

Transcribing form

Hatchwell, Sophie

DOI:

[10.5325/jmodeperistud.13.1.0077](https://doi.org/10.5325/jmodeperistud.13.1.0077)

License:

None: All rights reserved

Document Version

Peer reviewed version

Citation for published version (Harvard):

Hatchwell, S 2022, 'Transcribing form: the ekphrastic image in interwar British art journals', *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 77–102. <https://doi.org/10.5325/jmodeperistud.13.1.0077>

[Link to publication on Research at Birmingham portal](#)

General rights

Unless a licence is specified above, all rights (including copyright and moral rights) in this document are retained by the authors and/or the copyright holders. The express permission of the copyright holder must be obtained for any use of this material other than for purposes permitted by law.

- Users may freely distribute the URL that is used to identify this publication.
- Users may download and/or print one copy of the publication from the University of Birmingham research portal for the purpose of private study or non-commercial research.
- User may use extracts from the document in line with the concept of 'fair dealing' under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (?)
- Users may not further distribute the material nor use it for the purposes of commercial gain.

Where a licence is displayed above, please note the terms and conditions of the licence govern your use of this document.

When citing, please reference the published version.

Take down policy

While the University of Birmingham exercises care and attention in making items available there are rare occasions when an item has been uploaded in error or has been deemed to be commercially or otherwise sensitive.

If you believe that this is the case for this document, please contact UBIRA@lists.bham.ac.uk providing details and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate.

Transcribing Form: the ekphrastic image in interwar British art journals

Sophie Hatchwell

Abstract

Photographs of sculpture in interwar British art journals played a key role in the articulation and dissemination of abstract aesthetics. Through a comparative analysis of the journals *Axis* (1935-7) and *Circle* (1937), this article argues for the historiographical significance of such editorial presentations of sculpture, by demonstrating the central role these publications played in furthering interwar aesthetic debates. *Axis* and *Circle* were responsible for developing particular visual and verbal conventions for representing abstract art in print, influencing subsequent art-historical publications. This article traces the journals' construction of these conventions, and shows how an interplay between text and image foregrounded the aesthetic ideas they wished to convey. Image and text function together ekphrastically in *Axis* and *Circle*, prompting an active form of reading that shows the reader not just what abstract art should look like, but what it should be like to encounter it. The significance of this is three-fold: first, it provides a precise chronology for the development of specific conventions for representing abstract sculpture in print. Second, it contributes towards a fuller understanding of the phenomenological potential and pitfalls of modernist art journals. Finally, it shows how the study of journals can further art-historical knowledge and understanding of the development and dissemination of abstract aesthetics.

Key words: Abstract sculpture, *Circle*, *Axis*, ekphrasis, text and image.

Introduction

Photographs of sculpture in interwar British art journals played a key role in the articulation and dissemination of abstract aesthetics. *Circle International Survey of Constructivist Art* (1937) provides a case-in-point. Originally intended as a series but eventually appearing in a

single large volume with multiple sections, the second section of this publication focuses entirely on sculpture. Rather than commencing with essays on the topic, it begins with a photographic series of twenty-six art works unaccompanied by text except for the artists' surname and date of production. Articles about sculptural practice then appear on the pages following these images. The assumption is that the photographs and their serialized presentation within this journal provide a clear and eloquent overview of sculptural abstraction, introducing and framing the theoretical ideas that are then discussed in the subsequent essays. This article argues for the historiographical significance of such editorial presentation of sculpture photography in interwar British art journals by demonstrating the central role these documents played in furthering contemporary aesthetic debates.¹ This argument is rooted in a comparative analysis of the British art journals *Axis* (1935-7) and *Circle* (1937), with additional reference to *Unit One* (1934) and the French journal *Abstraction-Création* (1932-6). These publications are united by their focus on non-figurative sculpture. All appeared during a time when numerous commentaries on modern art were published and when, as this article illustrates, a standard modernist editorial aesthetic began to crystallize. This article contends that these journals were responsible for developing particular conventions for representing abstract art in print, and argues that they proved hugely influential in shaping subsequent publications about abstract art.

My aims are, first, to analyze the editorial goals of these journals by identifying the photographic and editorial techniques they deployed, the relationship between the photos and accompanying rhetorical devices, and how this interplay between text and image worked to convey a theory (or theories) of non-figurative sculpture. My second aim is to explore how the material presentation of photographs in combination with text within these journals has an ekphrastic function. I consider how the image-text combination creates a proxy encounter with the sculptural object and so sets out not just what modernist art works should look like,

but what it should be like to encounter them. The article then concludes with a consideration of how this process risks displacing the sculptural object, and how this problem then informed subsequent writing on sculpture in the 1960s and 70s. The significance of this study is three-fold: first, it provides a precise chronology for the development of specific conventions for presenting abstract sculpture by means of photographic reproduction in journals, and indicates the role these conventions played in the development of aesthetic debate. Second, it contributes towards a fuller understanding of the phenomenological potential and pitfalls of modernist visual art journals. Finally, building on this, it demonstrates how the study of journals and periodicals of the modernist period can advance art-historical knowledge and an understanding of the development of abstract aesthetics, and the means by which these ideas were disseminated.

The relationship between text and image is central to this article, as the interplay of photographs with each other and with accompanying art writing were key to how visual art journals conveyed their aesthetic ideas. While I discuss the varying aesthetic approaches and theories expounded in publications like *Circle* and *Axis*, I am not concerned, *per se*, with debating what these texts are trying to say to their readers: this has been done admirably elsewhere.² Instead, I explore how these publications communicated their ideas through the interaction of rhetoric, editorial devices, and photographic imagery. I apply ekphrastic and phenomenological theory to determine how these techniques attempted to engage readers with abstract sculpture in a manner aligned to the aesthetic theories the journals promoted. Thus, ekphrasis, the verbal evocation of the visual, is an important touchstone for this analysis, as is phenomenology, a body of theory that explores our experience of and engagement with the world.³ Focusing on how literary and editorial devices engage readers, this article explores what I describe elsewhere as the “rhetorical loci of spectatorship”: the verbal basis or frames for our visual experiences.⁴ Such an approach allows us to account for

how viewers respond to art works encountered indirectly through print, rather than directly in a gallery or exhibition.

The result, I hope, is that we begin to re-think how we value art journals and their contents historically: that we see them not just as evidence of debate, or evidence of what was being circulated when, but also as evidence of *how* art works were presented to viewers. The conditions under which viewers experienced works were formed not only through physical encounters with art objects, but through art writing and reproduction, too. Thus, the white page of the journal may assume an equivalent status to the white cube when considering how responses to art works were framed.⁵ The editorial techniques deployed and developed in and across visual art journals, and the ways in which text and image interplay in these publications, prompt an active form of reading. They encourage the reader to engage with and glean information not just from images (photographic reproductions) and essays, but from the meanings created when these two forms of communication are brought into contact with each other. The reader must therefore move actively between reading and viewing to comprehend the aesthetic points conveyed in these journals. As this article shows, this process develops and refines through multiple and serialized publications, with conversations between text and image happening not just on a single page, but across and throughout different publications, as well.

