing of self-fashioned individuals — that was captured by the modern artist: "the external world is reborn upon [the artist's] paper, natural and more than natural, beautiful and more than beautiful, strange and endowed with an impulsive life like the soul of its creator. The phantasmagoria has been distilled from nature."[34] It is easy to draw parallels between the roles of Baudelaire's modern artist or man of the crowd and the Paris Arcades. Both the Arcades and the modern artist symbolize a source of modern power that weave together the individuals of the crowd — the isolated fragments, man-made and sparkling — into an aesthetic totality. Here, every modern individual's longing for a lost community is met through their participation in the creation of art. The artwork becomes Frankenstein's monster: a living, breathing and independent totality that will long outlive both creator and participants. This concept is undoubtedly macabre. Baudelaire recognized this and had no qualms, stating,

> *"[I]t is impossible not to be gripped by the spectacle of this sickly population which swallows the dust of the factories, breathes in particles of cotton, and lets its tissues be permeated by white lead, mercury and all the poisons needed for the production of masterpieces... of this languishing and pining population to whom the earth owes its wonders; who feel a purple and impetuous blood coursing through their veins, who cast a long, sorrow laden look at the sunlight and shows of the great parks."*[35]

It is this macabre, honest picture of society that Baudelaire has rendered a thing of beauty: "it is [Baudelaire's] images of melancholy that kindle the spirit the most brightly."[36] Michael W. Jennings, editor of Benjamin's work *The Writer of Modern Life Author*, deems Baudelaire's style that of the "ragpicker," or that of the poet who draws on the "detritus of society through which he moves, seizing that which seems useful in part because society has deemed it useless."[37] In this sense, Baudelaire commits himself to pulling beauty from the dark and broken nature of his society rather than pining for an unattainable ideal. In his work, he maintains a focus on revealing the disorder of modern life rather than on issuing a call to order. Baudelaire's man of the crowd takes up this quest, managing to metamorphose the dead and rotting scraps of society into art that is living and entirely new. This style, which impressionistically collages together a "heap" of wretched fragments into works of "dialectical transcendence," later comes to define modern art.[38] In particular, poet T. S. Eliot and philosopher Walter Benjamin's respective writing styles and analyses of modernity are — perhaps unwittingly, and particularly in the case of Benjamin — oriented towards that of Baudelaire.[39]

Walter Benjamin and T. S. Eliot were not just influenced by Baudelaire — they also wrote a lot about his works. Benjamin wrote extensively on the negative aspects of modern life, particu-

larly its effects of fragmentation, isolation, and anxiety on the individual. He uses Baudelaire in his book about the Arcades, *The Arcades Project*, as an example of a modern individual who has been stripped of bourgeois comforts and rendered defenseless against the "ruptures and aporias of modern life."[40] Benjamin "resolutely refuses to attribute a single productive social or political insight to Baudelaire himself" — the purpose of Benjamin's essays being to expose how Baudelaire's poetry is "uniquely, scathingly, terrifyingly *symptomatic* of Baudelaire's era — and ours."[41] In painting Baudelaire as a victim, Benjamin hoped to reveal the brokenness and falseness at the heart of the modern experience that continued to permeate the bleak landscape of his present.

Benjamin's critique of modernity often centers around Baudelaire's 'man of the crowd,' which he re-terms the "flâneur," 'the social type that could read all of the others,' who took pleasure in abandoning himself to the "artificial world of high capitalist civilization."[42] It was the Arcades that Benjamin deemed home to the flâneur. They were, according to Benjamin, a place that embodied the psychologically destabilizing ambiguity of the bourgeois experience in the nineteenth century, being at once both street and interior, marketplace and entertainment venue. The mixing of classes allowed the flâneurs the endless pleasure of feeling socially empowered as "social botanists" who could watch without being seen, and judge without being judged. Ironically, however, Benjamin's description of the flâneur as a sort of useless, capitalistic leisurer — symptomatic of modernity's ruination of man and culture — is more derivative of the work of American author Edgar Allen Poe. Poe's short story "Man of the Crowd" describes a true flâneur-type who takes up residence one day in a London coffee shop, entertaining himself by categorizing the social types that walk by. Baudelaire's man of the crowd, or the modern artist, takes pleasure not in distinguishing himself from the crowd but rather in capturing its energy and channeling it: his self-loss to the crowd is a precondition for artistic creation.[43]

