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The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1960
Fine Arts

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AN EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS, ACCOMPANIED
BY AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT REGARDING
THE PAINTING ACT

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of the Ohio State University

By

MARTIN PAIMER MACK, B. A., M. A.

The Ohio State University
1960

Approved by

[Signature]

Adviser

School of Fine and Applied Arts
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PART I

How, and within what limits, can the artist's problem of creation be related to the rest of life — or more precisely, what makes it possible for the artist to act with regards to the discipline of his craft and vision and yet simultaneously establish the communication of a fact to his audience? This is a question which has become a subject of research, not only of poets and painters, but of aestheticians, psychologist — and indeed, educators. As a problem, this concern for the act of creation, its results as a fact, and the extent to which it disengages the rest of life is of a very particular nature.

Let us consider what T. S. Eliot writes in his introduction to Valery's Art of Poetry:

The only complaint which I am tempted to lodge against Valery's poetics, is that it provides us with no criterion of seriousness. He is deeply concerned with the problem of process, of how the poem is made, but not with the question of how it is related to the rest of life in such a way as to give the reader the shock of feeling that the poem has been to him, not merely an experience, but a serious experience.

In confronting Eliot's complaint, we can frame three questions regarding the act of creation, the resultant fact, and communication; we may note them. What is the problem of process? How, and to what extent, is the artistic creation related to the rest of life? And is an artistic statement to be considered merely a trick or a novel experience if it is not serious? The artistic statement, in point of discussion, can only be considered a fact if it does relate to
the rest of life in a meaningful and serious way. These questions acutely pertain to the artistic problems embodied in this dissertation; and only after we have examined the paintings and drawings and the many other factors which have necessitated their existence can we attempt to answer them. Leslie A. White asserts in Science of Culture that science is one of the two ways of dealing with experience.¹ The purpose of science and art is one, according to White -- to render experience intelligible. I will treat my artistic hypotheses as scientifically as possible; at the same time this exposition will deal with only my particular threefold problems of creation. This exposition will be the means of clarifying my own relationship to the universal aspects of the problem of the creative process.

The nature of the clarification I will offer has been given its coloration by the conditioning that one experiences in an institutional setting -- the community of the university. The three questions we have noted deal with the problem I have encountered perennially in directing my acts in painting and drawing and, again, in my private scrutinizations as to what extent of the rest of life is enclosed by the works I exhibit publicly.

Like Paul Valery, I have nurtured a deep concern for the problem of process, but as an artist whose desperate concern is to communicate to a living audience -- and further, as an artist who identifies himself with certain institutional concepts and a way

of life in relative accordance with them — I have continued to ask how, and to what extent, are my creations related to the rest of life. The gravity, or seriousness, I have experienced in the attainment of an adequate clarification has now and again led me out of and back into the community of the university.

Carl Justav Jung has declared that the creative act will forever elude the human understanding. If we may presume that my paintings and drawings are the results of truly creative acts, the most that I perhaps will succeed in doing will be to reconstruct plausible clues as regards the direction, aim, and significance of my artistic statements. The purpose of this exposition, then, is not to substitute for the studio dissertation, or exhibition of paintings and drawings — which is in almost every respect pictorial. Nor is this exposition to serve as an apologia. It is rather to serve as an introduction to the paintings and drawings, which constitute my artistic hypotheses. I will mention something of the method, order, and emphases that went on in my mind as I worked in forming the painted images.

It is difficult to simplify the preceding description of my regard for process, fact, and audience without considerable distortion in description; nonetheless, we may refer to this concern as the more basic problem of painter-painting and painting-audience — which allows us to grasp the situations of art-as-expression and art-as-communication in more direct terms. We

may make note of, then, the existence of the community -- Man, in the largest sense. Whether the creative activities we call "art" cannot become -- as Tolstoi suggested in a story early in his career -- the destructive forces we call "crime" comes into being as a permanent concern, the syntax of the human situation. It is a question of whether or not vice will triumph over virtue, and violence supersede creativity.
PART II

A love of drawing and the excitement of being told stories by adults has been a significant part of my experience — as far back as I am able to regress into the moments of my childhood. Whatever special gifts I had in art I exercised continuously; if I was not drawing or coloring, I was reading in my collection of story books, which I treasured as much as I respected my parents. My niece found considerable joy in breaking my crayons and in defacing my books. This was the beginning of a conflict situation that was to become more acute than merely a duality between a plastic drive and literary aspirations; it was the germ of my desire to impose my identity — even as a child of five or six — on a world that had the potential of destroying every vestige of it. Later I was to understand what the psyche of my early years had sensed. I enjoyed the self-expression involved in executing animal pictures — the direct images. Also, I experienced pleasure in modeling animal forms in the deep-red-colored clay at my father's brickyard.

During the years of my secondary-school education I attended the Hartford Art School every Saturday. I painted in oils, and was intrigued by the construction of puppets. This interest in tangible form led me to study ceramic design and sculpture at the Alfred University several years later.
As a freshman at Trinity College I studied literature and encountered Professor Kenneth Walter Cameron. Literary notions began to take form, yet I felt a keen sense of frustration --- not enough of my total being was involved in an inventive process, and my ideas seemed arid and without body.