Developing editorial conventions

Axis, edited by Myfanwy Evans (1911-1997), was a British art journal that ran for eight issues from 1935-7. It sought to survey contemporary “non-objective” painting and sculpture from Britain and Europe. Inspired by the French painter Jean Hélion (1904-1987) and the journal *Abstraction-Création*, it provided a site for debate about abstract art, and acted as an artists’ “source book.”⁶ The eight issues featured a mix of illustrated essays by prominent art

critics and artists, as well as occasional visual surveys of current art practice presented by means of sequences of photographic reproductions: images, therefore, sat on an equal footing with text in this journal. *Circle* was developed and planned in 1936, around a year after *Axis* first appeared, and was published in 1937, the year *Axis* folded. It was borne out of a transnational network of artists coalescing around Hampstead and later Cornwall. Originally intended as a serialized journal, it was ultimately realized as a large one-off survey volume, but still retained the visual and editorial format of a journal: multi-authored, with a number of essays on contemporary art practice and extensive photographic illustrations of art works. It aimed to showcase Constructivist painting, sculpture, and architecture and to expound Constructivist utopian theories of the interconnectedness of art and life.⁷ It commences with an editorial, followed by four discrete sections: on painting, sculpture, architecture, and “art and life.” The “Sculpture” section begins with a series of twenty-six photographs, followed by essays by the co-editor, Constructivist artist Naum Gabo (1890-1977), artists Barbara Hepworth (1903-75) and Henry Moore (1898-1986), and scientist J. D. Bernal (1901-71), concluding with additional photographs.⁸ Both of these journals, *Circle* and *Axis*, follow a similar editorial arrangement: they make use of initial editorials as a framing device to introduce key concepts and terms. Both also present a sequence of images, either in a discrete section followed by more in-depth articles expounding on art theory, or in sections where images and text are interspersed. In each case, the art-critical text included in the journals does not attempt to “speak” for the images. Rather, it sets up a proposition that the images explore and respond to: together, they form a conversation through which aesthetic theories are introduced, analyzed, and developed.

In both *Axis* and *Circle*, the inclusion and positioning of photographic reproductions plays a crucial role in the initial communication of the editors’ aesthetic aims. A comparison of the visual presentation of sculpture in *Circle* and *Axis* shows how photography was utilized

within journals to represent abstract sculpture, and how image and text functioned together to promote the particular modernist aesthetic(s) favored by the editors. Key editorial devices include the consistent pairing of works in reproduction either on a single page or across a double-page spread, and the construction of discrete sequences of images across multiple pages. The photographs in *Axis*, no. 5 (1936) epitomize this. This issue is a special edition focusing on the 1936 “Abstract-Concrete” exhibition, which was organized by writer and art collector Nicolette Gray (1911-97) and held across multiple locations in the UK.⁹ It approximates an exhibition catalogue, meticulously illustrating the key works featured in the show in sequence, accompanied by articles that outline the main artistic themes and approaches explored in the exhibition. It commences with a short introduction to abstract art by the pioneering art theorist Herbert Read (1893-1968), followed by a sequence of fifteen photographs of painting and sculpture, one to a page, with images arranged in pairs across the page spreads. These pairings emphasize particular aspects of the represented artworks and allow close comparison between them, or, rather, their representations. Far from functioning as straightforward records of the original sculptural objects, the photographs betray a specific editorial attitude about how the featured works should be presented to a reader-viewer. This attitude is communicated in a purely visual manner, with Read’s introduction avoiding any mention of the following sculptures, and the images themselves unaccompanied by text except for a short factual caption.

<insert figure 1, quarter page, black and white>

The first pair of photographs in *Axis*, no. 5 (figure 1) depicts a mobile by American sculptor Alexander Calder (1898-1976), and Dutch sculptor César Domela’s (1900-92) *Construction* (1935). Their juxtaposition across a page spread invites formal comparison, and highlights similarities and differences in material, composition, and use or interaction with space. At first glance, the two works seem very different. Calder’s mobile is caught

suspended in space, an expansive interplay of spheres and lines, embellished by shadows cast on the wall behind the work. In contrast, Domela's *Construction* is arranged on a flat surface (presumably displayed vertically). While we can tell from the photograph that the work is three dimensional, it is in shallow relief and shares none of the volume of Calder's work. However, the editorial arrangement of these images constructs parallels between the two sculptures, not just because they are paired, but also because they are both represented in photographs of similar size, placed in the same location on their respective pages, and captured against similar pale backgrounds. This presentation foregrounds the use of circular forms in both works, and their incorporation of a pivot point around which their constituent parts are organized. Thus, although the composition and use of space is vastly different in the two works, the relationship between the formal components within the two works does bear comparison. This editorial facilitation of formal comparison is consistent throughout the images in *Axis*, no. 5. These form a carefully constructed sequence of photographs, centered on pairs of images that encourage comparative analysis of formal elements of the represented sculpture, specifically the sculptures' use of space, material, and mode of making, but neglecting scale and three-dimensionality.

An almost identical editorial approach is seen in *Circle*. The two journals, although edited by different people, shared a number of contributors, including Herbert Read and Barbara Hepworth. The artist Ben Nicholson (1894-1982), one of the editors of *Circle* (along with architect Leslie Martin (1908-99) and Gabo), was known to have read *Axis*.¹⁰ Stylistic similarities between the two are therefore hardly surprising, but comparing them is useful as it tells us two things: first, the nature of editorial practice in British art journals of the 30s. Second, that evidently there was ongoing discussion amongst artists, writers and editors about how abstract art could be analyzed and documented, leading to the adoption of specific conventions for representing abstract art in print. The clearest point of comparison between

the two publications is in the presentation of images by the same artists. The sculpture section in *Circle* contains, in addition to work by artists Antoine Pevsner (1884-1962), Vladimir Tatlin (1885-1953), Mediniezky, and Constantin Brâncuși (1876-1957), work by every sculptor featured in *Axis*, no. 5 except Domela.¹¹ It commences with a piece by Hepworth that also featured in *Axis*, no. 5: her *Carving in Wood* (1935), represented by the same photograph. On this occasion, it is paired with another Hepworth piece, the work now known as *Monumental Stele* (1936) (figure 2).

<insert figure 2 here, half-page, black and white>

This comparison foregrounds ongoing formal themes in Hepworth's work through the juxtaposition of images of two quite different sculptures. Differing in material (wood versus blue Ancaster stone), location (indoor versus outdoor), and scale (table-top versus monumental), the two images nevertheless highlight the importance of the spherical form and the interplay of the sphere with rectilinear forms. This is evident in the first image, where the spherical mass of the wooden object meets the square base, and in the second where a spherical hole is pierced through the upper section of the vertical rectilinear monument. This pairing foregrounds *Circle*'s preoccupation with the dichotomy between mass and space, inviting the reader-viewer to perceive and evaluate the differing effects of these two components.¹² As with *Axis*, the image pairing encourages comparative analysis, and again this is presented visually in the first instance, as *Circle*'s sculpture section commences with images unaccompanied by text. Following essays, specifically Gabo's "Construction in Space" then delineate the relationship between mass and space in Constructive sculpture in general, but make no reference to specific works. As such, the images provide both an introduction to and demonstration of aesthetic theories that are only later clarified verbally through the accompanying essays.