Ironically, Benjamin's style of writing and melancholic nature seem unwittingly oriented towards Baudelaire and the man of the crowd that he criticizes so harshly. When one considers Benjamin's life, haunted as it was by "Hitler, exile, poverty, despondency, the fall of France, fear, flight and suicide," one can understand Benjamin's identification with the profound melancholy and the sense of social isolation that saturates every page of Baudelaire's work.[44] Benjamin's magnum opus, The Arcades Project, is made up of drafts and sketches dated from 1928-29, which are "gathered — or rather, disseminated — through a series of weird folio notecards, bound roughly into folders, exploring a whole range of subjects fanning out from the arcades."[45] Just like the ragpicker, Baudelaire and his 'conscious kaleidoscope' man of the crowd, Benjamin wrests vivid imageries from the coherent whole of their contexts and integrates them into collage-like text. Although his Arcades Project was never finished, Benjamin seems to have "dreamed of a final, rapid-fire, cinematic delivery, accelerating to the speed of exchange — fact after fact, image after image, with relations between them somehow revealed by the glitter and breathlessness of their juxtapositions."[46] Benjamin (following Marx and Hegel) deems this style the dialectical image.[47] This method of art-making, as well as its resulting product, are similar to the aesthetic examples we have found thus far: the architecture of the Arcades, Fuseli's "The Artist Overwhelmed," and Baudelaire's man of the crowd as conscious kaleidoscope. Although Benjamin was certainly not the first modern artist to be influenced by Baudelaire, it appears that he may have been one of the most conflicted.

One final modern artist who followed Baudelaire was T. S. Eliot. Like Baudelaire, Eliot "has gone through the narrow back streets, met with prostitutes, heard of strange murders, experienced the excruciating contrast between

sordid reality and ideal aspirations, and transmuted all this into poetry."[48] Eliot, however, found in Baudelaire a writer very different from the one discovered by Benjamin — his view of the poet is perhaps more akin to the aims of this paper. Baudelaire was a key element in Eliot's spiritual comprehension of modernity, as well as in his quest to find a path formed by religion through the modern wasteland.[49] Eliot, in an essay on Baudelaire, responded to the themes of satanism in Baudelaire's poetry by stating that it was preferable to commit oneself to evil than to spend one's life in a state of spiritual apathy. He is quoted as saying that Baudelaire's macabre outlook was like a way into Christianity through "the backdoor."[50] In a way, Eliot's idea of Baudelaire is a more religious version of this essay's given argument: that macabre, even satanistic, fragments of society can be transmuted into the 'Good.' Eliot picks up the ragpicker style of Baudelaire and Benjamin, writing poetry that violently fuses together heterogeneous elements to create a sense of "poetical equilibrium" that always seems on the verge of falling apart — although the original elements form an aesthetic whole, there "exists within the compound a high tension."[51] In essence, Eliot reaches into the past, not in order to hide, but to grab at historical fragments, forcefully forging them into something new, something that is both aesthetically whole and self-consciously fragmented: a mosaic. The shock that the reader receives from this tension was, for both Eliot and Baudelaire, an essential element of beauty.[52] T. S. Eliot's masterpiece *The Waste Land* is a "rich and strange mosaic" of literary references, nightmares, and surrealist dream sequences.[53] Here, he addresses us, the son of men (men of modernity) who have only ever known a "heap of broken images":

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
There is shadow under this red rock,
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.[54]

The Waste Land is the dialectical image we are looking for: it is melancholic, it is self-aware, and it beautifies the issues of modernity without ignoring its realities.

All together, the crowds of the Arcades and the poetry of Baudelaire, Eliot, and Benjamin have the effect of transmuting the bleak truths of society into a vast, aestheticized landscape which, for the modern person, provides evidence against the indignities of the modern world.[55] The fact that beauty could still be created, no matter how broken and drained the materials, was a beacon in a seemingly meaningless world. A quote from Linda Nochlin, author of *The Body in Pieces*, summarizes this idea of modernity as a positive trope:

We can now begin to see that it is by no means possible to assert that modernity may only be associated with, or suggested by, a metaphoric or actual fragmentation. On the contrary, paradoxically, dialectically, modern artists have moved towards its opposite, with a will to totaliziation embodied in the notion of the Gesamtkunstwerk, the struggle to overcome these disintegrative effects — social, psychic, political — inscribed in modern, particularly modern urban, experience, by hypostatizing them within a higher unity. One might, from this point of view, maintain that modernity is indeed marked by the will toward totalization as much as it is metaphorized by the fragment.[56]

Notes:

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4. Robert Brain, "Going to the Exhibition: Nineneenth Century Expositions, Fairs, and Museums" (lecture, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, March 11, 2014).
5. Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*.
6. Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life"; Durkheim, *On Suicide*.
7. Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*.
8. Ibid.
9. Nochlin, *The Body in Pieces* (43-45).
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11. Linda Nochlin, *The Body in Pieces: the Fragment as a Metaphor of Modernity* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 26.
12. Charles Pierre Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life, and Other Essays*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon, 1964), 9.
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17. Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity*, 2.
18. Nochlin, *The Body in Pieces*, 7.
19. Ibid., 8.
20. Ibid., 9.
21. Ibid.
22. Ulrike Fleischer, "Siegfried Kracauer and Weimar culture: modernity, flânerie, and literature" (PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, 2001), 72.
23. Ibid.
24. Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life."
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31. Ibid.
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33. Ibid.
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35. Walter Benjamin, *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, trans. Howard Eiland, et al. (Cambridge: Harvard, 2006), 102.
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37.. Ibid., 11.
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39. Eugene Rochberg-Halton, review of *Fragments of Modernity: Theories of Modernity in the Work of Simmel, Kracauer, and Benjamin* by David Frisby, *American Journal of Sociology* 93: 4 (1988): 969.
40. Benjamin, *The Writer of Modern Life*, 14.
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42. Ibid.,14.
43. Ibid.
44. T. J. Clark, "Reservations of the Marvellous," review of *The Arcades Project* by Walter Benjamin, trans. Howard Eiland, *London Review of Books*, June 22, 2000.
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46. Clark, "Reservations of the Marvellous."
47. Benjamin, *Writer of Modern Life*, 12-3.
48. R. Galand, "T.S. Eliot and the Impact of Baudelaire," *Yale French Studies* 6 (1950): 29.
49. Benjamin, *Writer of Modern Life*, 2.
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Monet's Series: A Temporal Narrative

By: Erin Watkins

Claude Monet produced a number of paintings of the same subject with subtle variations, such as *Grainstacks* and *Cathedrals* in the 1890s. These two series are typically positioned as some of the first instances of serial imagery. While this assumption is not technically incorrect, it tends to disregard how Monet's paintings were treated when they were first created, and their current existence as individual, or small groupings of, paintings dispersed throughout the world. Despite this dispersal, these works continue to feature in the collective "mental archive" of art history as a cohesive series or singular unit. The prevalence of this trend outlines a divide between the paintings' use value in the 1890s and their aesthetic value as an ephemeral concept — in other words, their unified status in the mental archive of art lovers. The aura of the paintings together as a whole series exists only in the mind, or 'mental archive,' since there has never been an exhibition or installation of the works as a series, despite effort to create one.[1] This essay, therefore, explores the divide between the historiographic and aesthetic appeals of the series within the trajectory of art history and modern day new media techniques such as .gifs and photomontage. I will examine first, how the economic status — that is, their functioning within the 19th century art market — of two of Monet's series, *Grainstacks* and *Cathedrals*, differs from the more aesthetic understanding of them as an entire series; then look deeper into what aesthetic significance the series had through visual analysis of the paintings in the two series; finally, comparing these findings with current trends in popular new media, such as .gifs and photomontage. By doing this, I explore how a collective, mental understanding of the aura of a painting can carry forward into modern culture as a prevalent theme.

Monet's entire painting "theory," though he hated that term, was to "render [his] impressions of the most fleeting effects"[2] on the canvas or, "to reproduce instantaneously upon the canvas the picture of his emotions, to project as on a screen the interior spectacle."[3] In other words, he aimed to record the sensations of a fleeting moment in a painting. In this attempt to capture fleeting moments, his painting style begins to sound like an act of photography; he tried to record a passing moment in time "instantaneously," much like the act of photography captures a brief moment instantaneously. He essentially attempted to take a snapshot of a brief moment and sensation in the medium of paint. This makes each individual painting in a series one brief moment in time, each becoming its own unique snapshot of a series of temporal and emotional moments. The photographic and temporal aspect of his art becomes even more interesting once all the images are combined. With each painting standing in as a short snapshot they begin to create an entire temporal narrative — that is a narrative which dictates the changes to the world which occur as time passes — once combined. The temporal narrative becomes clearer once a close visual analysis of the series is completed.

