'A COMMENTARY ON PICTORIAL SPACE'

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in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
Master of Art
in the
Department of Art

by
Edward John Epp
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

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Head of the Department of Art
University of Saskatchewan
SASKATOON, Canada
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1. INTRODUCTION

Children can listen breathlessly to a tale of which they understand only little. In the words of William James they take 'flying leaps' over long stretches that elude their understanding and fasten on the few points that appeal to them. They are still able to profit from this incomplete understanding. This ability of understanding—and it is an ability—may be due to their syncretistic capacity to comprehend a total structure rather than analysing single elements. (1)

This quotation refers to "syncretistic" vision: the ability to take from something that which appeals or seems important and to be not perturbed about having or wishing to leave the rest. This is the type of situation in which I see myself when I approach making paintings, viewing paintings, or studying some aspect of painting.

The topic of pictorial space is one which interests me. It is a fundamental element in all pictorial art regardless of epoch. My studies and discussions concerning pictorial space have been approached "syncretistically." With a "syncretistic" vision, I have become attracted to various artists' and writers' ideas on the subject. In this paper, I wish to present my studies and my working relationship with pictorial space.
In discussing pictorial space and my relationship with it, I begin with a look at some types of pictorial space which have been used in Western Art. This historical overview is intended as a preparation for the main body of the paper. These preparatory comments on pictorial space are limited to three periods which are seen as basic: Classical (Greco-Roman), Renaissance, and Baroque.

The main body of ideas deals with contemporary pictorial space problems and includes a view of my own work. I begin this section with a presentation of some ideas which have been written by several contemporary artists and critics regarding space. Next, I concentrate on three artists: Pablo Picasso, Hans Hofmann, and Mark Tobey. The discussions of their respective concepts and uses of pictorial space are by no means exhaustive; they are intended to serve as a means for arriving at a better understanding of my own conceptions and uses of pictorial space.

Finally, with the contemporary artists and critics above, and the historical survey still in mind, I talk about pictorial space and related elements as I understand them in my own work.

* According to Irving Zupnick and Paul Laporte, these three periods are the appropriate ones to study in order to analyse the development of Western pictorial space; they exhibit a logical progression from no system of spatial organization, to the system of linear perspective, and finally to the refinement of that system.
2. COMMENTARY ON PICTORIAL SPACE IN THREE HISTORICAL PERIODS

2.1 Classical period (Greco-Roman)

Space, as conceived by the artists of ancient Greece, was limited by the fact that they did not consider space itself as a system (with spatial coordinates or linear perspective) within which objects were situated. For them space was not thought of as being homogeneous or continuous. Rather, it just existed between solid, measureable objects. Thus, each object had its own space, the limits of which was the exterior surface of the object. Artists focused on solid things and organized them through the use of spatial conventions. They overlapped forms, portrayed more distant things by placing them higher in the picture plane, and made some use of modelling.

The inability to grasp space as a continuum led to a concentration on parts, so that, although in totality Classical art stands for harmonic articulation and organization to us, in actuality it seems to have been conceived in terms of highly developed segments of the whole. That these segments work so well together attests to the complete development of the system. (2)

Frequently, to avoid the problem of perspective, a "neutral or architectural background" was used as a "foil for a frieze of figures." (3)
In summary, there was no sense of space continuum. The art works appeared as concentrations on particular parts or groupings of parts knit harmoniously into a unified whole. This harmony could be achieved because the classical conception of space was developed as a system of parts, with objects in each part, and understood as such.

2.2 Renaissance period

During the Renaissance, great philosophical, social and economic changes provided stimuli and new sources for the artists. The period of transition between Gothic art and the Renaissance has been characterized as a transition from abstraction through realism to materialism. (4) Stern rationality became gradually modified by warmth of feeling and emotion. This new attitude gave rise to the need for a more accurate physical and material representation.

For this, the artists used as their source works of classical antiquity. (Roman wallpaintings are common throughout Italy.) They soon succeeded in achieving a more optically accurate representation of human form. But the paintings of early Renaissance lacked a credible, consistent space which the increasingly more weighty and massive figures could occupy. The space building techniques of classical Greco-Roman pictures were stretched to the limit of credibility by this new realism.
'The Battle of S. Romano' (c. 1454) by Uccello demonstrated this.

With the invention of linear perspective, many of the difficulties were solved and Renaissance portrayal of space became more consistent. It was possible for the size of each figure and object in the system of linear perspective to be "precisely defined through spatial co-ordinates." (5) The perfect observer for these pictures should have viewed the picture at the point of an imaginary cone directly in front, neither too near nor too far away from the picture. Viewing a picture organized with linear perspective was much like viewing a window opening into a space never to be reached. "If the spectator was invited to enter this space at all, he could do so only by imaginatively projecting himself into it." (6)

Having this system of representing space, the artists frequently chose settings such as natural and architectural landscapes which could be adapted to demonstrate their new technique. Linear perspective, an imposed finite system, gave the feeling of a "constructed and piecemeal conquest of space." (7) It was for artists in later periods of art, such as the Baroque, to develop a still more homogeneous and continuous setting for rendering objects and the space that enclosed them.
2.3 Baroque period

In the Baroque period, the conventions for handling space were developed from the ideals established during the Renaissance. These ideals were transmuted by the spirit of the Baroque age. New techniques were developed better to portray this 'new spirit.' "Solidly modelled figures" lost their "precise outlines." (8) Diffused and softened edges integrated solid figures into empty space. Colors close in tonal value were used to heighten this sense of integration. Space was given a fuller definition through the illusion of atmosphere. The step by step, or plane by plane, separation of figures in space developed in the Renaissance was replaced by a more fluid or organic interconnectedness of emerging and receding forms.