Such visual theorization is further achieved in *Circle* through the presentation of the work of single artists in sequence. An example can be seen with works by Gabo in the sculpture section: *Construction in Space C* (1920) and *Construction in Space: Two Cones* (1928) are placed opposite each other as plates 5 and 6 (figure 3).¹³ Once again, there are also comparisons with the representation of Gabo's work in *Axis*, no. 5. In this earlier publication, a photograph of *Construction in Relief* (1925) on page 7 emphasizes his use of new material combinations (plastic on wood) through a high-contrast photo that captures the glare off the plastic against the matte-black wooden support. However, *Circle*'s presentation of Gabo's work in sequence allows for additional observation and analysis of his practice. The pairing of *Construction in Space C* and *Two Cones* invites comparison between the formal composition of the two works: their use of intersecting planes, oriented around a pivot point, concentric in the case of *Two Cones*, eccentric in *Constructing in Space C*. The contrasting background colors emphasize this: the reflective transparent plastic of the latter standing out against a matte-black mount, and the curved black supporting components of the former set against a white background. The sequencing of these two images also allows for a more detailed analysis of Gabo's use of space: something that is hard to discern in *Axis* through a single image of a mounted relief. In *Circle*, we get to see more of Gabo's exploration of space as a material component of sculpture, through the comparison of a vertically mounted work projecting outwards eccentrically into space, with an upright piece that incorporates space alongside material mass within a concentric demarcated area. In contrast to *Axis*, this sequence of images illustrates the progressive development within Gabo's oeuvre.

<insert figure 3 here, half page, black and white>

While these two publications mobilize photographs to convey different ideas about abstract sculpture (sculptural variety in *Axis*, mass and space in *Circle*), both apply the same editorial conventions to do so, including image pairing, sequencing, and editorial design

(size, scale, and positioning of photos on a page). These conventions boast a long art-historical lineage and derive from a lengthy tradition of pairing illustration (graphic or photographic) with art writing. The field of Renaissance Studies has long considered the role played by photographs in art-historical publications, and has analyzed the conventions at play in visual representations of early modern sculpture. Geraldine A. Johnson, for example, identifies the emergence of a number of conventions in publications from the eighteenth century onwards, including the presentation of multiple views of a single sculpture; close-up detail images of a sculpture accompanied by a full view; the pairing of images of different sculptures to aid comparative analysis between different objects; and, as the discipline developed, “the emergence of the practice of authors to link their written arguments to a carefully considered sequence and juxtaposition of printed images.”¹⁴ The latter two techniques are still apparent in journals of the 1930s, as I shall discuss, and the usefulness of these for writers on modern sculptural practice is evident. They allow for the “instant comparison” of two works that otherwise could not be viewed together (a significant problem in the 1930s when political upheaval curtailed free movement across Europe), and they facilitate formal analysis.¹⁵

The former two editorial techniques identified by Johnson, however, are uncommon in modernist journals.¹⁶ This marks an important adaptation in how publications about modern sculpture use photographs compared with publications on Renaissance sculpture. These features, according to Johnson and fellow art historian Mary Bergstein, are rooted in “photograph-based connoisseurship,” in which images were used originally for attribution and authentication.¹⁷ Attribution, however, was not a major concern for modernist journals, not least because at the time of publication represented artists were often living and could evidently claim authorship. Citations for works in both *Axis* and *Circle* are, as a result, exceptional in their brevity.¹⁸ Instead, these journals focus on the final editorial convention

identified by Johnson: using a series of images to establish a particular argument. In the case of journals like *Axis* and *Circle*, the aim is to convey a sense of a particular aesthetic approach to or theory of abstraction, and to utilize formal comparison across a series of works in order to achieve this. As such, and in contrast to the preceding dominant historiographic function of photography, these publications were not offering up individual works for consumption. Instead, they present a body of work that can stand for or symbolize the specific aesthetic ideology(s) of a particular artist or group of artists. This manifests in an editorial fixation on devices that homogenize visual representations of sculpture: standard sequences and pairings, and standard editorial design.

Nascent versions of these devices exist in earlier publications, including the British journal *Ray* (1927-8), edited by Sydney Hunt (1896-1940); the French journal *Abstraction-Création* (1932-6), edited by Jean Hélion and Georges Vantongerloo (1886-1965); and the British catalogue *Unit One* (1934), edited by Herbert Read. All three developed their own idiosyncratic approach to design, layout, typography, and the incorporation of images as they foregrounded their particular aesthetic concerns. *Ray* adopted the stylistic language of Dada in its design, with photographs of paintings published amongst poems and collages, in some cases on the same page and at different orientations.¹⁹ *Abstraction-Création* is perhaps the clearest forerunner to *Axis*. In line with the objectives of the artists' group from which it gets its name, it sought to survey "Non-figurative art . . . that is to say a pure plastic culture, excluding all elements that are explanatory, anecdotal, literary, naturalistic etc."²⁰ It comprised a dual focus on art that "arrives at the conception of non-figuration through a progressive abstraction of the forms found in nature" and art that has "directly attain[ed] non-figuration through the conception of a purely geometric order," functioning essentially as source book for current abstract practice in European painting and sculpture.²¹ As such, it is ordered alphabetically by artist, with a section of text and a couple of images for each. The

journal's design is simple and functional, in line with the abstract aesthetics it promotes. It uses a utilitarian lower-case font throughout and images are of standard sizes, two-per page arranged vertically or on a diagonal, and accompanied by minimal captions (typically the artist's surname, initial, and the image date).

Unit One, the catalogue publication accompanying the 1934 exhibition of the Unit One group, drew on the aesthetic of *Abstraction-Crèation*. As Andrew Stephenson argues, it aimed to generate (or infer) heated debate about abstract art within British art practice, and at the same time “negotiate a ‘radical’ group identity.”²² The editorial design of the publication facilitated this, drawing on the French journal's example to incorporate a “Bauhaus-inspired” typography, “fragmentary” layouts, and references to the “international visual language” of continental abstraction through the inclusion of photographs that use framing techniques borrowed from early Soviet cinema and the German *Neue Sachlichkeit*.²³ These texts are precursors to, and influences on, *Axis* and *Circle*. They comprise a body of art writing that developed around artistic and critical experimentation with abstraction, emerging across France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Britain in the late 1920s-30s. The journals were certainly known to each other, and they demonstrate the development of an editorial language of modernism that accompanied the emergence of new ideas within art, architecture, and design practice. Comparisons between these publications, however, show that while certain editorial conventions were becoming standard, the way in which they were applied was often idiosyncratic, dependent on the scope of the journal and the aesthetic ideology explored therein.