On leave-of-absence from Trinity College, I spent a year at the Alfred University. And coming in contact with Professor Clara Nelson in painting, and with Professor Marion Fosdick, a disciple of the ceramist Doctor Charles Fergus Binns, in sculpture, I began to study the plastic arts with a dedicated intensity --- my first more mature interest in painting took conscious form. The two instructresses, and indeed almost all of the faculty in art --- excepting Daniel Rhodes who had taught mural painting at the Stanford University --- had painted with Hans Hofmann. At this school in New York State I was exposed to the theories of Hildebrand, Kepes, Moholy-Nagy, and post-Cezanne thought.

I returned to Trinity College because the specialized methods of the professional school tended to prohibit (it seemed to me at that point in my growth) my entrance into the world of ideas; I sought the "liberal arts." Professor Cameron aided me in my research in American Literature; he reconstructed the milieux of Emerson, Whitman, Dickinson, and Thoreau in vivid terms. We visited Longfellow's home in Cambridge, and I saw a painting the American poet had purchased in Europe --- an image of Franz Liszt, walking out of the darkness of a room; he held a lighted torch that gave a
description of his countenance. But again, I returned to the Alfred University for two summers --- in an attempt to yoke ideas with images and form.

The early American poets and writers did not engender enough tangible qualities --- or we might call it modernity of vision --- to support my painterly and literary conceptions. And I found that another stream of thought existed at Trinity. When I came within its resounding meaning, I realized that it was native to me. I registered in a class in creative writing and made the acquaintance of Professor Samuel French Morse, who praised the paintings of Paul Klee and the fugues of Igor Stravinsky. Of course it was necessary to study with Professor Clarence Watters, a former student of Marcel Dupre, in order to understand what a fugue was.

Professor Morse introduced me to the poetry of Edwin Arlington Robinson, Wallace Stevens, and T. S. Eliot. At last I had found resonance with the music and sensuous verse of an American poet, Wallace Stevens. During our study of Stevens, a year after the poet had received the Pulitzer Prize, the poet succumbed to cancer and died. Professor Morse became the executor of Stevens' literary estate, published Opus Posthumous, and commenced writing a biography on the poet who no longer saw Hartford in "a purple light." It seemed that what Emerson had been to the world (for he had been translated into many tongues), Stevens was becoming to New England and the Middle West --- though the Pacific Coast had not
accepted Stevens. Doctor Frank Baxter of the University of California contended — when confronted with a serious question on my part — that Stevens' smile was a wry one, a facial expression that went only from the shoulders up.

Petitioning for a fine arts tutorial at Trinity College, I worked with a professor and with an instructor, both former students of the pre-Albers Yale Art Department. I painted within the representational idiom and developed a facility in trompe l'oeil techniques. The study of painting in thin glazes was valuable, and although this experience was nothing more than a continued development in rendering and depicting objects, it gave me more skill in representation. My peers applauded Audubon and Pierre Roy and Kay Sage; and I could not relate Klee and Matisse to this approach. Negatively, I was learning to perceive the visual field in terms of isolated objects, not as an organic whole. I have had to overcome this delimiting approach in order to see in a manner essential to construction with abstract shapes. The cubist aesthetic had been implicit in the teaching of the professors at Alfred; I did not accept the guidance offered at Trinity.

With majors in Fine Arts and English, I correlated both fields by the introduction of a seminar project, The Graphic Recreation of Poetry and Poetic Imagery. Completing this project with Professor Morse, I undertook the re-creation of T. S. Eliot's "Morning at the Window," Wallace Stevens' "Public Square," and Edwin Arlington Robinson's "Tristram." I received the degree
Bachelor of Arts in English with Honors in Fine Arts at Trinity College in 1955.

The five years of graduate study which I have spent at Ohio State University constitute a major influence on my life and painting. In successive measures, I have come in contact with a group of gentlemen who have had experience adequate enough to guide me --- more directly, to note the seeds (not the obvious public blossomings) of my artistic predilections and painterly-literary notions and to make apparent to me possible directions for the symbolization of my experience. The names of Franklin Ludden, Hoyt Sherman, James Grimes, Roy Harvey Pearce, Robert King, and Ross L. Mooney follow. Considered as the builders of a collective band of thought, these professors aided me in establishing a number of ideas of personal significance. These ideas pertain to the artistic impulse of the nineteenth century in relation to that of the twentieth century, an operational attitude and historical framework for artistic expression, a means of gaining resonance with subject matter ("object material"), and the traditional intellectual and artistic disciplines of romanticism in the art of the United States, a love of drawing and color, and the artist --- "The Artist and Our Human Need"3 --- in the community of the university.

My first encounter at Ohio State University was with Professor Robert King in drawing. The vine charcoal that I had always used in drawing from the plaster cast at Trinity was no longer acceptable, rather I was obliged to use crude chunks of compressed charcoal that rendered shapes and lines in an amorphous manner. We drew in the Flash Laboratory under various light conditions in the methods of imposed perception, attempting to achieve unified images with charcoal on paper. In these sessions we also worked in the papier colle process. It was at this time that I met Professor Hoyt Sherman, who described the ideology underlying this approach to drawing and painting with great patience.

In our discussions, Professor Sherman disclosed to me certain of his assumptions as regards the Visual Demonstration Center and offered interpretations of the phenomena we viewed there. These informal talks functioned as a means of my correlating the phenomena observed at the Center with the problem of artistic creation. With Professor Sherman I witnessed a cataclysm; this took place as we studied a Goya-like drawing of mine. He made several smears with a piece of charcoal in the appropriate "life-and-death" positions (in no less careful manner than my brother moves his scalpel in obstetrical surgery) -- and I saw the whole unit "shift;" the shapes for an instant became animate, nudged each other in a way adequate enough to impact the whole unit, and they remained forever concrete.