(Baroque) Spatial organization attempts to give the illusion of continuous and homogeneous space. (9)

* "The 17th century found Europe a less integrated entity, with the universal faith superseded by a new philosophy based on experimental science. The beginning of the century saw an upsurge of spiritual confidence, coupled with a new approach to classical art which culminated in the Baroque. Foreshadowed in the first decade in Rome by Caravaggio and Anribale Carracci. The greatest exponent of the high Baroque was Bernini. In his work for Popes Urban VIII and Alexander VII, especially at St. Peter's, he achieved the Baroque ideal of the union of architecture, painting, and sculpture—a blending of illusionism, light, colour and movement inviting the emotional participation of the spectator." Huyghe, Rene, ed., Art and Mankind, Larousse Encyclopedia of Renaissance and Baroque Art (London: Paul Hamlyn, 1964), pp. 12-13.
In Baroque painting, the density of the space became consistent with the corporeality of objects and human forms; these beings could live and breathe and move about in this kind of atmosphere. Human form and space had become consistent and credible in Baroque painting.

The centuries-long development of the portrayal of an illusionistic consistent homogeneous space in which figures and objects could exist in a way which paralleled the way they exist for the eye in the natural world, culminated in Baroque painting. Eighteenth and nineteenth century painting further refined this naturalistic illusion.

3. ZUPNICK'S CONCEPTS OF PICTORIAL SPACE

3.1 Introduction

In the nineteenth century, most western artists were using the pictorial space which was their legacy from the artists of antiquity, the renaissance, and the baroque period. But in 1863, when the French painter Edward Manet finished the *Olympia* (1863, 51" x 74 3/4", Louvre, Paris), it was apparent that subsequent western artists would approach pictorial space in different and increasingly varied ways.

In his article, "Concept of Space and Spatial Organization in Art," Zupnick attempts to describe all of the contemporary spacemaking devices. He presents
four classes of pictorial space: 'primitive,' 'conceptual,' 'empirical,' and 'relativistic.' I am very attracted to Zupnick's categorical analysis as a tool for understanding space in both past and present paintings. Zupnick affirms that his classifications have their roots in the development of western art from antiquity forward.

'Classical' space is akin to his definition of 'primitive' space. In both, there is no spatial device (such as linear perspective) to unify objects in space. In 'Empirical' space, the artist tries to more accurately represent 'reality' as he sees it, as did the Renaissance and Baroque artists. 'Conceptual' space parallels 'Byzantine' space. In both, "idea" or "dogma," is more important than realistic rendering. Only 'relativistic' space is without precedent in western painting. Here many perspectives occur in a single picture.

3.2 Primitive spatial organization

Representation of space in a primitive manner is based on the idea of anthropocentricity. "It is dependent entirely upon concrete personal orientation, which develops through piecemeal accretion of isolated experiences into a more or less organized complex of local directions." (10) Because there is no unified way to express subject matter by a type of perspective (eg. linear), the result is a "composition of the most salient factors in the separate experiences." (11)
The primitive artist, called naive artist by some, (children or contemporaries without training in historically evolved methods of spatial representation) often makes distant figures higher and on the same plane as those in the front. Rock paintings are examples of primitive art. Examples of rock paintings are the scenes depicting a battle between animal-headed bowmen seen in Ain Due, Libyan Desert, North Africa or in the Frobenius Institute, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. These paintings contain pictograph-like figures fighting in mid-spaces as well as buffaloes scattered in the scene. They do not contain a sense of depth and the figures resemble silhouettes.

3.3 Conceptual spatial organization

The most important feature of conceptual space is the "expression of ideas or emotional content." (12) Gesture and emotional content are emphasized by the significant use of distortion and placement.

Medieval art would therefore appear to use "conceptual space." The figures found in Madonna and Child Enthroned (c 1250, Mellon Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, 84 cm x 53 cm), are shown in various placements and levels to represent a spacing concept beyond the requirements of purely pictorial arrangement, or physical fact.
Similarly, Mannerist painting does not seem to exhibit tangible space between groups of figures. Rather, the background and foreground figures merge on the same surface plane. The work of the Mannerist Jacopa da Pontormo, *Deposition*, circa 1526-1528, is an example of this "conceptual" rendering.

Works of the German Expressionist movement exemplify "conceptual space." Max Beckman's *The Family Picture*, 1920, distorts space to create a heightened effect of tension and oppression. Edward Munch's work, *The Shriek*, illustrates the distortion of space to suggest an explosive force. As in the works of the Mannerists, Munch's background is given as much expressive importance as the figure.