Text-image interplay and aesthetic theory

While photographic reproduction plays a major role in the initial demonstration of an abstract sculptural aesthetic, it is through the interplay of images and text that the journals most

clearly proclaim and promote their chosen aesthetic approaches. Both *Axis* and *Circle*, like *Abstraction-Création* and *Unit One*, were conceived with clear abstract aesthetics in mind, and established and cultivated these through a combination of text and image, with images holding the same status as words: no paragonal (hierarchical) relationship is inferred between the two.²⁴ Thus, photographic representations of art works within the journals impart key ideas about abstract practice in tandem with art-critical text. It is the interplay between the two that marks these journals out, enabling them to present an in-depth exploration of aesthetic practice, and to convey specific theories of abstraction. The journals adopt a similar editorial approach to combining text and image to convey their respective theoretical messages in their use of editorials to provide theoretical framing, their deployment of images in sequences to demonstrate aesthetics in practice, and their subsequent interspersing of art-critical essays with illustration to expand and develop their theses. The editorial decisions they make about how to present both text and image, including choices of layout and font, are intimately tied to the aesthetic approaches advocated in the publications and, overall, provide a holistic verbal-visual interjection into interwar critical debates about modernism and abstraction.

The notion that specific aesthetic theories underpin the editorial conventions of art-critical publications is not particular to modernist journals. Art-historical texts have traditionally utilized image sequences, close-up photography, and image pairing to, for example, advocate for formalist interpretation (as seen in Heinrich Wölfflin's work), and for iconographical interpretation (as seen, in radical form, in Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas* (1927-9)).²⁵ What is specific to the publications from the 30s, however, is that they developed additional idiosyncratic strategies to further their own brand of modernist aesthetic theory. These include the construction of an equitable conversation between text and image, and the mirroring of aesthetic ideas through editorial design, the latter influenced by publications

associated with the earlier Vorticist, Futurist, and Dada art movements.²⁶ *Axis* utilizes text and image in partnership in order to levy three propositions about abstract art: first, that a diverse range of practices comprises the contemporary abstract vocabulary. Second, that abstract art is active and evolving. Third, that abstract practice in Britain is on a par with that of Europe. Evans's editorial in *Axis*, no. 1 explicitly introduces the first two ideas. Aiming to define abstract practice, she describes how "the shape of things and the shapes between things become a vocabulary, slow to expand but gradually multiplying and growing flexible, until a new complexity is reached."²⁷ Aiming to diversify our view of abstraction, she outlines her "argument for expansion", stating that "this paper illustrates many variations of abstraction" including surrealist influences and some "traces of the object."²⁸ This editorial frames the reader-viewer's impressions of the following images in the publication. For example, an early double-page spread in *Axis*, no. 1 (figure 4) reinforces the diversity of abstract practice.

<insert figure 4 here, quarter page, black and white>

Featuring work by Alberto Giacometti (1901-66), Alexander Calder, Julio Gonzales (1876-1942), and Joan Miró (1893-1983) this array of images intersperses sculpture with painting, and surrealism with non-objective or neo-plastic art. The presentation of heterogeneous abstract practices, from pure or geometric abstraction, to surrealism to semi-representational work, extends across following issues of *Axis*. Semi-representational work by Nash, Picasso and Kandinsky is sandwiched between the "pure" abstraction of Ceri Richards and Arthur Jackson in *Axis*, no. 1 and Ben Nicholson in *Axis*, no. 2 respectively. This sequencing and sandwiching of images conveys not only diversity of practice but also active development. Featuring a range of works dating from c.1911 to the year of publication, *Axis* creates a narrative of aesthetic progression. This is most explicit in *Axis*, no. 2, which commences with two illustrated articles that look back at the pioneering modern practice of

Picasso (1881-1973) and Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) before alighting on Nicholson's 1930s abstract reliefs.

Image sequences are also deployed to support the publication's claim for the pre-eminence of abstract practice in Britain. This is evident in the balanced attention given to British artists alongside international artists. The eight issues include extensive reproduction of images of, and articles on, current British work by John Piper (1903-92), Nicholson, Moore, Paul Nash (1889-1946), and Hepworth, alongside articles on and images of international abstract work by European or American artists including Kandinsky, Héliou, Juan Gris, Calder, and Brancusi. The status of abstraction in Britain is then reinforced by reflective articles that discuss art and visual culture in Britain by writer-artists including Nash and Piper.²⁹ The image sequences also serve to create a sense of cohesion across this diverse body of work. Page layout and typography emphasize this: the journal developed a standard format for image captions and deployed a standard typeface for headers and body text, which brought a sense of homogeneity to the work it featured.³⁰ On the one hand, this compliments the favorable comparisons made between European and British abstract art in the accompanying articles. On the other, it hints towards a belief in a unified sense of abstract practice. This idea is implicit in Evans's 1935 editorial, which quotes Kandinsky's idea of an "eternal truth of art" and indicates that, despite their variations, all featured examples of abstract art are concerned with the same aesthetic questions, hence the title "axis" which is defined as "an imaginary line about which a body rotates."³¹

Circle proposes different ideas about abstract art compared to *Axis* but makes use of the same editorial devices to convey them, including image sequences, framing texts, and standard editorial design. If anything, these are more pronounced and idiosyncratic in this later publication.³² The sequencing of images and the incorporation of framing texts is key to conveying *Circle*'s Constructivist ideology, which comprises an exploration of how

Constructive art may contribute to a utopian rejuvenation of society; the interrelationship of art and emotional expression; and (for sculpture specifically) the respective roles of mass and space. The first two ideas are introduced in Gabo's editorial "The Constructive Idea in Art," and then expanded upon in subsequent image sequences and articles. The latter idea is introduced in the inaugural image sequence of the sculpture section and then expanded upon in the following articles. The use of the editorial to frame the publication's focus on common trends in Constructive art is concordant with the publication's self-proclaimed status as a survey text. The text states that *Circle* aims to emphasize "those works which appear to have one common idea and one common spirit."³³ This aim is linked to the journal's editorial design, with work placed "side by side" in the following pages to draw attention to "a common basis" for the works therein and to demonstrate the relationship "of this form of art to the whole social order."³⁴ Thus, the design and layout of the text is bound up explicitly with the aesthetic theory it proposes, as a "common basis" underpinning Constructivist practice is reinforced by the standard presentation of images and a unified editorial aesthetic. This is manifest in the standardization of image captions, where only minimal information is provided (artist's surname and date), and the use of a simple modern font consistently deployed.

The font was designed by Jan Tschichold (1902-74), whose article "The New Typography" appears later in the journal. His article outlines the key attributes of modern typography, including "asymmetrical balance from contrasting elements . . . preserv[ing] the unity of the whole," and functionalism: "the form of type should arise clearly and unequivocally out of the requirements of the text and pictures only."³⁵ Tschichold's consideration of font and form demonstrates how the journal's design reinforces its aesthetic claim for commonality. Similarly, it also aligns with Gabo's interest in space. Tschichold proclaims in his article that "the new typography aims at a clear presentation of typographic

images by . . . the use of forms which correspond to the new feeling for space.”³⁶ This “new feeling” for space was first introduced by Gabo in his leader essay, but is most forcefully conveyed in the image sequence in the “Sculpture” section.