Monet's *Grainstacks* is a series of paintings, completed in 1890-91, which are centered on images of haystacks near Monet's house in varying seasons and times of day, painted with thick, unmodulated brushstrokes and colours, as is typical to his style. Each painting features one to two haystacks in a specific season with specific lighting; however, the season and lighting changes from painting to painting, as does Monet's orientation to the haystacks. While most of the paintings feature haystacks in winter, such as *Stacks of Wheat (Snow Effect, Overcast Day)* — a painting of a single haystack on the left side of the canvas in snowy afternoon daylight — a small number of them are painted in summer, or during transitional seasons. *The Haystacks, End of Summer, Giverny* is one such example of a

painting in this series which features a different season. In this painting, Monet represents two haystacks on a diagonal line receding from the viewer's point of view towards the upper left corner of the canvas. He uses an earth toned palette of greens, browns, yellows, and blues, to create a soft inviting image of summer afternoon, playing heavily upon the light and shadow created on the haystacks by this particular time of day. This can be contrasted with the colder palette used to paint *Stacks of Wheat (Snow Effect, Overcast Day)* wherein the canvas is flooded with cold whites, and blues, and a yellow haystack which is mostly in shadow, turning the haystack blue as well. Both of the examples demonstrate how Monet played with the ideas of light and season, using the colour palette to create sensations of each season and particular time of day. Throughout the whole series, Monet is careful to demonstrate the more incremental changes in light throughout a day, using colour to emphasize the way light looks at different times. For example, Monet flooded an image with cool reds, pinks, and misty purples, to capture a hazy sunset,[4] or use cooler tones like whites, blues, and grays, to evoke overcast direct sunlight. While this does make for a beautiful individual painting, the effect created when placed next to each other is that of a narrative — detailing the changes which occur within the landscape as time passes — evoked in a cinematic way through the combination of several individual snapshots.

This notion, of progression through a day by use of individual paintings depicting specific times of day that are then put into a series, becomes even more explicit in Monet's 1892-94 *Cathedrals* series. This is due to the fact that, unlike in the *Grainstacks* series, he is focused on the same subject from the same perspective, with the only changes being that of light. With this series it is almost impossible to ignore the progression of time, as represented by changes in light, because it is the only difference in each painting. Monet painted this series from his view out the window of a small room above a milliner's shop,[5] explaining why each of them is so exactly framed like the others with an unwavering perspective. This perspective features the Rouen Cathedral's façade rising up, and almost towering over, into the viewers' space on the right hand side of the canvas. The facade is seen from a three quarters perspectival view, which moves further away from the viewers' eyes as it recedes into the bottom left hand corner. This perspective highlights the intricate carving on the Rouen's façade, which becomes even more prominent as the various angles of the sunlight create differing points of shadow and light on it from canvas to canvas. The paintings, when considered individually, demonstrate similar qualities as the *Grainstacks* paintings; that is, specific colour palettes which dictate the time of day recorded and heavy brushwork in an arguably sketchy manner. It is once they are combined that a clear pattern of light throughout the day is created, moving from the shadowy blues of morning, to the beige dominated midday scenes, through to the warm yellow reds of sunset, each individual canvas marking a brief sensation of a moment in the day. The main issue here is that by representing a series of snapshots of moments and sensations, Monet creates a narrative with a temporal message, which the viewer experiences visually only when the images are considered as a whole. Thus, Monet creates both individual static moments and cinematic temporal movement through the use of a series and the specific formal aspects of his work.