3.4 Empirical spatial organization

In Empirical spatial organization, the artist coordinates eye to hand to accurately reproduce what he sees, presumably without any 'inhibiting' influence of style or dogma. Through astute observations, the artist hopes to realize universal principles of form, color, and light.

The artists Vermeer, Valesquez, and Rembrandt serve as "empirical" artists here. The factor of reflected color "served as a cue to volume and space relationships," and became part of the realistic painter's "technical" vocabulary. The "pleine aire" artists of France may also be considered "empirical" painters. "By direct study of nature, Cézanne observed the effect of distance in 'cooling' colour." (13) Consider as well, Monet's famous series of cathedrals in different daylights and atmospheres.

3.5 The relativistic handling of space

Relativistic handling of space is associated with the theory of relativity. It suggests that absolute reality does not exist. Observations by a motionless and constant body cannot be considered a valid interpretation of the world. Therefore, the theory of relativity creates the idea of both a personal space, valid only for the individual observer, and an "impersonal space" which is constantly in flux. (14)

Many years before the announcement of the theory of relativity, eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophers had already begun to undermine the empiricist view. Philosophers such as Kant and Berkeley opposed the empirical ideal of Newton. Newton had postulated that an individual could make conclusions about absolute
space through astute observations of nature. Kant's reasoning however, was that our concept of space is completely subjective and intuitive. Berkeley held that absolute space was a false concept because one could not experience its existence through the senses. With the development of experimental physics in the mid-nineteenth century, a 'final blow' was dealt to any empiricist's concept. This development led to the theory of relativity in the beginning of the twentieth century.

Relativistic handling of space places the "factors of time and multiple views" on one plane. (15) Rather than relaying a static empirical image, this handling of space relays a closer representation of truth as many-faceted, and non-constant. Early works of cubism exemplify this particular theory.

Rather than trying to rely solely on observation, "contemporary art, as it is analogous to relativity, relies upon individual intuition as a means of discovering or illuminating absolute truths." (16) Relativistic space is more a theoretical than an observable conception of space. Each individual or group has its own theory or philosophy concerning spatial representation. It is hoped that by using "empirical visual experience" in conjunction with a particular individual or group
philosophy about spatial realization, a new visual world will be created which approaches universal values more closely. (17)

3.6 My personal attraction to the idea of relativistic space

Of Zupnick's four spatial classifications, 'relativistic' is the most meaningful to me. It is the most comprehensive 'spatial' method.

The artist who works in the relativistic manner hopes to describe 'impersonal space.' 'Personal space' is valid only for a single individual while 'impersonal space' includes the space of the 'whole.' The artist can attempt to come closer to 'impersonal space' by several means: by combining his intuition or philosophy about space with visual observation; by recording many momentary impressions on the canvas. Space methods such as 'empirical' allow only one frame of reference. 'Relativistic space' hopes to enlarge this frame.

I suggest that Picasso, Hofmann, and Tobey work in a 'relativistic' manner. The following section attempts to explain why I see them as relativists.

4. RELATIVISTIC SPACE IN THE WORK OF PICASSO, HOFMANN, AND TOBEY

4.1 Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and relativistic space

The following employs some ideas of critic Paul M. Laporte to convey an understanding of Picasso's method of
14. depicting pictorial space in his cubist paintings. Laporte suggests a connection between the ideas of Einstein and Picasso. Einstein rejects Euclidean ideas of absolute time. He develops a more comprehensive theory to describe space-time concepts.

There is no absolute...relation in space and no absolute relation in time between two events, but there is an absolute relation in space and time... (18)

As Laporte says, the separation of space and time no longer corresponds to the physical and philosophic truth of our age.

In Renaissance painting, linear perspective reflects Euclidean concepts of absolute space and absolute time. That is, a single cone of view is established. The 'ideal' viewer sees the image at the point of an imaginary cone in front of the picture. The Euclidean concept is undermined by Einstein. Correspondingly, Picasso does away with linear perspective. In Picasso's painting many cones of view concur.

Einstein's theories resolve the relationship between objects in space by showing an absolute relationship in terms of 'space-time.' Physicists diagram this relationship with a model described as a 'fourth-dimensional space-time continuum.' Graphically, this system is represented by four coordinates intersecting at a particular point.
The point corresponds to a particular object with a known mass and velocity. The relationship between two points (representing two objects) is graphically represented by a mathematically determined 'space-time' curve.

This relationship is difficult to comprehend for minds versed in Euclidean three-dimensional models of perception. Correspondingly, Picasso's simultaneous cones of view are difficult to assimilate. Laporte states that for Picasso the essence of nature is a variety of bodies moving through space with different speeds and in different directions. The movements of observer and object are not uniformly relative to each other. Both Einstein and Picasso describe a more universal way to understand relationships between objects and viewers in space.