<insert figure 5 here, half-page, black and white>

The images explore the use of space within Constructivist sculpture compared with the use of mass. The section on Gabo’s work (figure 2, discussed above) illustrates his ideas about space counterpointed with mass, presenting space and mass as equivalent material components. Gabo’s work is also appended by images of Moore’s work, which further reinforce the point. Reproductions of Moore’s *Sculpture* (1935, figure 5) accentuate the artist’s carving practice and use of material. Lighting connotes the softness and smoothness of the marble form, but also its solidity and weight. Two images of the work plunge down across the double page spread, arranged in a descent emphasized by the alignment of the typography, as the second lower image and its caption are squashed and anchored to the base of the page. Ideas about mass and space are then further developed in Gabo’s ensuing essay “Construction in Space.” In it, he argues that “volume of mass and volume of space are sculpturally . . . two different materials,” and that space is “an absolute sculptural element released from any closed volume.”³⁷ Crucially, however, the two qualities of mass and space can counterbalance or reinforce the other; by

adding space perception to the perception of Masses, emphasizing it and forming it, we enrich the expression of Mass making it more essential through the contrast between them, whereby mass retains its solidity and space its extension.³⁸

His essay is followed by an article by Hepworth who, similarly, argues that “full sculptural expression is spatial—it is the three-dimensional realization of an idea, either by mass or space construction.”³⁹ These texts serve to unpick and clarify the function and status of space in Constructive art. However, it is through the preceding image sequence and its layout that

the concepts of mass and space and their interaction are most clearly presented and analyzed. Thus, as with the emphasis on commonality, it is not just through the accompanying text but in the interplay of images and design in conversation with the text that the sculptural aesthetic is communicated. This reliance on image sequences to communicate theoretical ideas seems to pre-empt the appearance of picture essays in subsequent publications, such as Herbert Read's "Pictorial Survey" of modernism in *A Concise History of Modern Painting* (1959) and the three visual essays in John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* (1972).⁴⁰ These sorts of rhetoric also demand a particular response and encourage a particular sort of communicative experience. The reader-viewer switches between text and image, between reading and looking, in order to discern the proposed aesthetic ideas. Image-text conversation, therefore, facilitates a form of writing that encourages and is in fact predicated on the presence of an active reader who is prepared to alternate between looking and reading in order to fully engage with the aesthetic ideas on offer.

Embodied reading and the ekphrastic image

As they outline their respective aesthetic theories, *Circle* and *Axis* both incorporate writing that discusses the experience of encountering abstract art.⁴¹ This ekphrastic discourse seeks to evoke a sense of the viewing process through verbal expression, and is thus an example of "affect-oriented" ekphrasis: verbal representation of the experience of viewing visual works.⁴² Photographic reproductions play a crucial role in this evocation. Art historian and theorist Jaś Elsner asserts that all art writing is inherently ekphrastic, and argues that within the context of art history, photographic reproduction should be seen as "a visual ekphrasis," a selective and subjective "visual rendering" of an object to support an art-historical argument.⁴³ If, therefore, photographs provide an interpretation of the object, they may also be read as ekphrastic: an attempt to convey a sense of an encounter with the object. Thus,

what is being represented (or perhaps translated), in photographic reproductions in *Axis* and *Circle* is not simply the object, but a moment of encounter with it, or rather, an idealized encounter that conforms to the aesthetic arguments and ambitions of the respective journals.

Ekphrasis is a form of creative verbal description of, or commentary on, the visual, which “attempts to rival or emulate the range of emotive, formal and textual resonances evoked by the object described.”⁴⁴ Some scholarship suggests this relationship between text and image is hierarchical (paragonal), and that in ekphrastic writing, artworks become passive, silent presences, overwritten by “falsifying” rhetoric.⁴⁵ Comparatively, the theorist W.J.T. Mitchell argues that tension between text and image is rooted in “struggles in cultural politics.”⁴⁶ I am not concerned here with a paragonal account (although Mitchell’s point about political context deserves further investigation in regard to the text-image culture of the 1930s). Instead, my discussion pivots on the affect-oriented model: the ways in which art writing centers on “the reaction the work produces in the viewer,” and in turn, how we can account for the relationship between art writing and the reader-viewer’s response.⁴⁷ Thus, analysis of how ekphrastic texts and photographs aimed to evoke the experience of the object within *Axis* and *Circle* must consider phenomenological notions of experience and perception, particularly the intertwining of the viewer and object as theorized by philosophers such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty.⁴⁸

Many articles in *Axis* discuss the viewing experience and outline what the reader-viewer can expect from an encounter with abstract painting and sculpture. Herbert Read’s introduction to *Axis*, no. 5, for example, attempts to explain to unfamiliar viewers how to respond to abstract art:

If you are a sensitive person, there must have been occasions in your life when you have seen, perhaps a broken column in the sunlight perhaps the façade of a house you

have passed a thousand times but which you suddenly see to be subtly “right,” perhaps one of those stones which peasants in various parts of the world pick up and keep because something in the shape “holds” them. On all such occasions you are experiencing the kind of emotion which abstract art is intended to give you.⁴⁹

Here he uses comparative analogy with other sensorial experiences: perception of sunlight (and presumably the feeling of warmth too), the “feel” of architectural space (volume, depth), tactile touching and handling of stone, to suggest to the reader-viewer what it is like to encounter abstract art. He does not describe a simple optical viewing process, rather a multi-sensory physical engagement with the object. Crucially, he does not attempt to describe any specific art works and, instead, focuses on the nature of the viewer’s response, which is assumed to be of a standard subjective type across varying objects. The suggestion of a common response to abstraction and the inference of the communicative intension of abstract work align with the journal’s ambition to confer a sense of cohesion across a diverse body of work.

The essays in *Circle* likewise explore the viewing experience, but posit abstract art works as evidence of Constructive artists’ desire “to make visible the emotions which the artist wishes to communicate to others.”⁵⁰ Crucially, the emotions and experiences provoked by Constructivist work are located in the form and materials of the art, as Gabo argues:

Shapes act, shapes influence our psyche, shapes are events and Beings. Our perception of shapes is tied up with our perception of existence itself . . . The emotional force of an absolute shape is immediate, irresistible and universal . . . Our emotions are the real manifestations of this content.⁵¹

Unlike Read in *Axis*, Gabo does not see a need to draw analogy with the natural world, as the “life and action [of Constructivist art works] are self-conditioned psychological phenomena rooted in human nature . . . immediately and organically bound up with human emotions.”⁵² He argues instead that the emotional effect on the viewer is triggered, not by any parallel with everyday sensory experience, but by the forms and materials of sculpture as they convey both their own essential existence and the artist’s emotion: a work “moves us profoundly because it represents the whole of the artist’s experience and vision.”⁵³ Thus, *Circle*, unlike *Axis*, introduces the idea of direct phenomenological transference between artist, object and viewer.⁵⁴ However, the mechanics by which this idea is conveyed bears comparison to *Axis*’s approach to conveying ideas about experience. *Circle* also constructs a sense of a standard or preferred encounter with art objects as part of an attempt to outline a unified Constructivist aesthetic, similar to *Axis*’s claims for aesthetic cohesion across abstract practice.