Most important is the fact that Professor Sherman was able to communicate two things -- two facets regarding the unfold-
ment of the painted image in Western painting and an operational attitude and a framework for my own expression — which is to say, a sense of my own place in history as a painter and dedicated student. This was an awareness that no body of books, nor group of artistic personalities had ever given me. Professor Sherman's communication of these two facets aided me in consolidating several strands of belief that had been generated in reading T. S. Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" at Trinity College.

Working within the discipline of art history with Professor Franklin Ludden, I studied the aspects of structure and style in certain of the paintings of Henri Matisse. Later I completed a research project, The Romantic Pictures of Eugene Delacroix. Our inquiry into the romanticism of Delacroix necessitated the reading of his Journal. One passage offered meaning of a very particular quality to me; I quote it:

Gold is not often found in those smiling and fertile fields which bear peaceful harvests and fat pasturage. It is found in the entrails of the terrible rocks which terrify the traveler, the lair of tigers and of wild birds.  

By nature, I felt an immediate recognition of what I judged Delacroix had stated in metaphor. It seems reasonable that Baudelaire had described Delacroix as a "lake of blood by evil angels haunted"

in Les Phares. The "Gold" I sought was my own expression as an artist, and I sensed that I would have to search into the very entrails of human experience -- slaughterhouses, honky-tonks, and tropical climates -- which at first glance would terrify me. I recalled that Andre Malraux once had asserted that Delacroix painted his religious pictures in a "profane" style -- Delacroix' own.\(^5\) I began to form a basic notion as to what my subject matter ("object material") would be; my means was concentrated periods of painting and contemplation. At this time I formulated two questions: What will constitute my "object material"? And what will be the direction of my symbolic activity? I was certain that the only genuine answer to be arrived at could be my own -- in terms of my particular expressive drive, painterly gifts, and sensibility.

In my informal discussions with Professor James Grimes I found one means of gaining resonance with "object material," and of symbolizing this experience in the form of a series of paintings. It was clear to me that symbols would not rise spontaneously from my own mind, but would become articulate through contact with things seen -- E. H. Gombrich poses a similar hypothesis on symbolic externalization in "Psychoanalysis and the History of Art."\(^6\) This


clarification is reinforced by a statement of Jeanne Boardman Knorr:

The painting is the result of both creative intuition and the process which is activated through the act of painting. It is necessary to quote her further:

The process is embodied in the painting and it is the reason for it. The act of painting is a process of discovery of ways and means of making explicit in pictorial form the residue of creative intuition, which is symbolized in the canvas not at once but gradually. 7

I could see that my series of painting would be the concrete results of the very process of painting through the act of painting; the process itself would be embodied in the painted images and indeed would be the reason for them. Further, I realized that this process of discovery would be symbolized on the canvasses not at once but gradually.

Only as I grew in terms of the progressive sequences of my paintings did I comprehend David D. Ketner's reference to Carl Gustav Jung -- the case of the work of art determining the artist. 8

This is noted by Jung in Modern Man in Search of a Soul: The work in process becomes the poet's fate, and determines his psychic development. It is not Goethe who creates Faust, but Faust who creates Goethe. 9 A visit to the David A. Davies Slaughterhouse in Columbus

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7 Jeanne Boardman Knorr, Ph. D. Thesis: An Exhibition of Paintings, Accompanied by a Journal of the Creative Process and the Act of Painting (Ohio State University, 1956), pp. 1, 2.


9 Jung, op. cit., 375.
constituted the external beginning of my fate as an artist.

My painted images had been weak, and I could not establish a resonant relation with "object material" of any kind; thus Professor Grimes suggested that I view the process of slaughter. I visited the slaughterhouse, and a reaction of shock followed, although it did not "hit" me for many months. A seeming holocaust of anxiety settled upon me, for the slaughterhouse catalyst forced me to confront all of my vaguely felt notions in their totality for an instant. Vestiges from Malcolm Cowley's *Exile's Return* were in my mind. It was as though Professor Grimes had ignored the rich theory and insight of Professors Sherman and Ludden and had opened the Cowley volume and had pointed to a passage on one page; it read thus:

> It happened that our professors were eager to furnish us with such a key or guide; they were highly trained, earnest, devoted to their calling. Essentially the trouble was that the world they pictured for our benefit was the special world of scholarship—timeless, placeless, elaborate, incomplete and bearing only the vaguest relationship to that other world in which fortunes were made, universities endowed and city governments run by muckers. 10

I left the community of the university and retreated to the security of my parents' home in Connecticut. It was there that I formalized several written passages on the slaughterhouse experience and painted *The Portrait of the Baroness Pulchalski*. Part III of my exposition deals exclusively with the genesis of this portrait. In retrospect, I do not consider the portrait to be one of my most significant

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paintings. Jacques Maritain offers a fitting outline which is relatively aligned with my attitude as regards *The Portrait of the Baroness Pulchalski*. Maritain detects an element of imposture and quackery that is manifested in the primacy of the subject represented in certain Surrealist paintings. Maritain declares:

... to represent things devised both to captivate the eyes and to wound and shatter at the same time the heart of the spectator, to disorganize him and destroy something in him, to catch him in a trap, by means of a certain monstrous contrivance suddenly revealed in the spectacle.

