

The Function of *Gold Corner*

During the 1970's, Meyerowitz was in search for "revelation" and "epiphany" in his photography. Having used colour photography for the past decade, he began moving away from the idea of simply capturing an incident, and instead focused on the whole composition, where all elements of a scene played equal parts: "I meant [my photography] to be about the 'experience' of being on the street, in that specific city...so that viewers might experience for themselves what it felt like in that moment" (Houlette). His knowledge of photography helped Meyerowitz acknowledge the importance of considering a composition as a whole, rather than only capturing interesting street scenarios. Additionally, Meyerowitz's photography at the time can be described as *documentary photography*: "a depiction of the real world by a photographer whose intent is to communicate something of importance" (Lenman). Following this definition, we could perhaps deduce that Meyerowitz was commenting on the cultural movements of the 70s and the presence of globalization across the globe. More specifically, how these trends were affecting New York. Evidently, the cultural context of Meyerowitz's 70s photography played a key role in his concepts.

In the case of *Gold Corner*, we immediately feel the disorderly nature of the city; the implied lines, multiple planes and little symmetry of the image gives the viewer little means of focus; symmetry is usually associated with order, because our eyes adjust better when we can make sense of what we see. Without it, the audience feels lost (Holzmueller). In addition, the image emits the feeling of movement through the subjects' gazes that indicate a sense of direction. These aspects may represent the overwhelming nature of a typical street scene in New York that Meyerowitz wished to portray through *Gold Corner*.

Function of *Untitled – Aftermath Series*

The function of *Aftermath* is to construct an archive of the impact of 9/11. This record is an opportunity for New York residents to gain visual access to the prohibited “crime scene” and see the extent of the event. With very few people having right of entry, Ground Zero was completely enclosed from the public. As *Aftermath* is the only existing photographic record of 9/11, Meyerowitz “was taking pictures for everyone who didn't have access to the site...[he]wanted to communicate what it felt like to be in there as well as what it looked like: to show the pile's incredible intricacy and visceral power...[he]could provide a window for everyone else who wanted to be there, too--to help, or to grieve, or simply to try to understand what had happened to our city. “ (“Aftermath”). Likewise, the archive was also for future generations to look back on the event: “[my aim was that]people in the future who looked at this work -- not as a work of art, but as history, as what happened here -- could literally look at the photographs and feel what it was like to stand in front of the pile.” (“Faith and Doubt at Ground Zero”).

The series' title *Aftermath* plays a significant role in the understanding of the pieces. Defined as “The consequences or after-effects of a significant unpleasant event” (Oxford Dictionaries), the word *aftermath* shows the disastrous effects of 9/11. It shows the need to record the results of humans' mistakes, in order for us to learn the importance of avoiding such an event in the future. However, it could also be a tribute to those who lost their lives during 9/11 by recording the *aftermath*.

In my opinion, *Untitled* is one of the most interesting pieces of *Aftermath*, because it depicts a clash of two worlds: the background consists of a still-standing building, whilst the foreground is of metal debris. Perhaps these components illustrate a collision of utopia and dystopia, whereby the dystopic world has become reality. Furthermore, it suggest how amidst the whole of New York, there is now a mountain of debris in the streets (Conrad).

“[My aim was that] people in the future who looked at this work -- not as a work of art, but as history, as what happened here -- could literally look at the photographs and feel what it was like to stand in front of the pile.”- Joel Meyerowitz (“Faith and Doubt at Ground Zero”)

Contextualizing 'Market at Minho'

Cultural Context:

During the WW1 period, Sonia and Robert Delaunay travelled to Madrid and the village of Vila do Condo in Portugal, and Valença da Minho, where Sonia began drawing inspiration from her surroundings as she painted still-lives and market scenes. (jwa.org) She became inspired by the rapid changes of busy modern life.