In both cases, these arguments are reinforced by the accompanying photographs, which, in their presentation, are less concerned with clear and impartial representation of individual sculptures than with demonstrating the journals’ claims about the interrelationship of art with emotional expression and experience. Thus, these photographic sequences offer “a visual interpretative framing within a textual interpretative framing.”⁵⁵ They act in the same way as the ekphrastic text, evoking a sense of what a correct experience of abstract sculpture should look and feel like. As such, they work along with the accompanying ekphrastic text to support the aesthetic argument proposed in the journals overall. This ekphrastic function of photographs is well-established in scholarship on Renaissance sculpture, notably in the work of historians such as Joy Kenseth.⁵⁶ A comparable use of image sequences to convey an art-critical narrative can be seen in both *Axis* and *Circle*. As outlined above, both journals deploy sequences of images to deliver their respective versions of abstract aesthetics. Consequently, these image sequences become an important means by which the object is brought into

relationship with reader-viewer. My concern here is with the rhetorical and phenomenological mechanics underpinning this. In the case of *Axis*, the aesthetic aims of the journal involve the reader in a holistic encounter with a wide array of abstract work. The reproductions in the journal therefore provide a curated selection of paintings, drawing, and sculpture, which the reader-viewer is required to peruse (for example, figure 4). The reader-viewer is not expected to conduct detailed scrutiny of individual works, rather, they are encouraged to look at a variety of pieces together, identify points of comparison and observe recurring formal or material tropes. Overall, the deployment of images alongside a framing text constructs a rhetorical environment in which the reader-viewer is guided to perceive the aesthetic interconnectedness of a broad range of abstract works.

Circle conditions the spectatorial encounter in a similar way but to different ends. It uses the aforementioned editorial devices to enact its theories of mass and space across the printed page, entwining the reader-viewer in its rhetorical performance of the Constructivist aesthetic. The interplay between Hepworth's works on pl. 1-2 demonstrate this (figure 1). The sphere in pl. 1 and the spherical void in pl. 2 are juxtaposed by the images' placement on the pages (the alignment of the two spheres in the top quadrants), generating tension between mass and space. The reader-viewer moves from the solid object on one hand to the void within the mass of the second object, creating a projection of physical movement from mass into space. This brings the reader-viewer into not just a visual but an imaginary spatial proximity to the three-dimensional object. The same spatial rendering of sculpture can be seen in pl. 9-10 (figure 5), where the solid mass of Moore's work plunges down the page. A contrasting representation of space is seen in the reproduction of Calder's mobiles (pl. 19-20), where the photographs, like the sculptural objects they represent, rise up across the double-page spread, suspended from the top margin. What we see forming in *Axis*, and fully realized in *Circle*, is an active relationship between the reader-viewer and photographic

reproduction. As such, these publications infer the existence of a tripartite relationship between viewer, reproduction, and object: the reader-viewer encounters the art object through the text and reproduction in a manner that underscores Gabo's notion of the communicative and emotional nature of Constructivist sculpture.

Conclusion: displacing the object

The idea of an experiential intertwining of object and viewing subject has its roots in the materialist criticism of the late nineteenth century.⁵⁷ It eventually became a central concern of modernist theory after Clement Greenberg. For example, in the 1970s, the artist Robert Morris's and the critic Rosalind Krauss's assessments of Minimalist sculpture both, in different ways, see phenomenological interaction between sculpture and subject as a key aspect of the production and reception of sculpture in the 1950s-60s.⁵⁸ This brings us back to the significance of the interwar journals in question. My analysis of how they constructed rhetorical encounters with artworks indicates that these publications had an ongoing impact on modernist art writing. More broadly, this investigation maps out two important areas for critical reflection: the assumed synergy between modern sculpture and photographic representation, and the close relationship between theories of modernism and the role of the artwork within a sensorial interaction with the viewer. Elsner claims the image is often a willing participant in the interpretative act and that it (and presumably its reproduction) will invite a particular reading and response.⁵⁹ Bergstein argues that the use of photography in art history is rooted in formalism in particular, and that this holds special meaning for abstract work. For her, "sculpture fabricated in an abstract, formalist language thrives on an interpretative counterpart in photography," "fus[ing] with photography in an apparently effortless seamless formal synthesis."⁶⁰ However, as this article has shown, the relationship between aesthetic, artwork, and text-image reproduction is anything but effortless. It is rooted

in an attentive editorial, theoretical, visual, and spatial framing of the works, directed towards intentioned exposition of a specific aesthetic position. Image reproductions bear significant evidentiary weight within this framing.

Reproductions, however, are not neutral, objective records of an object, as this article demonstrates. There is a risk therefore, that, far from conveying a sense of the artist's aesthetic intentions or reliably inspiring the viewer's emotions as per the original, photographs will in fact displace the original work: "falsifying the object," representing it in a manner that "reflects, transforms or even consumes" it.⁶¹ This suggests that the phenomenological encounter potentially inspired by art writing is not between object and reader-viewer, but reader-viewer, photographic representation of the object, and an editor-writer. In effect, journals such as *Axis* and *Circle* create a form of ekphrastic verbal and visual commentary that is a "parallel work of art."⁶² As such, photographic reproductions and accompanying critical text have the potential to take on a life of their own, and promote a form of aesthetic encounter at variance with what the original art work is able to do: arguably the case with both *Circle* and *Axis*. Debates about the importance of the material work and the integrity of the object will no doubt rage on; however, the key point to make here is that through such reproductions works become irrevocably bound up with a single ideological framework, regardless of the complexity of their lives as objects. In order to fulfill the ideological ambition of the publication, image reproductions are deployed in such a way as to reduce the interpretative and experiential possibilities of the original works. In summation, then, these journals mark the culmination of a long process in which specific conventions for representing sculpture through publication were developed over time. From the 1930s onwards, these conventions become inherently associated with modernist aesthetics. They exist at a pivot point in the exploration of emotive reading of abstract work. Stylistically, they draw on earlier ideas from movements such as Vorticism and Dada. They also develop the

text-image tropes that underpin subsequent modernist publications, notably the picture essay, as seen in books by Read and Berger amongst others, and the attention to spectatorial encounter seen in texts by theorists like Krauss.⁶³

Acknowledgements

This article is dedicated to the memory of my dear friend and colleague Dr Jutta Vinzent, with grateful thanks for her invaluable advice and support.

I am grateful to Dr Emma West for inviting me to contribute to this Special Issue and to the very helpful guidance she and her co-editor Dr Brittany Moster Bergonzi provided; to Vicky Falconer at the Courtauld Institute of Art with her help accessing original issues of the journals discussed here; and my dear friend Dr Dana Lungu for helping with the translations.