We may note that — although the painting of this portrait was a serious experience for me — the work does not describe itself to an audience as a more permanent and controlled experience. Its expressionist dimensions are too great, and the painting-audience relation is incomplete.

As a means of my constructing more clear notions of painter-painting and painting-audience communication, Professor Sherman introduced me to Professor Roy Harvey Pearce. Agreeing to augment my painterly enquiry by means of literary criticism, Professor Pearce directed me to certain of the disciplines of the New Critics of Poetry. And he called my attention to Charles D. Abbott's first tentative study of the worksheets of contemporary poets; it was the volume *Poets at Work*, which included essays by W. H. Auden, Karl Shapiro, Rudolf Arnheim, and Donald A. Stauffer. We endeavored to establish workable criteria for evaluating the inventive act of painting and for judging the fact of the painted image in a penetrating manner. The sequence of writings that evolved from our

Again I left the community of the university and transported a large body of my paintings to New York City and made contacts with several galleries. My disappointment in the commercial milieu of the ten blocks of contemporary American painting galleries was balanced only by the seeing of a play. My friends at an off-Broadway theater, the Sullivan Street Playhouse, were presenting Eugene Ionesco's The Bald Soprano and Jack (or The Submission). The cast's projection of the dramatic power of Ionesco only tended to heighten what I responded to as a destructive tone in the two plays. I detected a form of genius, but this innate gift somehow was adorned with a certain dementia; I felt a sense of terror greater than that which I had experienced at the slaughterhouse. Ionesco had proceeded to break down almost every stable corner of conscious experience — a sense of being undermined from too many subterranean levels of consciousness was present. I formed one question: Cannot the effect of the creative process in its decreative aspects become destructive? Simone Weil in Le Peintre et la Grace had declared that decreation is
making pass from the created to the uncreated, but that destruction is making pass from the created to nothingness. I found myself at the point of nothingness -- a place where human values were no longer existent -- after witnessing the plays of Ionesco.

The plays of Eugene O'Neill, Ionesco, Tennessee Williams, and Samuel Beckett have in varying intensities a tone of destruction inherent in their structure. As playwrights, these men at different times have demonstrated their talents for unearthing unusual characters, delighting in them, and for dealing with marginal experiences and abnormal cases. Jacques Maritain affords a sufficient description of this type of artistic genius in speaking of what Rimbaud called the _combat d'esprit_: Intensity in which we see high qualities of spirit fall from above, and poetry fated to doom cast its last secret flame at the boundaries of death. It is as though these playwrights during their creative process -- misdirected themselves in the experience common to most creators as choosing without making a choice. They took, if you will, what I only can term as the wrong road. Maritain gives a better description of this phenomenon than I am able to extend:

When man seeking his own inner universe takes the wrong road, he enters the internal world of the deaf unconscious, while believing he enters the internal world of the spirit, and

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13 Maritain, _op. cit._, p. 58.
he thus finds himself wandering in a false kind
of self-interiority, where wildness and automatism
mimic freedom. 14

Back once again in the community of the university, my
search for "object material" led me in a direction more or less
similar to that of the playwrights -- to the honky-tonks. I
watched the miscreants who frequented the Dutch Cafe and the Honky
Tonk Tavern in Columbus -- until the two cafes were raided. The
honky-tonks provided me with the local manners of a certain group
of people; and yet the underlying tone of my paintings was destructive.
I wrote many poems, but I quote one:

NITECLUB DAYE

Nightly-featured
Vivien Day barks
A fat Polish ballade.

Stripped of blue gown,
Daye folds out like
Any gal before the
Sorching curse of
Morning.

At this point Professor Grimes recognized not the symbols of my
expression but the symptoms of it. He studied my drawings and then
introduced me to a group of folk singers, for he believed that it
was necessary for me to become immersed in a regional "object
material." Periods of vigorous drawing were the most important means
of transfiguring my abundant responses to the expressive potential
of these human situations.

14
Ibid., p. 69.
Over the July Fourth holidays the folk singers invited me to accompany them to Athens, Ohio. I went with them and helped them paint their trailer, and they fed me. These people were unaware of poetry as I would conceive of it -- for them poetry existed only in the unconscious passages of music, thought, and action which passed by them for the most part unnoticed. They generated poetic immolations -- both private and particular -- which never would be engaged in a public framework. Living with the folk singers in Columbus and Athens, I was arrested by the direct and epigrammatic nature of their words and behavior. Nothing ever was stated obliquely, rather comments always were candidly posed in raw fact. One poem emerged from the visit to Athens.

THE PEOPLE OF ATHENS

She had got littler;
Her otherworld look
Faded like pink roses.

He had grew’d rough;
His this-worldly gape
Flushed like brown sands.

They were wed and locked;
Lived in Hocking Hills County—
No longer folks of Bucyrus
Or Massillon; not even
People of Athens.

Using Edouard Manet’s The Old Musician and Picasso’s The Saltimbanques as references, I consolidated my poems, drawings, and feelings in one painting, Family Group. Professor Grimes noted that the historical references had represented six human figures; and we observed that in Picasso’s The Saltimbanques red, yellow, and blue were present in
relatively saturated intensities. Thus we theorized, and we concluded that only one of the hues exerted itself in its fullest intensity, the other hues were subordinated in a type of organic pictorial order.