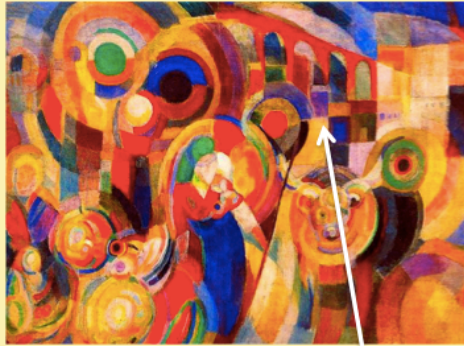
Market at Minho: Real Life



Busy market place



Bridge over the Minho River



Other works inspired by Sonia's travels:



Sonia Delaunay
Flamenco singer, 1916
Oil on canvas



Sonia Delaunay
Tall Portuguese
Woman, 1916
70.5 x 80 cm

Function and Purpose:

'It was tradition to represent a dancer in a chosen position, like a snapshot. I broke away from this tradition by superimposing postures, blending light and motion and scrambling from the planes.'- Sonia Delaunay (Art quotes)

interplay between the objects and atmosphere is Delaunay's perception of the environment she was in while she travelled. Rather than looking at the world in a static way, she looked at it more artificially, representing pure excitement in her work. Delaunay expressed this new form of seeing, to encourage a connection between color and an objective scene.

Stools Formal Qualities and Function/Purpose

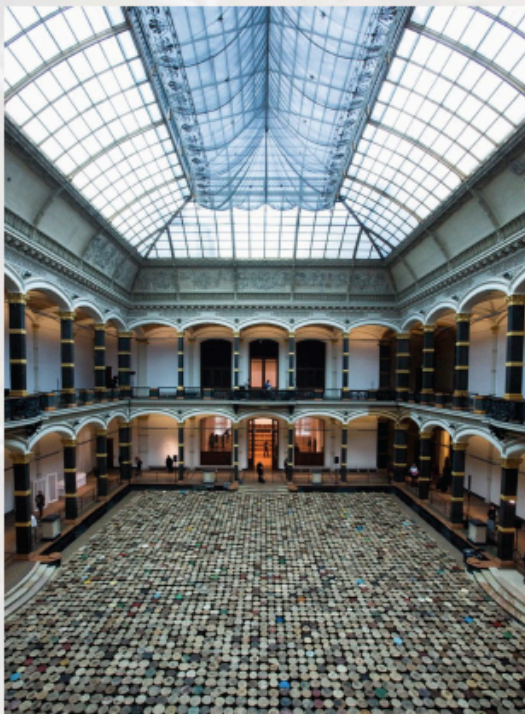


Image 14, Stools, Ai Weiwei, 2011; 6,000 Wooden Chairs
Source: aiweiwei.com 01.10.15

"The historical and cultural significance of the materials and techniques Ai Weiwei uses are an essential element of almost all his sculptures. Much of his work with ceramics has involved ready-mades: adapting, painting and destroying valuable ancient urns and vases."(12)

Composition (13)

The centerpiece of Ai Weiwei's *Evidence* exhibition was *Stools*, an installation composed of over "6,000 wooden stools from Ming and Qing Dynasties and the republican period, which have been gathered from villages across northern China." These connected stools, which are "more battered than others," create a pattern. This in turn, forms a "wooden surface" and "covers the tile floor of the Martin Gropius Bau's atrium." The stools differ from each other in their colors and shapes. This could symbolize the change from the individuality that was once celebrated before, compared to the mass-production of identical plastic stools now. As stated by the curator of the exhibition, Gereon Sievernich, "the collection of the individual stools represents individuality in the face of today's mass manufactured plastic goods".

Material Significance: Wood (13)

Connection to Ming and Qing Dynasty

Ai Weiwei is commenting on the differences between the Ming and Qing Dynasty with the modernized China today. He does this by using 6,000 stools crafted there hundred years ago, which therefore represent those centuries. He then arranged them on the tiling of the hall in a random assortment. The fact he has chosen these wooden stools could suggest that he is showing the change in function of the stools. They were once built in the Ming and Qing Dynasty for artisans to create art or materials they specialized in; now they are used in factories to mass-produce commodities. Weiwei could be suggesting that we, the consumers, are responsible for this change as well since we consume these goods.