In a Picasso cubist painting there are many different perspectives occurring at one time. He paints a number of close views of a particular object. Simultaneously, he shows several distant views. Each view is from a slightly different perspective. These points of view may result from the movement of the object, the viewer, one eye or the other, or any combination of these. For example, Picasso shows a simultaneous view of profile and front. These are seen from a distance. At the same time, close views are seen of the mouth and nose from top, bottom, or side. (refer to Figure 1.)
4.2 Mark Tobey (1890- ) and pictorial space

Tobey's interest is the description of motion in the life of contemporary man. He uses a writing technique to describe space. Lines interrelate suggesting both space and motion. (Refer to Figure 2.)

At last I had found a technical approach (writing the painting) which enabled me to capture what specifically interested me in the city—its lights—threading traffic—the river of humanity chartered and flowing through and around its self-imposed limitations... (19)
There is a relationship between Tobey's and Picasso's representations of space in that there is no particular "cone of view." While Picasso has simultaneous "cones of view," Tobey has images that are broken down even further. One experiences a vast, deep space where objects are barely recognizable, if they are recognized at all. K. G. Hulten writes of Tobey's picture, *The Void Devouring the Gadget Era*, circa 1942:
Figures and objects lose their dimensions, and with them, their identity. In this painting, the lines and figures sometimes seem familiar and recognizable. Are they parts of machines? vessels? microbes? malevolent animals? This elusiveness of identity gives rise to a sense of great uncertainty. (20)

Tobey uses his technique to suggest an emotional state of uncertainty. Of the same painting Tobey writes:

Its genesis was the realization of many people and myself, that gadgets were filling up the space in which we lived.... It could be possible that there is a warning in this picture. Those who look carefully will in any age decipher it, I am sure. (21)

The vast space filled with unrecognizable fragments enunciates a visual message, paralleling in a visual way a message about reality that goes beyond Tobey's personal life and concerns. It is a statement about the general condition of mankind and nature expressed in a suitable visual manner.

4.3 Hans Hofmann (1880-1966) and pictorial space

Hans Hofmann spent a lifetime trying to realize the universal truths of pictorial art. His ideas about pictorial space are collected in Search For the Real.

Hofmann rejected linear perspective and modelling as valid methods for describing space in painting:
Depth in a pictorial, plastic sense, is not created by the arrangement of objects one after another toward a vanishing point, in the sense of the Renaissance perspective, but on the contrary (and in absolute denial of this doctrine) by the creation of forces in the sense of Push and Pull. Nor is depth created by tonal gradation—(another doctrine of the academician which, at its culmination, degraded the use of color to a mere function of expressing dark and light). (22)

The space methods attributed to the Classical, Renaissance, and Baroque ages were not, in Hofmann's view, important as vehicles for expressing depth or space. Rather, space occurred or was sensed in spite of these methods. As Hofmann stated, push and pull create space.

Hofmann further explained the forces of push and pull:

“Push and Pull are expanding and contracting forces which are activated by carriers in visual motion.” (23)

“Carriers” are defined as planes, lines, and points. The carriers have different characteristics such as shape, colour, and texture. When these carriers are placed beside each other tensions occur. “Tensions are the expressions of forces.” Hofmann stated that the most important “carrier” to create a push and pull force is the plane.

When a number of planes are opposed one to another, a spatial effect results. (24)
A plane is a fragment in the architecture of space. The outline of a figure in an old master's painting is a plane and, as Hofmann stated, "as such the figure becomes plastically active in the composition." (25)

Hofmann examined the idea of space using the concept of positive and negative space.

Form and space interrelate to give the sense of three-dimensionality, but they exit on, and do not defy the sense of flatness of the two dimensional plane. (26)

Form, in this quotation, is the same as the object represented. Space is the 'ether' between the objects. In this sense, another term which describes this relationship is figure-ground where figure is the positive space, and ground, the negative space. The artist feels "negative space" just as objectively as he feels "positive space." Both supplement each other, "both resolve into a unity of space." Three-dimensionality is a sense that the artist and viewer experience when there is a balance between positive and negative space. (27)

Regarding nature and empirical observation, Hofmann said that an artist must have a 'subjective' understanding of nature if he/she hopes to be able to create the sense of three-dimensionality on a flat surface.

The experience of space depends upon understanding the 'living' coherence of things. (28)
In other words, the artist must be sensitive to the plastic feeling emanating from three-dimensional phenomena in the natural world. For example, he must be able to sense the definition of form which a gouge in the earth suggests; he must be able to sense the open space that is a flat cloudless plain. Then the artist must be able to recreate this sensation and understanding by relating positive and negative space on a two-dimensional picture-plane.

In Hofmann's painting, there are opposing push and pull forces which are resolved into a spatial unity of three-dimensional illusions on a two-dimensional plane. Also in his painting, as in Picasso's, there are fragments of color and texture over the picture-plane. (Refer to Figure 3.)
4.4 Conclusion

Picasso, Tobey, and Hofmann appear to me to be what Zupnick describes as relativistic space organizers. Each artist has combined an individual philosophy of humanity and art with an empirically experienced understanding of the visual world to create a unique picture space.
The works of Picasso, Tobey, and Hofmann all show fragmentation rather than an enclosed absolute. Picasso painted simultaneous perspectives; Tobey filled his space with interwoven lines; Hofmann united forces of colored planes, points, and lines. Through their respective methods, relativistic pictorial spaces were invented to reflect the spirit of the contemporary age, and in ways which were more to the point than had been possible using "primitive," "conceptual," and "empirical" spatial concepts.