Following the general examination for the doctorate at Ohio State University, I felt a hunger for the vile and raw greenness of slim-covered marsh grass. I sought chartreuse masses of vegetation with strips of zinc yellows and the bright orange and red tips of growing flowers; I left Ohio and lived in Florida. There I felt an intense compulsion to scrutinize the essence of movement in growing things, which was caused by the dense atmosphere of light tropical breezes, I wanted to sense the quiet sensuousness of what I wished to revitalize as the facts of a freshly dead corpse of a maiden -- Ravel's Pavanne to a Dead Princess. In Florida I was able to transfer my feelings that had arisen in the honky-tonks in Columbus: the quality of dirt and the petal-soft juxtaposed with the carbuncular. The Mermaid Tavern was nearby in Hobe Sound, Florida; but now only the ocean and the exotic radiance of the skies constituted my "object material." The tragic tavern crew existed somewhere, but their fate was consumed by my direct view of nature and vegetation.

I had found my inner self as a painter of romantic pictures, and I realized that in painting one achieves another life -- a plastic and spiritual life. It is in painting that one is close to death. For in death one meets his spirit for an instant: at that time he (the painter) sees in a sense what he is and what he is not. The
contemplation of my earlier paintings became for me a state of
meditation. Liszt and Ravel had disappeared, only Ernest Bloch
remained. This was my meditation — a relatively complete aware-
ness of my genuine self. In speaking of Zen Buddhism, Robert
Linssen lends description to what I experienced in confronting
myself:

Before reaching this domain lying beyond
all experience, we reveal ourselves in the
fire of experience. Correct meditation
...is a lucidity of every instant in the
course of which are revealed our emotional
and mental reactions, our craving, susceptibi-
ties, attachments, our sensuality, and violence
in our relation with others.15

The meaning of Paul Eluard's poem became clear to me in terms of a
private meaning:

END OF A MONSTER

You must see yourself die
To know that you still live
The sea is very deep and your heart quite shallow
Son of the earth eater of flowers cinder-fruit
In your breast the shades forever cover the sky.

Sun loose the cord the walls no longer are dancing
Sun leave to the birds impenetrable ways.16

As Juan Ramon Jimenez has written — "My soul, mirror in
darkness, wherever you may be you catch the light"17 —

15 Robert Linssen, Living Zen (New York: The Macmillan

16 Paul Eluard, Picasso (New York: Philosophical Library,
1947), p. 56.

17 Juan Ramon Jimenez, Selected Writings (New York: Farrar,
I now write an introduction to the exhibit of my works. The light which the inevitable absolute of my conscious self has caught is embodies in the exhibition of paintings and drawings enclosed in this thesis. These works symbolically define my inner Self for this instant.
Portrait of the Baroness Pulchalski  Oil on Canvas  44" x 30"

(Collection of Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Sterling, Toronto, Canada.)
The Old Musician by Manet

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

(Chester Dale Collection, Loan)
The Saltimbanques by Picasso  
Oil on Canvas  
84" x 90"

Painted 1905

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

(Chester Dale Collection, Loan)
Family Group

Oil on Canvas

49″ x 79″
PART III

The genesis of the essential factors of the formal color contrast found in *The Portrait of the Baroness Pulchalski* the color value and intensity contrast of pure cadmium red and pure cadmium yellow, light, took place, we at least may assume, three months before the creation of the painting itself.

How does one happen to create a painting: where does it come from? The psychologist or the geneticist of art have asked this question — a question that assuredly bears upon the method, order, and emphases that go through the painter's mind from the first point of his orgiastic identification with an artistic conception to the inventive processes and ultimate formalization, the painting.

A visit to the David A. Davies Slaughterhouse in Columbus, Ohio, served as a primary "trigger" for a long sequence of expressionist outbursts. Exposure to butchery on a large scale cast into strong relief certain metaphysical concern.

The first outpouring of expressionism occurred several days after the Davies House visit; I wrote a descriptive section. Its repetitious and confused form suggest a reaction of shock:

Does it matter if they are cutting up the cows? I asked which door to take and a tall, thin man wearing boots and whiskers showed me how to get where I wanted to go. A push, and the door opened. A whole trough full of red liquid first met my eyes. Then the tones of somber brown layers of fur and hide tattered down to the square of red.
The odor of blood filled me. One man had bled
them, and the others were busy chopping and
cutting. A heavy man with a black rubber apron
was pushing a wheelbarrow. He held it and then
slashed at the cow's bulk of stomach. And with
a knife he cut the form clear down - a slit clear
through. All at once the whole intestines dropped
cut outside the stable carcass and into the wheel­
barrow like a massive harvest of porous flesh.
Full, rounded and swollen tubular forms filled the
face of the wheelbarrow. The heavy man wheeled
it away.

In the center of the slaughter-room men of
different character sawed down the limp and the
lead-like hanging forms of cattle. What had
been chewing before was taken through bleeding
and was lowered upside down as it climbed, in
a futile role, at the grey wall. Thoroughly
disseminated the cows' forms were now dead
and numb.

This is the pattern: growth, harvest, and then-
murder, murder with hot blood and many workers.
They prepare food for the mouths of up-moving
children who know kindness. These kids cannot
be killers, for they merely grow on meat.