Another Wooden Piece by Ai Weiwei and Its Significance Tree (2009-2010) (10)

This installation consists of "chunks of wood" from dead trees in Southern China, which Weiwei has put back together to form whole trees. What was once a tree in Southern China, is "dead" wood. When Weiwei puts the pieces back together, it is evident that the pieces don't match perfectly because they are different colors and sizes. This emphasizes that what "is made to appear as a living meaningful form is in reality a dead construct". This meaning could also link to *Stools*, as the stools have now lost their history since their functions have changed as well.

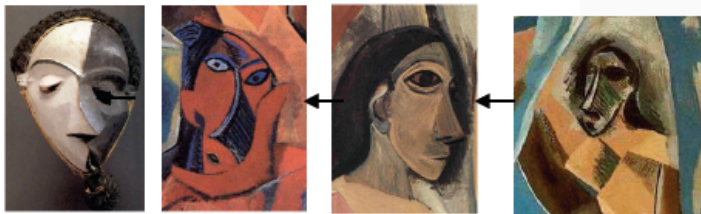


Image 16: Tree, 2009-2010,
Weiwei, wood
Source: The Gaurdian, 01.10.16

The painting displays five nude ladies who do not seem very welcoming or attractive, but in fact appear very aggressive and unfeminine. This is due to the odd, angular, geometric and disjointed depiction of the female body through Picasso's cubist style. Two of the women appear to have mask like faces, suggesting an African tribal mask, while the other two middle figures portray a more feminine and human like figure. At the bottom of the painting, a table is portrayed on which sits a collection of fruits, which appear more of a still-life painting, which contradicts his strong use of geometrical shapes and lines. Embedded to and surrounding the figures is a curtain, constructed from smoother brush strokes, which is one of the only ways in which Picasso depicted depth. Picasso used a diverse range of colors from the color wheel: from harsh, strong, dark and warm tone color to cool, soft tans of olives tone and a variety values of blues. The middle figures are constructed from a warm monochromatic pink/cinnamon color, which hints human like skin.

The purpose of this painting is to challenge the idealized representations of female beauty (9), through the use of the distorted and geometrical shapes which forms a body.

The flat painting has been produced with oil paint on a canvas surface (10). The harsh movement illustrated in the piece is achieved through the geometrical shapes and lines that Picasso has used to construct the female figures. The strong shapes result in a harsh and chaotic movement from one side of the painting to the other. The use of African and Iberian masks was influenced from the primitive art of these cultures (10), with emphasis on the African culture which heavily impacted and influenced Picasso's work- Picasso has created a series of African masks (10). In the "Les Femmes d'Alger" (O.J. version O), the faces possess features that owe to the African culture such as the elongated nose (8). Picasso contradicted two opposite cultural views of an idealized representation of the female beauty, which raises the questions of "what is the idealized beauty and what aspects and features differs and changes within different cultures?". Also, the idea of contrasting two different cultures in one image demonstrates cultural confrontations. The use of impasto to construct the black bulbs over the eyes in addition to the strong geometrical shapes, adds a sense of violence and disruptive feeling.



Mask
Pende, Democratic Republic of Congo
Royal Museum for Central Africa Tervuren

Pablo Picasso
Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J. version O) [Detail] 1907
Museum of Modern Art, New York

An analysis of

Les Demoiselles d' Avignon

Pablo Picasso

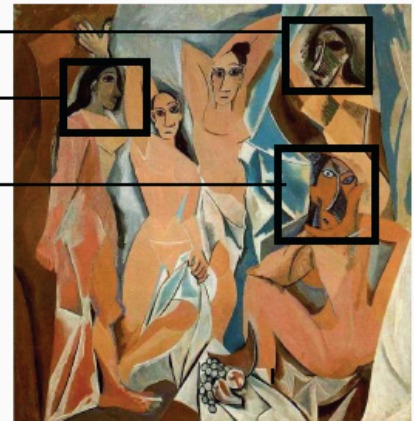


Image 11: Les Demoiselles d' Avignon, Pablo Picasso, 1907, Oil painting on canvas, 96x92in, source: <http://www.pablopicasso.org/>

The painting's original name was "Le Bordel d'Avignon" which translates to "The Brothel of Avignon" was changed by the art critic Andre Salmon to "Les Femmes d'Avignon", "The Young Ladies of Avignon", to reduce the painting's outrageous effect on general society (8).