Picasso's space had an affinity with Einstein's theories about space-time. Tobey's enables him to describe motion in modern life. Hofmann attempted, through the dynamics of his pictorial elements, to realize universal spatial relationships.

The attacks which these three artists have individually enacted in order to expand the traditional pictorial spatial devices and systems have influenced me profoundly, and have served to show me standards in my own search concerning the handling of pictorial space in my paintings.

5. MY WORK AND RELATIVISTIC SPACE

The following section compares my work to that of Picasso, Tobey, and Hofmann and describes how my approach to pictorial space is also that of the relativist described by Zupnick.
5.1 Relationships to Picasso

Picasso paints many simultaneous perspectives or "cones of view." I too paint many different points of view. One difference between our multiple views is that my points of view are not necessarily views of an object; Picasso uses objects. For example, he paints different perspectives of objects in a still life. By comparison, I use similar shapes in all of my paintings and give these shapes many views.

My paintings have 'points of view' which are similar to Picasso's in that the visual effect is the result of a fragmentation. In describing Picasso's work, Laporte saw the visual result of his fragments as a kinesthetic effect. The viewer's eyes respond to a combination of the following motions: one eye comes close to the subject; one eye goes far from the subject; two eyes come close to the subject; two eyes go far from the subject. This simultaneous eye motion is the kinesthetic effect.

In my paintings there is also a kinesthetic effect. Some of the painted shapes appear close, others far, some large, some small. The colour changes radically. There are sharp divisions between adjacent negative and positive areas in the paintings. The effect on the eyes is like the kinesthetic effect in Picasso's paintings. (Compare
Figure 4.
*New Creatures*, 1975, Edward Epp
(13" x 15", acrylic on canvas)
Figure 5.
Night Life, 1975, Edward Epp
(22 1/2" x 30", acrylic on paper)

Figure 6.
City Park, 1975, Edward Epp
(20" x 15", acrylic on paper)
5.2 Relationships to Tobey

Tobey 'writes' many of his paintings and weaves his lines to create a deep space. The lines assist him to achieve his goal of "smashing." (29) That is, he destroys the naturalistic illusion of form.

I was excited by Tobey's pictures, particularly his "White Writing" series. This series, more than others, exemplifies this technique. In my Emma Lake drawings and paintings circa 1971, I attempted to emulate this effect. My lines do not interweave as did Tobey's. Therefore, the sense of deep space is not as evident in my paintings. Nevertheless, I did manage to break down the representation of illusionistic form. The lines
in these paintings have a materialistic and graphic feeling. The viewer is conscious of the lines existing as graphic marks rather than as outlines of form.

Tobey often uses a line that can suggest ambiguous shape; because the shapes are ambiguous, and are still readable as purely graphic line, his effort to destroy identifiable illusionistic form is maintained in these paintings. I see this aspect of Tobey's work as a playful outlet. His heightened awareness of the physical line enables him to use line to create ambiguous symbols that describe motion like traffic and people in the city.

Similarly, the lines in some of my paintings and drawings describe little ambiguous creatures. These shapes may or may not be attributed to some naturalistic form. Using lines in this manner was like building an imaginary city. To me, as for Tobey, the lines act as graphic marks and as playful suggestions of another world. (Compare the effect of Tobey's work in Figure 2 with my work in Figure 8.)

* Materialistic in the sense that the actual presence of the line denotes an element of art.
Figure 8.

Emma Lake Creatures, 1972, Edward Epp
(9" x 9", acrylic and ink on paper)

5.3 Relationships to Hofmann

Hofmann uses colored planes, lines, points and marks as visual "carriers." These visual "carriers" operate as expanding and contracting forces. Their resolution is the realization of pictorial space.

In several of my paintings I have tried to interrelate planes, marks, and colors to realize space in the style of Hofmann. Often the attempts to emulate looked too literally like a copy of Hofmann's style. In learning from Hofmann, I became overly self-conscious. Thus, one of my conclusions regarding the achievement of a pictorial fundamental, such as space, was that the artist
should become immersed in the actual process of fabrication and worry less about achieving an effect. As soon as I become aware of a pictorial fundamental like picture space, I should get involved in the process of picture making. I should believe that as I work on the painting, a problem of space will resolve itself.

Hofmann said that the artist's first duty is to be sensitive to the inner fabric (or workings) of nature. When the artist has this 'sensitivity,' his painting will reflect it on the two-dimensional plane. Anton Ehrenzweig confirmed Hofmann when he wrote that the artist must "forego the wish to visualize precisely the final appearance of his work. An inordinate desire of this kind will only detract from eventual success." (30)

Acting on the advice of Hofmann, a device I have used to become more involved with the process of fabrication is to concentrate on technique. As an example, in one painting I cut up paintings on paper and let the cut pieces fall on the canvas. I glued the pieces where they fell and loosely tossed enamel paint over the glued paper. After the enamel set, I touched in dashes of dark paint to "box in the painting." Finally, I covered the work with clear acrylic. Each

* Fabrication is used to denote a method of building a composition with either collage or structured elements which accelerates the thinking process towards achieving a gestalt wholeness or a total configuration.
step was meditated but involved the chance 'mutations' of nature. The process determined the direction of the painting, rather than the desire to achieve a particular pictorial space. (Refer to Figure 9.)