This cinematic experience of the paintings becomes complicated upon examination of the way Monet's series functioned in the changing dynamics of the nineteenth century art market — as distinct, individual commodities — and how this ultimately defined their eventual physical relation to each other. The pertinent changes in the art market for the purposes of this discussion, are that: firstly, art dealers were taking a more prominent position in a market with diverse commodities and niche styles;[6] and secondly, due to a "growing interest from collectors disenchanted

with the high prices and dubious quality of mainstream collecting areas" and buyers' frustration with "the recycling of commodities which had first passed through the dealers' hands twenty or thirty years before," there was a newly burgeoning market[7] for art. This would signal freedom for the artists from the constraints the high art market previously held over art. This new demand for contemporary art demonstrates how Monet's paintings would have been viewed by dealers — in his case Durand-Ruel — as holding more value in their monetary status, over their aesthetic status as a series, and thus, as individual objects to fetch a good price in a newly popular market, as opposed to an important artistic series to be kept together. John Klein provides a closer examination of how Monet's paintings in particular operated in this way; in his article "The Dispersal of the Modernist Series," he argues that the paintings were never intended to be a whole unit any further than their initial exhibition. Klein writes that "when these exhibitions, which sometimes lasted for less than two weeks, were over, [Monet] saw a need to 're-individualize' some of the canvases, retouching them so that they would stand better on their own, because their final, isolated destiny was ultimately more important than the residue of their temporary togetherness."[8] This quotation brings up the crux of the issue with Monet's series: while they appeared as a unit first, they were ultimately separated, even reworked — as Klein mentioned — to function better alone.

Klein does, however, bring up the way that their original "temporary togetherness"[9] could have functioned as a financial instrument to imbue the individual paintings with a type of "family relationship,"[10] attaching the "aura of its collective effect,"[11] to the individual painting, generating more interest in each painting and therefore driving up their use values. This demonstrates how even in their economic setting, there is already a need to think of the series as a cohesive unit. Klein's statement that the paintings held more draw in the market place because of their "family relationship"[12] to the other paintings implies that the buyers were thinking of the painting in terms of the series it came from, viewing the individual paintings as symbols for the series as a whole.

Both Green and Klein's articles highlight the ways in which Monet's paintings would have actually functioned as individual economic entities used to generate as much money as possible. This demonstrates the extent to which the paintings' importance was located in their status as physical objects to be bought and sold, as opposed to the way they operated in the minds of those viewing them, including the buyers. This highlights the conflation implicit in the series because, the paintings' original state, where their aura or sense of existing as a collective unit was created, is radically different from their final, individualized, dispersed state, thus creating a divide in the way they are perceived: as a collective versus disperse commodities. What this then establishes is that there are two ways in which to view Monet's series, both of which hold validity.

Many scholars persist in considering Monet's series as a cohesive whole, indicating that there may be a certain type of significance gained from viewing them as a collection. This is typically seen in attempts to reconstruct the original exhibition arrangement of some of Monet's series. One example of this occurs in Richard Brettell's article "Monet's Haystacks Reconsidered." In his article, he uses the original exhibition catalogue, along with Daniel Wildenstein's work on identifying the *Grainstacks* paintings with reference to their original titles, to attempt a theoretical reconstruction of the original 1891 exhibition of the paintings and the subsets that could be found among them.[13] Brettell's reconstruction demonstrated that when the *Grainstacks* series was initially shown, the paintings could have provided a narrative or message to the viewer due to their arrangement and visual relationship to each other, thus proving, in his opinion, that this series held an important signif-

icance as a unit, which cannot be gleaned in its dispersed state.[14] This significance can be seen, through visual analysis like that done earlier in this essay, as that of a temporal narrative.

A crucial article that studies the temporal aspect to Monet's series is Steven Z. Levine's "Monet, Lumière, and Cinematic Time." In this article, Levine examines the connections between Monet's *Gare Saint-Lazare* series and Lumière's first cinematic works, claiming that each one utilizes a series of snapshot like images to create a narrative. Levine, then, comes to the same conclusion that, through Monet's technique—his desire "to reproduce instantaneously upon the canvas the picture of his emotions, to project as on a screen the interior spectacle"[15] — he created a temporal narrative, or as Levine put it, a "durational recombination of those instantaneity's into a quasi-cinematic narrative sequence."[16] Levine's article also, then implicitly uses this cinematic use of individual images to connect Monet's series, done in the traditional medium of high art, to a new medium beginning to evolve.