This article was written during lockdown and I am exceptionally grateful to my colleague Professor Alexandra Harris for her generosity in sharing with me various articles and resources after the libraries and archives closed.

¹ I use the terms modernism and modernist here in the context in which they appear in English-language art criticism and theory during the 1930s-50s, i.e. the Greenbergian tradition of “a progressing modern art” (Charles Harrison, *sic passim*), derived from French cubism and associated both with a focus on formal expression, and avant-garde practice. Key English-language publications on modern art emerging in this period include works by Roger Fry and Herbert Read. Modernism is, however, a problematic and multifaceted term. For discussion of its lineage and heterogeneity, Harrison’s *Modernism* (London: Tate, 1997) provides a useful introduction.

² See, for example, Jeremy Lewison, ed., *Circle, Constructive Art in Britain 1934-40* (Cambridge: Kettle’s Yard, 1982); Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010), 15-37; Harrison, *English Art and Modernism* (New Haven: Yale

University Press, 1981); Jutta Vinzent, *From Space in Modern Art to a Spatial Art History* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020); Joanna P. Gardner-Huggett, "Myfanwy Evans: 'Axis' and a Voice for the British Avant-Garde," *Woman's Art Journal* 21, no. 2 (2001): 22-26; Andrew Stephenson, "Strategies of Situation: British Modernism and the Slump, c. 1929-1934," *Oxford Art Journal* 14, no. 2 (1991), 30-51.

³ For an overview of ekphrasis, see David Kennedy and Richard Meeke, *Ekphrastic Encounters* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2018). For an overview of phenomenology, see Dermot Moran, ed., *The Phenomenology Reader* (London: Routledge, 2002).

⁴ Sophie Hatchwell, *Performance and Spectatorship in Edwardian Art* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave, 2019), 115.

⁵ At this point, my arguments intersect with Elizabeth Loizeaux's idea of "textual consciousness" and the involvement of the reader in the ekphrastic function of literature. "Ekphrasis and Textual Consciousness," *Word and Image* 15, no. 1 (1999): 76-96.

⁶ Footnote 2 lists the major scholarship on this journal.

⁷ See footnote 2 and Martin Hammer and Christina Lodder, *Constructing Modernity: The Art and Career of Naum Gabo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

⁸ Naum Gabo, Leslie Martin and Ben Nicholson, eds., *Circle International Survey of Constructivist Art* (London: Faber, 1937; repr. 1971), 77-129.

⁹ Gardner-Huggett, "Myfanwy Evans", 22.

¹⁰ Gardner-Huggett, 22-23, 25.

¹¹ Namely Calder, Gabo, Giacometti, Holding, Hepworth, and Moore.

¹² For a full discussion of mass and space in *Circle*, see Vinzent, *From Space in Modern Art*, 99-107.

¹³ Followed by *Torsion* (1929) and *Model of Construction in Space: Stone with a Collar* (1933), plates 7-8.

¹⁴ Geraldine A. Johnson, ““(Un)richtige Aufnahme’: Renaissance Sculpture and the Visual Historiography of Art History,” *Art History* 36, no. 1 (2013): 12-51. See also Mary Bergstein, “Lonely Aphrodites: On the Documentary Photography of Sculpture,” *The Art Bulletin* 74, no. 3 (1992): 475-498. Helene E. Roberts, ed., *Art History through the Camera’s Lens* (London: Routledge, 1995).

¹⁵ Johnson also argues that photography can draw attention to specific features by virtue of its qualities as a medium, e.g. “a photograph allowed more subtle gradations of light and shadow across the surface of the sculpture to be perceived, thereby giving it a greater sense of volume.” Similarly, she notes the tendency to set sculpture against monochrome plain backgrounds removes contextual information about their display and highlights composition: a clearly formalist approach. See Johnson, ““(Un)richtige Aufnahme,”” 23-4.

¹⁶ The two photos of Moore’s *Sculpture* (1935) in *Circle* (plates 8-9) are the exception. See Vinzent, *From Space in Modern Art*, 29.

¹⁷ In this regard, both former tropes seem to promise a degree of objectivity to the photographic record, a contentious point in the history and study of photography, as both Johnson and Bergstein acknowledge. See Johnson, ““(Un)richtige Aufnahme,”” 20 and Bergstein, “Lonely Aphrodities,” 479.

¹⁸ This is not necessarily a well-established feature of twentieth-century art texts: extensive image citations are found in other publications prior to this period, for example *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, *The Studio*, i.e. those aimed at dealers, collectors, and a wide range of art professionals. For *Axis* and *Circle*, as artists’ source books, just the name of artist was presumably deemed sufficient.

¹⁹ See Iria Candella, “The only English periodical of the avant-garde: Sidney Hunt and the journal ‘Ray.’” *The Burlington Magazine* 152, no. 1285 (2010): 239-244. Candella argues

that *Ray* is “the missing link” between Wyndham Lewis’s *BLAST* (1914-5) and *Axis* and *Circle* in the 30s. For more on *Ray*, see Nicola Baird’s essay in this special issue.

²⁰ Jean Héliion, “Editorial,” *Abstraction-Création* 1 (1932): 1. “*art non figuratif . . . c’est-à-dire culture de la plastique pure, à l’exclusion de tout élément explatif, anecdotique, littéraire, naturaliste etc.*”

²¹ Héliion, “Editorial,” 1. The journal distinguishes to an extent between art that it associates with the term “abstract,” i.e. that which “*arrivés à la conception de non-figuration par l’abstraction progressive des forms de la nature,*” and art that it associates with the term “création” which “*atteint directement la non-figuration par une conception d ordre purement géométrique.*”

²² Stephenson, “Strategies of Situation,” 45-46.

²³ Stephenson, “Strategies of Situation,” 45-46.

²⁴ Vinzent makes this point about the status of images in *Circle*, see *From Space in Modern Art*, 69.

²⁵ For further information of Wölfflin’s use of images in his formalist scholarship, see Heinrich Wölfflin and Geraldine A Johnson, “How one should photograph sculpture,” *Art History* 36, no. 1 (2013): 52-71. For scholarship on Warburg see Christopher D. Johnson, *Memory, Metaphor and Aby Warburg’s Atlas of Images* (Ithica: Cornell UP, 2012).

²⁶ See for example, *BLAST* (1914-15), *L’Italia Futurista* (1916), *Der Dada* (1919-20).

²⁷ Myfanwy Evans, “Dead or Alive.” *Axis* 1 (1935): 3.

²⁸ Evans, “Dead or Alive,” 4.

²⁹ For example, Paul Nash’s “For but not with,” *Axis* 1 (1934): 24-6 and “England’s Climate” by John Piper and the poet Geoffrey Grigson, *Axis* 7 (1936): 5-8.

³⁰ The design of *Axis* varied somewhat in the first couple of issues but had been standardised by issue 3. See Gardener-Huggert, “Myfanwy Evans,” 25.

³¹ Evans, “Dead or Alive,” 3-4.

³² The one main difference is the lack of interspersed media, strange given that *Circle* seems to want to break down distinctions between media.