Figure 9.
Rage, 1974, Edward Epp
(3' x 3', acrylic, enamel, and paper collage on canvas)

5.4 Summary

The works of Picasso, Tobey, and Hofmann inspire and direct my work. I am attracted to their paintings and to the philosophies which directed the paintings. As they approach the space of each picture in a relativistic way, so do I. The following section elaborates.
6. MY PAINTINGS COMPLETED DURING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

The following section of the paper is a discussion about several concepts that are important to me concerning the painting I have done during the graduate program. The concepts are: repetition, fragmentatation, and the problem of resolving "oneness" and "otherness." Whenever possible I illustrate the concept with examples of paintings that are shown in photographs at the end of this paper. All three of the concepts are involved in the relativistic approach to pictorial space.

6.1 Repetition

Repetition of symbols or shapes occurs in many of my paintings. Basically, I use elementary shapes. They are circles, x's, flower shapes, c's, squares, and other geometric forms. I use these over and over. Thus I save the energy required to create unique shapes in each new canvas. This allows me to concentrate on other possibilities.

For example, this allows me to fully explore pictorial space in a particular painting. I can place similar types of marks beside each other to create different patterns; I can create different bands of marks beside each other or superimpose bands over each other; I can combine different colored areas of marks. The elementary shapes are a limitation I use
in order to be free to pursue a particular direction of working. Continually recreating new shapes scatters my focus of attention.

I believe it is to make this point that Anton Ehrenzweig has written:

In the right aesthetic climate, even unimaginative repetition, imitation and rigid cliches need not act as straightjackets inhibiting the play of the imagination. (31)

Regarding historical traditions which involve repetition, Ehrenzweig writes:

...artistic traditions which bind the artist both in content and form can give him more freedom than the forced over originality of our time. (32)

As example of the phenomenon of defined "form and content," Ehrenzweig points to the Byzantine icons. Many of these icons appear to be exact copies of each other yet the aesthetic feeling from each differs greatly.

Hofmann has also spoken in favour of limitation. He states that a "consciousness of limitation is paramount for an expression of the Infinite." (33) Only when an artist feels the safety of certain limitations does he feel freed to concentrate on self-exploration and expression. He no longer is wasting energy creating new and saleable packages. He moves into spiritual density. According to Hofmann,
"(any) limitation can be subdivided infinitely." (34)

To use my work as an example of the subdivision of a limitation, view figures 10, 11, and 12. Each painting utilizes similar shapes and patterns yet the feeling of each painting is different. Three or four similar shapes can be used to achieve many different results. The total colour effect for example, from each painting provides a different emotional effect despite the sameness of shape and imagery. My usage of repetition, similar shapes, and similar patterns is not restrictive. The limitations free me.

Figure 10.
City Lights, 1975, Edward Epp
(3' x 3', acrylic on canvas)
Figure 11.
New City, 1975, Edward Epp
(3' x 3 1/2', acrylic on canvas)

Figure 12.
Birth of the New Creatures, 1975, Edward Epp
(3' x 3 1/2', acrylic on canvas)
6.2 'Unconscious integration below a fragmented surface'

In using repetitions of 'x' or 'o' motifs, triangular, or other geometrical shapes in various paintings, there is a common denominator among these paintings besides the fact of repetition. It is that the surface image is fragmented, and that the pictorial space is realized through a unity of these smaller parts.

Ehrenzweig writes of this fragmenting or "splintering" effect in terms of literature:

Schizoid splintering of the language function does not prevent a creative use of language function if unconscious linkages are preserved. (35)

As an example he points to James Joyce:

His fantastic word conglomerates are not just violent compressions of language splinters, but establish counterpoints of dreamlike fantasies that run on below the surface and link the word clusters into an unending hypnotic stream. (36)

I believe that Ehrenzweig is saying that while on the surface the fragmented ideas may seem chaotic and meaningless, on a deeper than conscious level there is a perceivable sense of unity. Ehrenzweig goes on to say that art's main communication occurs on a deeper psychic level, that level "where the artist's conversation with his own work is carried on." (37) In terms of the unity perceived on a deeper level, I think there is a
correlation between James Joyce and the work of many contemporary artists. I argue that the deeper meaning of fragments holds true for the work of Picasso, Tobey, and Hofmann. I think it is true for my work also.

Picasso's work represents a new concept of space; a fragmented surface of a combination of perspectives yet somehow resolved. It is, as Anton Ehrenzweig suggests, a situation where the 'creative' artist destroys the surface of the image (or form) and realizes a greater sense of order on a deeper level. Tobey broke down

I use this idea in the spirit that all the arts share common elements. "We classify the arts according to the material they use in order to express the world around them. One who expresses himself in tones is called a musician; one who employs colours, a painter; one who uses words, a poet. This, however, is a purely external division. In reality, the material in which the artist expresses himself is secondary matter. He is not only a painter, or only a poet, or only a musician, but all in one. Various artists have their habitation in his soul. His work is a product of their cooperation; all have a part in each one of his ideas....