This type of connection between Monet's series' function as a whole and alternate forms of new media can still be seen in modern day art. John Coplans already connects Monet's series to photographic series and postmodern work, such as some of Andy Warhol's work,[17] in his book *Serial Imagery*. This demonstrates that scholars have found a connection as far as the 1960s between Monet's concept of serial imagery and new media. I would argue that since Coplans' book was written, this connection has continued beyond Warhol's use of the series, growing in popularity so that even the typical forms of images used in popular culture today still reference back to this fundamental notion of narrative, implicit in the viewing of Monet's series as a collective unit, which is the most common understanding of his series. However, Warhol's series, because they do not gain their seriality from representation of changes in time but rather changes in printing reproduction, do not complement the temporal narrative aspect of Monet's series. Newer forms of media, such as photomontage and .gifs, do inherently reference temporality in a way similar to Monet.

There are many current artists who use the series format to create a narrative of time progressing through use of new media. The most fitting example of this is an artwork by Fong Qi Wei, whose work was featured on *This is Colossal*'s blog[18] August 15th 2013[19] for his series *Time is a Dimension*, which was subsequently featured a second time February 21 2014[20] after the images were animated in GIF format, a relatively new, highly popular, media technique which adds an extra dimension of temporal narrative to the original images. The original collages features thirty-four images, each of which features a layering of photographs of the same subject, from the same perspective, but taken over the span of the day. Here, each separate photograph represents one subject as it would appear throughout the entire day, all at once, thus creating a temporal narrative of time's progression and effect upon that subject. By viewing the whole series as a unit, a visual narrative of the entire city, as seen from different viewpoints is created, thus creating the impression of existing everywhere at all times, a sense of infiniteness or omnipotence. Animating the images through the use of GIFs, this sense of temporality is exaggerated, creating a quick, easily disseminated[21] way to experience a momentary time lapse of the day. The particular lines along which the images are layered also take on a greater role in its animated form: the layering effect is still present in the animated form; however, the colours in each layer alternate in a repeating loop, creating a pulsing sensation which evokes the pulsation of a city's ceaseless rhythm as the viewer watches the animation progress along its never-ending loop. This narrative, created by Fong Qui Wei's pictures and GIFs, can easily be connected to Monet's *Cathedrals* series in that each individual collage is like Monet's entire series layered into one image. Here Monet's version of a temporal

and sensational narrative is condensed into one image and then expanded upon with the series, to create a broader narrative that mixes temporality with spatiality.

Wei is not the only contemporary artist to take up this idea of temporal narrative. Examples of this type of art can be found all over the Internet and on many artists webpages for sale. The artist Richard Silver, for example, uses a very similar photomontage technique to Wei in his *Time Sliced* series.[22] The main difference with Silver's art is that he chooses to examine famous landmarks as opposed to everyday scenes of city life. He also edits each 'slice' of time together along the same vertical axis for every montage, whereas Wei utilizes the layers of photos to create a pattern of their own. What Silver's choice in subject does is create a ubiquitous representation of a famous landmark. Thousands of people see these landmarks a day, each person encountering it at a different time of day. By layering each change of light that occurs throughout the day, Silver creates an image of the landmark which resonates with every person's view of the landmark, creating one singular view. This could be read as very similar to Monet's rendering of the Rouen Cathedral.

Another prime example of how a temporal narrative is created in new media can be found in the ever popular '365 project.'[23] This project is one wherein people take a picture of themselves — or of any other singular subject — once a day, every day, for a year. These photos are then compiled together, often into a short video or a .gif but sometimes simply posted as photos, to create a document of the same subject's incremental changes throughout a set timeframe. While these may not visually look as similar to Monet's series as the previous examples, they still contain an interest in visually representing incremental changes throughout a specific period of time. This interest in indexicality can be found across not just all three individual examples, but in the specific media they use. Through the act of photography, film, and .gifs artists are able to compile a number of series' of images of the same subjects, captured over a set amount of time, together to demonstrate the various changes which occur over time — changes which are often overlooked. A large difference between the new media examples and Monet's works is, however, their economic status. Monet's works were valued heavily because of their medium. Paintings were a lucrative business in the nineteenth century, making Monet's paintings of high monetary value. In contrast to this, works posted — and occasionally even created — online are often not for profit, but to become popularly shared online, allowing the artist to become well known through Internet virality. The images put up for sale do not come across the same problems of dispersal as Monet's series, because the temporal narrative is embedded within each individual work, not within the series as a whole. This allows the images to hold onto their collective narrative, while still being sold individually for maximum profit: new media is then, allowing artists to have the best of both worlds — narrative and profit.