A pattern of life is outlined in the blood-mess.
What part are we? Are we, too, dissolving and
being laid bare in the ultimate? Do we wait for
something like the morning attack of butchers
come at us in our beds?

A friend sang that perhaps we are like the cows.
And maybe our end-route is just as brutal and
clear as it beckons. We know and believe that
we exist, but what are we doing and what way will
we go? Will we perhaps be led in varying speeds,
only to contribute to the bloody square? The
flesh smells and the muscles feel like tough
layers of uncontrolled bulk.

Can we jump from the cage or out of the slaughter­
house? If we make the jump, what will pull us
into another slaughter?
The pattern, the red square and we are one.
The design is manifest, and we must follow through the doors. We cannot turn and go -- it lurks everywhere.

and later I wrote:

The hearer sounds, and hear blasts of loud noises that parch the skin on my face!

A big contrast of loudness with a drawn-out soft happens.

It seems like they must have had a great battle on top of a hill -- with a horizon of tall, and some bending, war figures who broke the long rectangular stretches of the garish yellow sky. The figures were dark -- black, really -- but somehow the sides split and red streams puddled out.

The streaks of yellow -- so bright that one only sees light that blinds me and pulls my eyelids taut -- parched, parched -- and Josey pat the skin of an elephant, for it's like the fact that covers the skull of a really old man.

Then bars of red cadmium wash out everything, even my affective things.

Remember the long hillside with the figures conflicting, and I can still see parades of non-people. They walk in grey ranks and wave something around. It is their selves, brittle wraps for pithy old stumps of teachers.

The young ladies and the old men say that it is all over because some green things are coming in. Don't be afraid now, for we are all lying to the Tall Man who will never speak to us. Horrible quietness could part the fabrics for me -- but the bell might ring and Juan would backup and pull the horse's tail.

Ring and rake for we must zag in the red heart.

A chorus of really nice people would shake us to death and we would sprout like orange tulips that cost too much.

Money for your time, when you should really bear me a zagger. And a beam of tea could always spill on a spotted tiger. Eyes, nose, and pulse rush us to the red skid-track.
We rush and jump some, and our arms go round — princes get tired even and what is their purpose? Arms stop and we go further down the track — though the track-line is fake, and pacers on and on go through us.

Into a vacuum we all rush and then can look beside us. It is the ones who had fooled us on earlier sides — then turn red, open up, and shake the room. The voiders swell and we disappear into a no red purpose.

The color war and the battling figures on the noisy hillside tire everyone. I turn around, but the thoughts still pull at my wrist and hit my sides; is this a punishment for nothing?

If I could turn it off like a horse, I would be a machine that rolls instead of chopping piecemeal.

My studio contained a palette that had been somber and fugitive — the palette piece had been so for several months. Cadmium red pigment was at the palette's corner in a glob; it grew to pin my thoughts and art forms to a certain terror about the immense statement of the blood-like la condition humaine:

Sc cattle blood is not entirely different from my blood, and cadmium, like my blood, is red and can grow pasty. Not red pigment, my blood cannot be mixed with extender or Damar to express man's spirit (with red-purplish and yellowish white veins coiling around it) in its cage.

Red, and why does that brite spectacled man talk out when I turn the page? And what is this — his tough poem, a nothing piece. Is he so caught up in meshy living veins and in a cell of bone padding, that he cannot hear the knocking in the skull? But how can a heart share some of the terror if quiet children will eat it — maybe it (the child) chews on green.
Three months after the slaughterhouse visit in Columbus, Ohio, I sat alone in my atelier in Windsor, Connecticut. My field of vision extended as I looked through the window of the studio; I saw a "red", and the perception unnerved me for I could not guess what the spot of red was or what it belonged with.

Then I concentrated on the spot of bright cadmium red, and I saw -- it was a sweater, and it was worn by a feminine figure who in addition, wore a skirt, grey and full.

My security in externality had been shaken, for I was only able to determine what the red spot was by searching with my eyes to find out where the shape was, that is, where its material-mass groundings were. The tree, the massing of grass, and the buildings all permitted a sculptural orientation; past experience with physical form saved me from the acute terror of being an Eye.

Allie, the baron's wife, was coming to the studio for her first sitting. The appointment was to paint her portrait. She too, had unnerved me, especially in our meeting in the street.

Adulthood is the only quality that I had invented or divined at the time of my first meeting with the Baroness Pulchalski. She was aggressive and moved with firmness, always completing each movement with a coarse halt. She had a Polish festival dress -- her ultimate mark was to be painted in it. I had painted her daughter, Linda, and in seeing the child's portrait, Allie commented that the conflict of her own life was present in the dynamics of the picture of Linda.
As I balanced the reaction to the red spot and the impressions of the wife of the Polish baron — redness seems to swell in me; I sought neutrality. Buzz and static started when the adult woman entered the atelier.

Her dress was a festive blue, and it had innumerable ribbons and lace — scribble and dynamic calligraphy to my eyes. The lady's hair was unruly; I recalled the meshy network of ribbons. Did she strike me like the fierce woman of Durer's Melencolia I: but the lady--leaning-on-elbow by Duer isn't covered with ribbons of blood -- could she be?