³³ Martin, Nicholson and Gabo, “Editorial,” *Circle* (1937), vi.

³⁴ Martin, Nicholson and Gabo, “Editorial,” vi.

³⁵ Tschichold, “The New Typography,” *Circle* (1937), 250, 249.

³⁶ Tschichold, “The New Typography,” 250, 249.

³⁷ Gabo, “Construction in Space,” *Circle* (1937), 106-8.

³⁸ Gabo, “Construction in Space,” 106-8.

³⁹ Hepworth, “Sculpture,” 113.

⁴⁰ Herbert Read, *A Concise History of Modern Painting* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1959), 325-368; John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin, 1972).

⁴¹ It is worth noting that the images in *Circle* were not necessarily acquired from the contributing writers: many were gathered by the editors. See Vinzent, *From Space in Modern Art*, 166.

⁴² Stephen Cheeke, *Writing for Art* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2008), 3; Hatchwell, *Performing Spectatorship*, 46.

⁴³ Jaś Elsner, “Art History as Ekphrasis,” *Art History* 33, no. 1 (2010): 12-13. See also W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1994).

⁴⁴ Elsner, “Art History as Ekphrasis,” 12.

⁴⁵ See Elsner, “Art History as Ekphrasis,” 12; David Kennedy *The Ekphrastic Encounter in Contemporary British Poetry and Elsewhere* (London: Routledge, 2016), 7; James Heffernan, “Speaking for pictures: The rhetoric of art criticism,” *Word & Image* 15, no. 1 (1999): 19-33.

⁴⁶ Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 3.

47 Cheeke, *Writing for Art*, 3; Baxandall also began to consider ekphrasis as an act of exchange between text/writer and reader/beholder in “The Language of Art History,” *New Literary History* 10, no. 3 (1979): 456.

48 See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, “The intertwining—the chiasm,” in *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 130-155; Amanda Boetzkes, “Phenomenology and Interpretation Beyond the Flesh,” *Art History* 32, no. 4 (2009): 690-711.

49 Herbert Read, “Abstract Art: A Note for the Uninitiated,” *Axis*, no. 5 (1936): 3.

50 Gabo, “Construction in Space,” 104.

51 Gabo, “Construction in Space,” 110.

52 Gabo, “Editorial,” 7.

53 Gabo, “Construction in Space,” 116.

54 See Merleau-Ponty, “Eye and Mind,” in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1996), 121-151, where he describes the “kind of crossover . . . between the see-er and the visible” (125).

55 Elsner, “Art History as Ekphrasis,” 24.

56 Joy Kenseth, “Bernini’s Borghese Bronzes: Another View,” *The Art Bulletin* 63, no. 2 (1981): 191-210. Kenseth uses photographic sequences to present a narrative interpretation of Bernini’s sculpture.

57 Walter Pater’s *The Renaissance* (1873) is a key source here.

58 See Rosalind Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (New York: Viking, 1977) and Robert Morris, “Some notes on the phenomenology of making,” *Artforum* 8, no. 8 (1970): 79-81.

59 Elsner, “Art History as Ekphrasis,” 13: “Images and objects . . . invite ekphrasis, indeed they require it. Part of the play of their relations with viewers is to elicit verbal as well as more directly sensual or visual responses.”

⁶⁰ Bergstein, “Lonely Aphrodities,” 52.

⁶¹ Elsner, “Art History as Ekphrasis,” 12; Bergstein, “Lonely Aphrodities,” 480.

⁶² Elsner, “Art History as Ekphrasis,” 13.

⁶³ Read, *A Concise History*; Berger, *Ways of Seeing*; Krauss, *Passages*.

Bibliography

Baxandall, Michael. “The Language of Art History.” *New Literary History* 10, no. 3 (1979): 435-465.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin, 1972.

Bergstein, Mary. “Lonely Aphrodities: On the Documentary Photography of Sculpture.” *The Art Bulletin* 74, no. 3 (1992): 475-498.

Boetzkes, Amanda. “Phenomenology and Interpretation Beyond the Flesh.” *Art History* 32, no. 4 (2009): 690-711.

Candella, Iria. “The only English periodical of the avant-garde: Sidney Hunt and the journal ‘Ray’.” *The Burlington Magazine* 152, no. 1285 (2010): 239-244

Cheeke, Stephen. *Writing for Art*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008.

Elsner, Jaś. “Art History as Ekphrasis.” *Art History* 33, no. 1 (2010): 10-27.

Gardner-Huggett, Joanna P. “Myfanwy Evans: ‘Axis’ and a Voice for the British Avant-Garde.” *Woman's Art Journal* 21, no. 2 (2001): 22-26.

Hammer, Martin, and Lodder, Christina. *Constructing Modernity: The Art and Career of Naum Gabo*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

Harris, Alexandra. *Romantic Moderns*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2010.

Harrison, Charles. *Modernism*. London: Tate, 1997.

---. *English Art and Modernism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.

Hatchwell, Sophie. *Performance and Spectatorship in Edwardian Art*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave, 2019.

Heffernan, James. "Speaking for pictures: The rhetoric of art criticism." *Word & Image* 15, no. 1 (1999): 19-33.

Johnson, Geraldine A. "'(Un)richtige Aufnahme': Renaissance Sculpture and the Visual Historiography of Art History." *Art History* 36, no. 1 (2013): 12-51.

--- and Heinrich Wölfflin. "How one should photograph sculpture." *Art History* 36, no. 1 (2013): 52-71.

Johnson, Christopher D. *Memory, Metaphor and Aby Warburg's Atlas of Images*. Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2012.

Kennedy, David. *The Ekphrastic Encounter in Contemporary British Poetry and Elsewhere*. London: Routledge, 2016.

--- and Richard Meeke. *Ekphrastic Encounters*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018.

Kenseth, Joy. "Bernini's Borghese Bronzes: Another View." *The Art Bulletin* 63, no. 2 (1981): 191-210.

Krauss, Rosalind. *Passages in Modern Sculpture*. New York: Viking, 1977.

Lewis, Jeremy, ed. *Circle, Constructive Art in Britain 1934-40*. Cambridge: Kettle's Yard, 1982.

Loizeaux, Elizabeth. "Ekphrasis and Textual Consciousness." *Word and Image* 15, no. 1

(1999): 76-96.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968.

---. *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader*, Northwestern University Press, 1996.

Mitchell, W. J. T. *Picture Theory*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994.

Moran, Dermot, ed. *The Phenomenology Reader*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Morris, Robert. "Some notes on the phenomenology of making." *Artforum* 8, no. 8 (1970): 79-81.

Read, Herbert. *A Concise History of Modern Painting*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1959.

Roberts, Helene E., ed. *Art History through the Camera's Lens*. London: Routledge, 1995.

Stephenson, Andrew. "Strategies of Situation: British Modernism and the Slump, c. 1929-1934." *Oxford Art Journal* 14, no. 2 (1991): 30-51.

Vinzent, Jutta. *From Space in Modern Art to a Spatial Art History*. Berlin: de Grueter, 2020.