Every artistic ideal is complex in quality until the moment when it finds artistic expression....Art in itself is neither painting nor poetry nor music, but an art of creation in which all three cooperate....Every artistic feeling is really an art. Artistic creation is only a special case of the artistic attitude toward the world....Art is the translation of the aesthetic association of ideas. The more complexly and intensely the conscious and unconscious concepts and ideas of the artist communicate themselves to us through his art-work, the deeper is the impression. It is then that he succeeds in stimulating others to that vivacity of imaginative feeling which we call art, in contradistinction to what we hear and see and experience in our ordinary moments." Schweitzer, Albert, *J. S. Bach* (London: A. C. Black, 1923), 2, pp. 8-15.
the recognizable form so much that the space appears "so vast and limitless, that it tends to swallow up everything in it." (38) As with Picasso's work, despite the fragmented surface, a unity is perceived and a new, powerful understanding of reality is suggested.

Hofmann talked about the need to realize in a deep-felt way the "inner workings" of nature in order to realize three-dimensionality on a two-dimensional plane. In his "push-pull" paintings I believe that he does reveal his insights into the very nature of the universal reality of pictorial space.

In terms of "low-level integration" in my own paintings, I paint shapes across the surface of the canvas; I sit myself back and view the work with an "open-eyed stare," the

...open-eyed empty stare which is needed for scanning low-level integration hidden below the fragmented surface. (39)

Then I move onto the surface again with other shapes until I 'feel' a valid visual statement emerging. At this point, the painting comes into a life peculiar to itself.

...there comes a certain point in the work of art where the painting takes on a personality of its own. It is at that point that the painting's pictorial space is "filled" and is "breathing" with its own peculiar life. (40)
6.3 "Oneness" and "otherness"

"Oneness" envelops the viewer. "Otherness" places a distance between viewer and painting. My work has moved from a less mature "oneness" to a more mature "otherness."

Looking at American Painting, particularly that of the New York Abstract Expressionists during the '40's and '50's, Ehrenzweig says that "American painting has ground down all splinters into tachist shreds and textured fragments." (41) Ehrenzweig says that Abstract Expressionist paintings have a hypnotic effect. The paintings envelop the viewer. This hypnotic or enveloped sense occurs in the extreme examples of fragmented art, particularly in works by Pollock. The aesthetic distance that separates viewer (and painter) from the painting, is annihilated altogether in such extreme works. Ehrenzweig quotes Adrian Stokes to make the point that this enveloping reflects a particular inner level of feeling that an artist has achieved while in the process of making the work of art:

The artist feels at one with his work in a mystic oceanic union, not unlike the nursling on his mother's breast who feels at one with his mother. (42)
In psychological terms, this sense of envelopment is called "manic." Ehrenzweig refers to manic envelopment to describe the artist reaching "oneness" with his work of art. "Oneness" is contrasted to the more mature experience of "otherness." When the artist, during the creative process, experiences "otherness," the "artist feels the work as an independent organism beyond his control placed at a definite distance from him." (43)

Both experiences are existent in the artist to varying degrees, but "in extreme cases the feeling of envelopment has almost ousted the more mature feeling of otherness." (44) It is as if in the "manic" oneness state, the artist has not yet detached himself from the work. It leaves the artist before going into a final stage of independent existence where the work manifests an individuality of its own, separate from the artist's will and also from that of the viewer's.

I mention these ideas in order to better comprehend the attitudes that I maintained during earlier stages of development as an artist. In earlier painting, I was compelled to get involved with my work in a deep-felt sense very much akin to Ehrenzweig's idea of "oneness." I would paint almost blindly, relying on a sense that told me when I was touching a deep subconscious reality. At that level, the work seemed to be fulfilling.
It was usually at this point of feeling that I stopped working on the painting. Over a period of time, however, this manner of working seemed unsatisfactory. Too many rational associations, observations and problems were emerging that could not be resolved merely in terms of feeling or intuition. Harold Rosenberg discusses this problem in the work of Pollack and contrasts it to that of Tobey.

Tobey's hand retains contact with the canvas or paper, and the movement of the line, the dottings and nervous scribbles are used to evoke an image not to enact an experience. The Tobey picture originates beyond the self of the artist, rather than in the endeavor to express, extend, intoxicate, or submerge that self. (45)

If we can accept Rosenberg's thesis, then Tobey's picture "originates beyond the self" or, in Ehrenzweig's words, reaches the stage of "otherness;" Pollock's works "endeavor to express, extend, intoxicate, or submerge that self" or are still in the stage of "oneness." (Compare Tobey's work in Figure 2 with that of Pollock in Figure 13.)

I think this aptly describes a change I see in my own work. I have made greater demands for my conscious or rational mind to become involved with the process of painting. The works must be understood in every possible aspect. Each movement must originate in a conscious
decision, yet without eliminating the action arriving from the level of the subconscious.

There was a time in my development when I seemed to be operating almost entirely on an unconscious or "manic" level. When persons questioned me about my work, I was lost for words. For example, in one of my seminars, an artist said that he was never sure what was meant to be in my painting and what was an accident. He was implying, I believe, that I was not using my rational faculties when I painted. However, over time, I had crises in my painting which caused me to make conscious decisions about every aspect
of my work. I became more conscious of painting certain colored shapes and areas and of changing them only to fit more coherently rather than at random. To try to explain this in another way, I became more conscious of my own marks and, rather than doubt their validity and half obliterate them in that sense of doubt, I became more forceful in projecting my own markings, colors, and shapes. My work has changed from a "manic" expression to a more controlled resolution of "otherness."

7. SUMMARY

My understandings of pictorial space (including that in my own work), of limitation as freedom, of fragmentation as unity, of oneness and otherness—all of these understandings may be "syncretistic," and highly imperfect. Nevertheless, the fact that spaciousness, volume, and movement in every direction can be created on a purely flat plane, and that space can be knit into a total image is an inspiration to me, whatever the system or non-system involved in the creative process. The pictorial space which is allowed to will grow. My elementary and repetitive imagery during my process of painting certainly does compell me to "listen breathlessly." (46)
The reproductions shown on the following pages are a selection of works from the two-year graduate program, 1973-1975. From what has been written in previous sections, I believe the intent of the paintings, from which the reproductions were made, is self-evident.
Figure 14.
Lifesaver Ridge, 1973, Edward Epp
(5' x 6', acrylic on canvas)
Figure 15.
*Floral Wall*, 1974, Edward Epp
(4' x 4', acrylic on canvas)
Figure 16. 
*July Noon Sun*, 1974, Edward Epp  
(12" x 12", acrylic on plywood)

Figure 17. 
*30,000' Up*, 1974, Edward Epp  
(12" x 12", acrylic on plywood)
Figure 18.
Little Egypt, 1974, Edward Epp
(1 1/2' x 3', acrylic on canvas)

Figure 19.
Crack in the Wall, 1974, Edward Epp
(3' x 3', acrylic on canvas)
Figure 20.
Rain of Fire, 1974, Edward Epp
(3 1/2' x 3 1/2', acrylic on canvas)
Figure 21.
Fallen City, 1974, Edward Epp
(4' x 4', acrylic on canvas)
Figure 22.
Red Divide, 1974, Edward Epp
(22 1/2" x 30", acrylic and enamel on paper)

Figure 23.
Jacob's Ladder, 1974, Edward Epp
(3' x 4', acrylic on canvas)
Figure 24.
Strange Sleep, 1974, Edward Epp
(22 1/2" x 30", acrylic on paper)

Figure 25.
Golden Calf, 1974, Edward Epp
(3 1/2" x 2 1/2", acrylic on canvas)
Figure 26.
Centre Line, 1975, Edward Epp
$(2 1/2' \times 3')$, acrylic on canvas

Figure 27.
Caught in the Runoff, 1975, Edward Epp
$(3' \times 3')$, acrylic, enamel, and paper collage on canvas
Figure 28.
Cherry Blossom, 1975, Edward Epp
(22 1/2" x 30", acrylic on paper)

Figure 29.
Star Fall, 1975, Edward Epp
(20 1/2" x 16 1/2", acrylic on paper)
Figure 30.
Space Station, 1975, Edward Epp
(21 1/2" x 16 1/2", acrylic on paper)

Figure 31.
Broken Dreams, 1975, Edward Epp
(4 1/2' x 5 1/2', acrylic on canvas)
Figure 32.
Autumn Residue, 1975, Edward Epp
(3' x 3 1/2', acrylic on canvas)
LIST OF REFERENCES

1. INTRODUCTION


2. COMMENTARY ON PICTORIAL SPACE IN THREE HISTORICAL PERIODS

   2.1 Classical period (Greco-Roman)


      Special Reference:


   2.2 Renaissance period


   2.3 Baroque period

3. ZUPNICK'S CONCEPTS OF PICTORIAL SPACE

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Primitive spatial organization


3.3 Conceptual spatial organization


General References:


3.4 Empirical spatial organization


3.5 The relativistic handling of space


3.6 My personal attraction to the idea of relativistic space
4. RELATIVISTIC SPACE IN THE WORK OF PICASSO, TOBEY AND HOFMANN

4.1 Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and relativistic space


General References:


4.2 Mark Tobey (1890- ) and relativistic space


4.3 Hans Hofmann (1880-1966) and relativistic space


23. Hofmann, Search for the Real. p. 44.

24. Hofmann, Search for the Real. p. 44.


4.4 Conclusion
5. MY WORK AND RELATIVISTIC SPACE

5.1 Relationships to Picasso

5.2 Relationships to Tobey


5.3 Relationships to Hofmann


5.4 Summary

6. MY PAINTINGS COMPLETED DURING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

6.1 Repetition

33. Hofmann, Search for the Real. p. 43.
34. Hofmann, Search for the Real. p. 43.

6.2 'Unconscious integration below a fragmented surface'


General Reference:
Bowland, Mannerism—Style and Mood. p. x.

6.3 "Oneness" and "otherness"


7. SUMMARY