This demonstrates how, over 100 years later, series with temporal narratives are still prevalent. Wei's, Silver's and the many participants in the 365 project's series, especially their inclusion of popular new media techniques, indicate the ways in which series are being used in new medias and technologies, but with the same connotational intent as Monet's series. By comparing how these narrative types are prevalent even into current culture and new media types, it further demonstrates society's attachment to these types of readings of series, thus further elucidating why the more ephemeral understanding of the meaning behind Monet's series is so popular, in spite of their reality as dispersed commodities. What this ultimately proves is that, while in actuality, Monet's two series in question are dispersed and were treated as commodities sold for optimum profit, they exist as a collective unit in a more ephemeral, or cerebral, sense. The

aura of the paintings in series form, that is to say the ephemeral sense attached to the paintings, is often what is considered when thinking of each group of paintings, as demonstrated by the various ways the paintings are treated as a whole unit, as opposed to dispersed single objects. The concept's prevalence would suggest that there is a significance, or meaning, which is gained from the series existence as a unit which is not gained to the same extent when considered in the way the paintings actually exist, that is to say in their dispersed state. By closer analysis of the series, this significance can be identified as a temporal narrative. This temporality which the series provides when viewed as a unit can be seen as part of an entire trajectory of series art, even into popular image culture today. This then connects the prevalent concept of Monet's series as whole units, which provide a narrative, especially a temporal narrative, to a wider genre of series art which focus on the very themes raised in Monet's series. Monet's series then, when viewed as a cohesive whole, as is so popularly done, falls into a wider category of temporal narrative through serial imagery, thus establishing the importance of understanding Monet's series as a whole unit in spite of its original intentions. This temporal narrative, often represented through serial imagery, has seen a resurgence in modern new media, creating an interesting connection between the aesthetic trajectory which Monet's series began, and the types of works being produced by today's new media artists.

Notes:

1. One such effort to reconstruct can be found in Richard Brettell's article "Monet's Haystacks Reconsidered". *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 11 (1), 1984. pg. 9-12
2. Levine, Steven Z. "Monet's Series: Repetition, Obsession" *The MIT Press* October 37, 1986. pg. 65
3. Levine, Steven Z. "Monet, Lumiere, and Cinematic Time" *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 36 (4) 1978. pg. 442
4. As can be seen in *Grainstack, Sun in the Mist* and *Grainstack (Sunset)*.
5. Coplans, John. *Serial Imagery*. Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum. 1968. pg. 23-26
6. Green, Nicholas, "Dealing in Temperaments: Economic Transformation of the Artistic Field in France During the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century", *Art History* 10 (1) 1987. pg. 62. Nicholas Green's article provides a good perspective on the changes which were occurring in the way art sales functioned and the ways roles of the various parties involved in art sales were being redefined.
7. Ibid. pg. 63-64
8. Klein, John. "The Dispersal of the Modernist Series". *Oxford Art Journal* 21 (1) 1998. pg. 125
9. Ibid
10. Ibid. pg. 128, more in-depth discussion on this matter pg. 127-129
11. Ibid. pg. 128
12. Ibid.
13. For the entire reconstruction see: Brettell, Richard. "Monet's Haystacks Reconsidered", pg. 9-12
14. Brettell, Richard. "Monet's Haystacks Reconsidered", pg. 12, Brettell claims that Monet's series "must be read as an apotheosis to the triumph of the haystack over time as well as weather" because of the way they are arranged.
15. Levine, Steven Z. "Monet, Lumière, and Cinematic Time" pg. 442
16. Ibid. pg. 444
17. Coplans, John. pg.130-136, pg. 7-10
18. thisiscolossal.com
19.http://www.thisiscolossal.com/2013/08/time-is-a-dimension/
20. http://www.thisiscolossal.com/2014/02/animated-photo-collages-by-qi-wei-fong-shimmer-to-life-as-time-passes/
21. The animated images would be easily disseminated because of their GIF format, which is compatible with most current social media platforms, therefore allowing the images to be spread across the internet with ease.
22.http://www.richardsilverphoto.com/time-

slice-global/
23. Examples include but are certainly not limit-
ed to: http://marsio365project.tumblr.com and
http://alvesfilho.com/365/