On the first day I was anxious to "block-in" the two or three major localities -- the essential blocks of contrast. I began drawing, all the time attempting to see this woman as a flat picture. Impressions of texture invaded me and made me want to rub my fingers together and twist my neck. And reactions to linear stimili cut away any bonds with physical masses, and I wanted to turn my wrists at oblique angles and strike them against solid materials for security -- I knew that I could no longer coordinate my wrists with a "grasp" action of my hands. "To grasp" is to reach for a physical object; "to see" is to float without bodily limbs -- the only reminder of mass is that kinesthetic contact of, not the arm or the hand, but the whole organism, without gravity, fixating at the flexible brushtip as it (the brush tip) hits the plane of the canvas. My awareness of the brush's tip was almost the only contact with the "otherness" of externality I had.
The initial sitting with the Baroness served to render her more pliable; I grew to possess the impact of the subject matter. It was "something about" the Baroness that I carried through a dialectic and through abstraction. Even at this time, the proportions and features related to the woman took on a monstrous effect. Little by little, the recognizable aspects of the painting dissolved; a cataclysmic upheaval was taking place. The emphases and energies started in conflict -- the visual image, once suggestive of a woman, was lost in a discord of the plastic elements of line, shape, texture, and color.

My sitter left, but I remained near the canvas and painted. The largest possible generalizations of broad color areas had not localized themselves -- a battle, plastic and determined, was still to go on. Largest generalization competed with the relatively largest generalization -- one fought to lie on top of or to overlap the other in a flat physical sense. The edges of shapes would meet and form a boundary, a type of double contour -- yet the energies of the whole work would not allow this for long. "On top of," "underneath," and "beside" all fought to hold their position and direction on every small area of the canvas.

By the time of the second day with the Baroness, the major color localities had declared their roles. Pure cadmium red and pure cadmium yellow, light, were the localities. The hues of red and yellow acted with both valences of color, color value and color intensity.
The problem at the second sitting, it seemed, was to make use of the Baroness and the resultant psychological and aesthetic dimensions, and somehow to "bridge" and interpolate between the dissonant ends of red and yellow -- all the time with an intention of ultimately moving back into a representational "portrait."

The off-tones, garish and stinging, were the means of creating an imbalance proportionate enough to "nourish" a discord that would assimilate any lesser discords. The plastic fight continued, and slowly the representational elements emerged.

It was the last sitting that marked a "yoking together" of the discordant elements by the most economic means at my command. How truthful it is that work screams, and that "violins off-pitch" can be sensed within it -- but my intention was that the work scream, but all one way -- with the energies all setting up the greatest possible discord, an unharmony that unites dissimilar things.
PART IV

Within the idiom of representational painting, my primary "object material" is man, his actions, and his feelings. My painting is almost always an inner reaction to observed outside struggle. It is the type of realism that Jacques Maritain describes in an elaboration on the work of Georges Rouault: "It is realism of the spiritual significance of what exists (and moves, and suffers, and loves, and kills).

Any coup d'oeil upon nature is an intense experience for me; it often enforces an abandonment before the thing seen and acutely felt. At this point in my experiencing of an artistic impulse I usually identify myself, at least in terms of resonance, with the coup d'oeil upon nature of Courbet and Corot — as noted in the constructive terms of Roger Fry: Of Courbet, "The fullest liberation, the most effective functioning of his plastic imagination, occurred when his whole sensibility was intent upon the thing seen," and of Corot, "There was a man who was so constituted that almost any coup d'oeil upon nature liberated within him the rarest, strangest, subtlest harmonies of tone and colour."16

An impressionistic notion as regards a human personality who sits for a portrait, a landscape passage, a still life assemblage, or a study from the human figure often constitutes the

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impetus for beginning one of my paintings or drawings. I begin with an impulse that best can be described as an idea of serial representation, or of picture-series. And as I distil the raw impulse not as a means of controlling it but as a means of directing it, I instantly search within my conscious sensibility for the most fruitful moment for representation. I seek a "snapshot", or an impression, momentary and representational. The difficulties I meet in giving concrete pictorial form to this impressionistic and impulsive reaction to a glance upon nature give one characteristic of style to my work. It is the characteristic of individual expression. We may recall what Ernest Hemingway declared when he was asked how he developed his style of writing: "In stating as fully as I could how things were, it was often very difficult and I wrote awkwardly and the awkwardness is what they called my style. All mistakes and awkwardnesses are easy to see, and they called it style." The expressive aspect of my painting is the by-product of an impressionistic grasping for the prime impulse or "object material"; the plastic and organizational aspect of my painting is the end-product of my instinctive involvement with the raw facts of the painting materials and their formal relations; and the stylistic aspect of my painting is the end-product of little more than the battle scars and the awkward incompletions of the struggle to speak within the discipline of my given medium. It is as though, in the resolution of style, the audience completes what I could not — whether with ridicule, or with praise.
The painter must have abundant reactions to things; he must feel abundantly. As I commence to paint representational images which mirror the "object material" in nature through my conscious sensibility, I sometimes create geometric shapes. This by no means implies any contempt for or divorce from nature; rather, it is an attempt to steal from nature -- as was the case with Renoir -- its own secrets of invention. These shapes are not made rationally; they are arrived at more or less intuitively and automatically. The logic of the geometric character that the shapes will have is apparent to me only after their implicit shapelessness has been established spontaneously -- thus it may be with the invention of the geometric shapes in my works as it is with art and reason in Jacques Maritain's "Art Bitten by Poetry Longs to be Freed from Reason." He reminds us that there may be not only reason, but also, and prior to it, intuitive reason.

In my painting I want to achieve sensuous shapes; they must be full and wide, like objects of tropical growth. I do not want shapes that have been twisted and turned by an anguished mind. My shapes must grow with the strength of a tree and be as fluidly related to each other as the water which sustains human life is to us. These shapes have existence only as they are related to an absolute -- through and beneath all of these shapes an absolute


20 Maritain, op. cit., p. 55.
must exist. And this absolute never can be altered, for the resultant configurations are only so many attempts of seemingly different character which move towards the one absolute. The absolute is the pictorial construct, and it can be expressed as the manipulation of brightness contrasts which are given plastic vitality by the nature of their various positions, their opposing sizes, their effected overlap, and by their differences in hue. And always the drive is to impact in concrete terms the organically achieved amounts of the color primaries, red, yellow, and blue. This struggle is in a sense aligned with the plastic drives of Mondrian and Leger — manifested in certain periods of their work. My drive is to achieve "closure" in the modulations of pure pigment — no matter what the tone or number of hues used. Even in a colored chalk drawing the slightest hint of hueness prompts me to introduce opposing huenesses to the surface. As Leger has said:

"Pure color, dynamically disposed, is capable of visually destroying a wall. Color is a formidable material, as indispensable to life as water or fire . . . I make use of the law of contrasts which is the eternal means of producing the impression of activity, of life . . . I strive to build up organized oppositions of contrasting volumes and contrasting lines."

Unlike Leger, I do not entertain the possible existence of volumes in my paintings; for me the cube, the sphere, and the cylinder will always be more than the physical mass that one can

experience in externality -- they have no integrity on a flat, painted surface. In describing my way of building up organized oppositions, I mention not volume but shape and line. My pictorial vocabulary is made up of shape, color, line, and texture. And in working with pure color contrast I attempt not to lose a sensuousness of texture; we recall that Mondrian and Leger eliminated texture for the most part when they dealt with pure pigment.

In my use of the four pictorial elements, I attempt to establish a plastic relation between them and the flat plane that sustains their existence. I consider them to be plastic in so far as they are strong enough to exist as four distinct elements and at the same time are weak enough to yield to the influence of the "field" of the flat plane -- yet not all at once. This implies, I trust, the factor of time. The "closure" of these elements functions as space. Spatial experience in my paintings is intimately connected with the experience of light. Without light there is no vision, and without vision there can be no visible space. Space, then, as a visual experience, is light-space. Vision is always "there," and the flat picture plane and its plastic elements are always "here" -- volumes as we know them in externality are non-existent.

In achieving a decentralized or baroque pictorial unity, I work from the general qualities of the painted image to the particular ones. The flatness of the picture plane is primary, and it constitutes the "field" or "ground" if the plastic elements are to exist at all. There is no discontinuity between the plastic
elements and the surrounding surface area. The plastic elements are truly distinct where the concentration of energy in the "field" is small; this distinctness can be described as a positioned locality. Every positioned locality is structured within the "field" and is continuous with it; and every positioned locality is, in turn, overlapping with other positioned localities. As Mondrian has declared:

"Every true artist has always been moved by the beauty of line, color, and relationship for their own sake and not by what they represent. He has always tried to express all energy and all vital richness by these means along . . . He has augmented the tension of line and purified the color . . . to conquer individual expression and to reveal, as far as possible, the universal aspect of life."

And as it was with Leger -- Truth in painting is color at its fullest: red, black, yellow, since pure tone in painting is reality — thus it is with the red, yellow, and blue in my painting and the plastic, painterly elements within my frame of reference.

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Study in Color Structure  
Oil on Canvas  
30" x 17"
Still Life with Peacock Feathers
(Collection of Alexander Kirkland,
Gallery 14, Palm Beach, Florida.)
View of Seal Beach, California  Oil on Canvas  36" x 18"
View of Salerno, Florida
Oil on Canvas
33½" x 42"
Florida Seascape: Hobe Sound. Watercolor. 11" x 14"
Still Life with Bottle  Watercolor  11" x 11"
Still Life with Feather  
Oil on Canvas  
20" x 18"
Still Life with Jug
Oil on Canvas
28" x 24"
Still Life in Red
Oil on Canvas
20" x 27"
Barnyard with Horse  Drawing  8" x 10"
Still Life with Potatoes
Drawing
18" x 24"
Chrysanthemum Growers Drawing 11" x 14"
Portrait of Anna, I  Drawing  11" x 11"
Still Life with Doll  Drawing  8" x 10"
Venus, I  
Drawing  
11" x 14"
I, Martin Palmer Mack, was born in Windsor, Connecticut, January 17, 1933. I received my secondary-school education in the public schools of Windsor, Connecticut, and my undergraduate training at Trinity College. On leave-of-absence from Trinity College, I spent one year at the Alfred University. From Trinity College, I received the degree Bachelor of Arts in 1955. I received the degree Master of Arts in 1957 from the Ohio State University, where I began doctoral research in March of the same year. While in residence there, I acted in the capacity of graduate assistant to Professor Erwin F. Frey during the year 1956-57, and subsequently as a graduate assistant in art history. In October, 1958, I was granted a graduate instructorship in drawing. In 1959, I accepted the position of Instructor of Art at the Los Angeles State College of Applied Arts and Science, where I taught advanced painting and courses in art education. I held this position for one year while completing the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy.