

MA MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER

**FRACTALS OF ART AND LIFE:
THE ARENSBERG SALON AS A CUBIST SPACE**

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Frontispiece: Charles Sheeler, *Portrait of Walter Arensberg*, undated. Drawing. Walter and Louise Arensberg Papers (1912-1982). Philadelphia Museum of Art Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

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-- Erin McCurdy

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The *** room

Which Walter conceived one day
Instead of walking with Pitts in the Park
Or celebrating Sex on the Avenue

Where people who lived in glass houses
Threw stones connubially at one another;
And the super pictures on the walls
Had intercourse with the poems that were never written

Where Lou held court
And, conscious that the prodigy had proceeded from
 her own womb,
Disowned it as an unnatural child
But asserted her ownership at the piano

Where Louise danced in her bare feet with Jean
 Croeti

And Jean between Hell and Heaven
Thought first he was dancing with Salome
And then with the Virgin.

Where Ernest, in search of the spawn of Shakes-
peare and Milton,

Laid his own eggs

At the same time teaching us that chess

Was like tying your necktie.

Where I wish that I were from my waist down,

Where my waist up wanders;

Where nobody ever made love

For all were lovers.

Where I first saw Time in the Nude;

Where I met Mme. Picabia;

Where Christ would have had to sit down

And Moses might have been born with propriety.

-- Allen Norton, "Walter's Room," 1919

Introduction:

The Art Revolution in Walter's Room, Or Where Lou Held Court

Published in the June 1919 issue of *The Quill*,¹ the poem "Walter's Room" by Allen Norton transposes the New York salon gatherings of Walter and Louise Arensberg into suggestive verse. Filled with sexual overtones, the poem describes the Arensbergs' soirées in Dionysian terms, focusing on the corporeal pleasures of the guests. In the fourth stanza, Norton depicts his own wife Louise dancing barefoot in the salon with French painter Jean Crotti,² while the fifth stanza expresses Norton's desire to venture from the waist down where the "waist up wanders," suggesting that the poet covets the physical consummation of an intellectual flirtation. In addition to capturing the sexual tension of a salon where "all were lovers," Norton's poem sexualizes inter-arts collaboration through his description of "the super pictures on the walls" that "Had intercourse with the poems that were never written." Through the theme of (pro)creation, Norton portrays the salon as a generative site indicative of the revolutionary artistic contributions made by the Arensberg circle. This metaphor is realized fully in the third stanza where the artistic production of salon guests, retrospectively categorized as New York Dada, is described as a prodigy proceeding from the womb of Louise Arensberg.

Taken further, Norton's procreative metaphor can be applied to Walter and Louise Arensberg's private residence, which functioned as a womb nurturing the production of

¹ *The Quill* was a literary journal based in Greenwich Village and edited by Arthur Moss from 1917 to 1921. My thanks to the Modern Literature and Culture Research Center, Special Collections, for giving me access to the magazine.

² In the published poem, Crotti's name is incorrectly spelled Croeti, presumably in error.

distinctly American art, poetry, and literature. Hosted during the World War I and post-war era, from 1915-1921, the Arensberg salon served a generative function, welcoming bohemians and intellectuals from different nations and economic standings to convene and engage in conversation, chess, revelry, and collaborative projects. In addition to acting as the physical nucleus of New York Dada, the Arensberg residence, with its “super pictures” adorning the walls, served as an impressive domestic exhibition site incorporating art objects, decorative arts, and artefacts from disparate origins. Its hosts were Walter Arensberg, a poet, journalist, and literary scholar, and his wife Louise, a musician who came from equally wealthy stock. Together the Arensbergs used their sizeable inheritances to become influential collectors and patrons of the arts.

Many of the Arensbergs’ *habitués* were expatriates who had migrated to New York in order to dodge service or escape the declining living conditions overseas. In a 1915 interview with the *New York Tribune*, Marcel Duchamp, a French artist who would become a regular fixture at the Arensberg salon, lamented the stagnancy of wartime Paris: “Art has gone dusty...it is a very different life from the happy stimulating life one used to encounter. Paris is like a deserted mansion. Her lights are out” (“French Artists” 2-3). The anonymous article, titled “French Artists Spur on an American Art,” featured Duchamp alongside artists Marius de Zayas, Francis Picabia, Frederick MacMonnies, and Albert Gleizes and his wife Juliette Roche. As the title suggests, the article focused on the migration of key French avant-gardists to New York City and their anticipated influence on the development of American modernism.

For the artists featured in the *Tribune* article and many other Continental modernists seeking refuge in America, the cosmopolitan city of New York with its

skyscrapers, bridges, and machines, offered an escape from the dormant atmosphere of European nations consumed by the war effort. Free of the weight of the old masters, New York was a modern city and the prime location for an artistic revolution. Word of the Arensbergs' impressive collection of modern art travelled quickly amongst the migrant bohemia, and soon Walter and Louise were hosting an assorted group of European refugees at their soirées including: painters Francis Picabia, Jean Crotti and Yvonne Chastel (who was married to Crotti at the time); composer Edgard Varèse; critic and art collector Henri-Pierre Roché, poet Mina Loy; and anarchistic poet and pugilist Arthur Cravan. The expatriates associated with the Dada activities of the Arensberg circle escaped conscription in a variety of ways (Jones 61). Roché, for example, avoided the frontlines by performing translation work related to the war effort, while Cravan continually fled to neutral countries (Jones 61). As the Great War destroyed the old world, the Arensbergs' expanding circle was focused on building anew. As the young American actress and salon guest Beatrice Wood recalled in her autobiography *I Shock Myself*, the only battles that occupied this motley group “were the ones against traditional values” (28). This interdisciplinary group collaborated on numerous projects including the Society of Independent Artists Exhibition of 1917 and *The Blindman*, an avant-garde magazine of art, poetry, and criticism, edited in the salon by Duchamp, Wood, and Roché (Wood 29-31).

In addition to transforming their home into an artistic laboratory, Walter and Louise Arensberg nurtured the artistic milieu of New York in their role as supportive patrons of the arts, purchasing artworks from their guests and financially backing independent literary magazines including *Rongwrong*, *Rogue*, and *Others*. The couple

also supported artists in less conventional ways, offering up their residence to Duchamp upon his arrival to New York, and posting Cravan's bail after the infamous 'lecture' he gave at the opening of the American Independents Exhibition of 1917 in which he publicly disrobed while berating an audience of Park Avenue ladies there to learn "the mysteries of abstract painting" (Buffet-Picabia 260). Walter and Louise Arensberg also provided nourishment in the literal sense, filling the empty stomachs of New York's bohemia. William Carlos Williams noted in his autobiography: "Arensberg could afford to spread a really ample feed with drinks to match" (Williams 136). *Habitué* Beatrice Wood recalled that "at midnight, Lou served drinks and hot chocolate, pastries and éclairs" (Wood 27) while Duchamp adds that "a fair amount of whisky was drunk" (qtd. in Cabanne 53).

In the Arensbergs' Sixty-seventh street apartment the "prodigy" of New York Dada, the "unnatural child" described in Norton's poem, was conceived. While this American avant-garde movement has been studied extensively in scholarship (see literature review below) particularly for its media innovations and anti-art objects (Dachy 2006; Molesworth 2003; Naumann 1994) as well as its influence on surrealist, pop and post-modern conceptual art (Gale 1997; Osterwold 2003; Pegrum 2000), the physical place that conceived this "unnatural child" has only begun to be studied. How did the private residence of Walter and Louise Arensberg, two Americans of wealthy upbringing, become the centre of New York Dada, a nihilistic movement that mocked the status quo? Why did an international band of artists choose to gather at their apartment? How did the Arensbergs' unconventional collection and its ahistorical display parallel the perceptual shifts characteristic of modernity? These questions will be the focus of this major

research paper and will be answered by delving into one of the most impressive and prescient private collections of modern art and pre-Columbian artefacts in North America.

In studying the Arensberg salon, others have preceded me in establishing its crucial relevancy for art making in the twentieth-century and beyond. Francis M. Naumann, in *New York Dada, 1915-1923* (1994) and Steven Watson, in *Strange Bedfellows: The First American Avant-Garde* (1991) have established the Arensberg salon as the nucleus for the New York Dada movement from 1915-1921.³ They documented that during this period, Walter Arensberg and his wife Louise, a well-to-do couple from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Ludlow, Massachusetts respectively, transformed their home into a virtual open house. Thus Naumann and Watson have identified an impressive guest list comprising key figures of the American avant-garde: artists Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia; photographers Man Ray and Charles Sheeler; poets Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, Allen Norton, and William Carlos Williams; art critic Henri-Pierre Roché; actress Beatrice Wood among others (Naumann 1994: 28-32). Naumann has also completed influential research into the atmosphere of the salon, which on any given night included topical conversation, chess matches, drunken revelry, and artistic collaboration (Naumann 1994: 27-28).⁴

³ Naumann conducted extensive biographical research into the lives of Walter and Louise Arensberg tracing, for example, Walter's education at Harvard in 1900, his travels to Europe, studies in Berlin and Florence, and return to Boston in 1903 where he married Louise in 1907. For details, see Naumann 2004, pp. 23-25; Naumann 1980, pp. 3-11.

⁴ See also other foundational studies such as Robert M. Crunden, *American Salons: Encounters with European Modernism 1885-1917*; Dickran Tashjian, *Skyscraper Primitives: Dada and the American Avant-Garde, 1910-1925*.

Feminist scholars, such as Irene Gammel, in *Baroness Elsa: Gender, Dada, and Everyday Modernity*, and Amelia Jones in *Irrational Modernism: A Neurasthenic History of New York Dada*, have focused on the role of more radical avant-garde figures such as the Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven and Arthur Cravan who played crucial roles at the periphery of the Arensberg salon. Thus Gammel has argued that the Baroness's *lived* version of Dada had an important catalyst function for the entire New York Dada movement, involving a crucial crossing of the boundaries of art and life, just like the Arensberg salon itself (Gammel 158-286); while Jones has noted that Cravan's embodiment of hyperbolic masculinity served to thwart the gender-eroding effects of industrialism and World War I, while blurring the distinction between life and performance (Jones 130). Collectively, these studies also emphasize the intermediality of the Arensberg salon, a focus also pursued by Stephen Joyce in an article entitled "Make the World Your Salon: Poetry and Community at the Arensberg Apartment." Concentrating on the poetic output of this motley group, Joyce examines the communal artistic practices and unparalleled interdisciplinary exchange of the Arensberg circle, documenting the unique constellation of artists, patrons, publications, and events facilitated by this social space (Joyce 627-643).

By engaging and extending these theories, this major research essay does more than examine the Arensberg salon within its cultural context: it explores an under-researched yet crucially relevant domain, namely, the Arensbergs' diverse collection of fine art, artefacts, and decorative arts in order to show that Cubist principles underpin the collection and its exhibition. Thus this essay ultimately aims to situate the Arensberg salon as a historically specific exhibition site that promoted radically modern ways of

looking through the rejection of the geographical and temporal organization prevalent in public gallery institutions. Further, I will consider the intricate relationship between the display of the Arensberg collection within this salon setting and the shifting relationship of time and space experienced during the period spanning the *fin-de-siècle* through World War I as the world witnessed racial shifts in technologies, media, women's rights, entertainment and consumer culture. What is the impact of these changes on the modes of art display and viewing in the Arensbergs' salon? What kind of modern viewer does this new Cubist space produce?

In Part 1: Fractals of Art: Cubism and the Arensberg Collection, I will draw on Cubist aesthetic theory by Christopher Grey, Edward Fry and Robert Rosenblum, as well as Stephen Kern's theorization of time and space between the *fin-de-siècle* and World War I, to argue that Cubist art is a visual manifestation of the perceptual shifts of modernity. Using recollections by Duchamp and art collector Walter Pach, combined with documentary photographs taken by Charles Sheeler, and extending Naumann's foundational research, I will also establish the prominence of Cubist and Cubist-influenced art in the Arensbergs' radical collection, beginning with their first substantial acquisition purchased from the infamous Armory Show.

In Part 2: Fractals of Life: The Modern Exhibition Space from the Arensberg Salon to the MoMA, I move beyond the individual artworks in Arensberg collection to explore its unconventional, modernist display within the couple's private living space. More specifically, using salon theorists Emily D. Bilski and Emily Braun and exhibition theorists including Evelyn C. Hankins and Reesa Greenberg, I will argue that the Arensberg residence conforms to the Enlightenment salon tradition of displaying art

within the home, while also dismantling conventional methods of art exhibition. Using Cubist aesthetic theory as a lens to examine Sheeler's documentary photographs of the display of art within the salon, I will unpack the Arensbergs' modern exhibition style, arguing that it incited modern modes of looking from the salon guests.

The Conclusion: From Cubist *Wunderkammer* to Open House positions the Arensberg salon as a *wunderkammer* that encourages active and comparative modes of perception. Drawing on collection theory by Walter Benjamin, Barbara Maria Stafford, and Frances Terpak, this section argues that the Cubist treatment of vision as a dynamic, intellectual process parallels the modern phenomenon of the *wunderkammer* exemplified by the Arensbergs' immense collection.

Just as the Cubist composition of the Arensbergs' collection brought together a multiplicity of perspectives, this essay integrates theoretical viewpoints and art historical publications. This essay also uses first-hand autobiographical sources such as letters, memoirs, and recollections of the Arensbergs' *habitués*, sources that are, by their very nature, subjective and occasionally anecdotal. In addition, this major research paper is based on original archival research conducted into the Walter and Louise Arensberg Papers (including original and unpublished drawings, correspondences, and documents such as an inventory of the collection) housed at the Philadelphia Museum of Modern Art, which were made available to me in microfilm form.⁵ I also explored some of the era's rare journals, magazines, and books in the Special Collections of the Modern Literature and Culture Research Center at Ryerson.

⁵ My thanks to the Smithsonian Archives of American Art for documenting the Walter and Louise Arensberg Papers on microfilm and making them accessible through interlibrary loan, and thanks to the Special Collections Department and Interlibrary Loan Department at Ryerson University for assisting with this archival research.

Before we turn to Cubism in Part 1 of the essay, briefly consider an undated and unpublished drawing by Charles Sheeler, from the Arensberg Papers, presumably completed during the period of the New York salon (see frontispiece). In the simple line drawing, Sheeler depicts Walter Arensberg transfixed in a distracted gaze with his shirt collar rumpled and unbuttoned, his tie loosened, and his hair hanging haphazardly over his forehead. The image coalesces remarkably with Naumann's physical description of Arensberg as an unkempt, "distracted scholar," derived from interviews with his friends (Naumann 1994: 24). Yet what is also striking in Sheeler's portrait is the loose and undefined drawing style employed by an artist known for his precisionist art characterized by crisp, architectonic forms. Instead, the boundaries and features of his subject appear indefinite reminding us of Beatrice Wood's retrospective observation in her memoir, that in comparison with the frank and sincere Louise, Walter "was not quite so sincere. His cordiality lit up for callers. Like royalty he was always the gracious host" (Wood 27).

Interestingly, in the same context, Wood describes her younger self's transformative experience as a viewer of modern art in the Arensberg salon: "One night while Sheeler and Stella discussed color theory, I gazed at the terrifying Matisse over the fireplace. It was his *Portrait of Mademoiselle Yvonne Landsberg*. Willing myself to be open-minded, I almost went into a trance. My eyes locked on its angular lines, until suddenly out of the canvas appeared a creature of wondrous beauty; Matisse had spoken, and at last, I listened" (28). From Victorian ingénue, Wood became a modern woman committed to an anti-bourgeois life of art. This major research paper is about such moments of viewer transformation enabled by the spaces and arrangements of modern art

that produce new ways of looking and listening to aesthetic stimuli within an everyday exhibition setting. The shock of modernity that transforms and transfixes, as we shall see, was at the heart of Cubism as well as the Arensbergs' aesthetic principles of collecting and exhibiting.

Part 1: Fractals of Art

Cubism and the Arensberg Collection

In front of a Cubist work of art, the spectator was to realize that no single interpretation of the fluctuating shapes, textures, spaces, and objects could be complete in itself. And in expressing this awareness of the paradoxical nature of reality and the need for describing it in multiple and even contradictory ways, Cubism offered a visual equivalent of a fundamental aspect of twentieth-century experience.

--Robert Rosenblum, *Cubism and Twentieth-Century Art*

The Cubist revolution, characterised by the rejection of linear perspective, an acknowledgement of the flat picture plane, and an emphasis on the dynamic nature of time and space is widely regarded a landmark development in the course of Western art. Often accredited the same importance as the discovery of linear perspective during the Italian Renaissance, Cubism represents a turning point in modern artistic expression. Arguably the impact of Cubism is the reason it figured so prominently in the Arensberg collection in the form of pure Cubist works by Picasso and Braque as well as Cubist-influenced art indebted to this early twentieth century movement. This chapter will examine the aesthetics of this pivotal modernist movement, contextualizing Cubism within the course of modernism as well as identifying the cultural-historical factors that led to its development. Further, the prevalence of Cubism within the Arensberg collection

will be explored, beginning with the origins of the Arensbergs' modern art collection at the Armory Show. It was through this pivotal exhibition the Arensbergs first became acquainted with the Cubist experimentation occurring in Paris, and first developed a taste for collecting, a passion that would ultimately transport the art and artists of the French avant-garde into this American couple's living room.

In the 1966 publication *Cubism* art historian Edward F. Fry aptly describes Cubism as a "historical and stylistic phenomenon" (36). As an artistic style, Cubism culminated out of lineage of avant-garde experimentation originating in the nineteenth century, and as a historically specific phenomenon, Cubism developed parallel to a series of rapid scientific, technological, philosophical, and political transformations which preceded World War I. Making a decided break from the art of visual appearances, the Cubists achieved abstraction through their depiction of vision as intellectual and conceptual as opposed to physical and sensory (Golding 16). Characterized by visual contradictions, Cubist painting possesses a mixture of dense, cloisonné forms as well as weightless transparencies and textures. In a Cubist composition, planes converge appearing to belong simultaneously to the foreground and background of the work (Rosenblum 9). Through the paradoxical dualities explored in Cubist painting, Picasso and Braque draw attention to the contradictory nature of reality and the multiple perspectives through which it is formed (Rosenblum 9).

This radical treatment of the process vision was greatly indebted to the work of Paul Cézanne. In fact, in conversation with Brassaï, Picasso famously referred to Cézanne as "the father of us all" (Brassaï 107), and this often quoted statement succinctly captures the crucial impact Cézanne's Post-Impressionistic painting had on Cubism and

beyond. Cézanne was originally a member of Impressionism, a movement concerned with capturing the transient effect of light on nature. However, as the *fin-de-siècle* approached, Cézanne broke away from the Impressionist school taking painting into uncharted territory. While visual observation of the physical world was central to Impressionism as well as the western art that had preceded it, Cézanne's Post-Impressionistic painting rejected sensation in favour of intuition and intellect. Instead of attempting to imitate the material world Cézanne sought to capture the Ideal forms that exist beyond the boundaries of the physical realm. In doing so, Cézanne transformed painting from an imitation of nature into an artistic creation reflecting the individuality of the artist (Gray 47-50).

In his rejection of sensation Cézanne made a decisive break from the fixed-point perspective that had dominated western painting since its development during the Italian Renaissance. While iterations of classical painting privileged a single static viewpoint, Cézanne amalgamated multiple perspectives in a single composition. This was intended to give a faithful depiction of the dynamic process of vision, which uses analysis and logic to gather visual information over a period of time. By emphasizing the duration of experience and by pursuing ideal forms beyond the material realm, Cézanne made a radical split from the illusionistic legacy of the Renaissance painters (Gray 47-50).

Following Cézanne's precedent, Picasso and Braque adopted the use of multiple viewpoints as the foundation for Cubism, a non-imitative, and non-illusionistic method of depicting material reality (Fry 38).

A second figure from the *fin de siècle* period that was influential to the development of Cubism was the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898). Mallarmé,

like Cézanne, pursued the Ideal forms that exist beyond the material world. Influenced by the Idealist philosophy of Georg H. W. Hegel, Mallarmé viewed nature as essentially formless—a mere illusion created through sense phenomena. The illusory quality of nature thus distanced it from the Ideal, making it of little significance to the artist. Mallarmé believed that the poetic form could reveal pure ideas, because thoughts expressed through language escaped the contamination caused by the senses. Accessing the Ideal through pure intellect, Mallarmé strove to create poetry unbound by the rules of the causal world (Gray 11-16). Expanding on Mallarmé, the Cubists depicted subject matter the way it appeared to the mind's eye, emphasizing the role of intellect in the process of vision.

While the development of Cubism was influenced by the Idealism promoted in the paintings of Cézanne and the poetry of Mallarmé, this modern art movement was also impacted by a rising western fascination in 'primitive' or 'tribal' artefacts. Through colonial encounters with Micronesian, African, and Native American cultures, 'primitive' objects were accumulated by the West and made available through European flea markets and shops. For 'Primitivist' painters such as Gauguin (1848-1903), this 'tribal' art derived from other regions of the world offered a counterpoint to the rationalism of 'civilized' Western society. Enamoured with the symbolic power and formal simplicity of 'primitive' art, Gauguin reinterpreted aesthetic elements from non-Western art to serve his own stylistic purposes (Golding 50).

As John Golding notes in his book *Cubism: A History and an Analysis 1907-1914*, Picasso was fascinated in the stylistic properties and conceptual quality of African art. Inspired by 'primitive' art, paintings from the first phase of Cubism communicated

on a conceptual level, depicting the artists' knowledge about the subject as opposed to imitating the subject's physical appearance. For the Cubists, the study of 'tribal' artefacts revealed a new, expressive approach to art making which re-created the world as opposed to the western tradition of representation (Golding 51).

With the beginning of the 20th century came a rejection of the *fin-de-siècle* attitude and an interest in the 'new.' Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918), a French poet, playwright, and art critic associated with Cubism, emphasized the dynamism of the machine age while celebrating the vitality of youth. Promoting an *esprit nouveau*, the writing of Apollinaire stresses life, movement, and change, which he felt were expressed in the technologies of the new machine age (Gray 28-37). Following Cézanne and Mallarmé, Apollinaire and his Cubist contemporaries believed that truth exists beyond the scope of the material world. However, unlike Mallarmé who believed in a static Absolute, Apollinaire envisioned the Ideal as a dynamic truth derived from the artist's mind (Gray 28-37). Capturing Apollinaire's *esprit nouveau*, Cubist art transformed the canvas into a series of shifting planes referencing the dynamic nature of reality and the shifting relationship of time and space at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Modern Perception of Time and Space

While Cubism emerged out of a lineage of avant-garde experimentation beginning in the nineteenth century, this artistic movement also developed parallel to numerous cultural phenomena that transformed the way time and space were experienced in the years preceding World War I. Arguably Cubism as an artistic movement gives visual form to

the modern perceptual shifts occurring amid rapid changes in the domains of science, technology, philosophy, and politics at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In his 1983 publication *The Culture of Time & Space: 1880-1918*, Stephen Kern uses phenomenology as a methodological approach to interpret the conceptualization of time and space during this cultural period. As Kern argues, time and space are constituent units of human existence, and by understanding how these dimensions were experienced during any given era, one can gain insight into the culture of that period.

The years prior to World War I were marked by rapid changes in the domain of science. During this period an abundance of experimental discoveries were made including the electron, radioactivity, and x-rays, while modern science and physics were also impacted greatly by the development of non-Euclidean geometry, Quantum Theory, and the General Theory of Relativity (Born 1). As Kern suggests, the General Theory of Relativity signified a breakdown of prevailing notions of space and time. Einstein's theory exploded existing conceptions of Absolute time by establishing the relativity of time in relation to velocity (Kern 1983: 151). In addition, Einstein's theory transformed conceptions of space by proving that gravitational fields cause material bodies to accelerate, which in turn, modifies their apparent size. This refuted the accepted belief that bodies were rigid and definite (Kern 1983: 185). This period also saw the development of transformational modern technologies including the telephone, telegraph, x-ray, cinema, bicycle, automobile, and airplane. These new technologies accelerated time through the speed they afforded communication and travel. In doing so, they also collapsed space enabling people or information to travel greater distances (Kern 1983: 1).

The beginning of the twentieth century was also marked by influential philosophical shifts. Notably, the writing of Henri Bergson (1859-1941) stressed the relationship between time and consciousness, which he referred to as 'duration.' Established in his *Introduction à la Métaphysique* (1903) and further in his *L'Evolution Créatrice* (1907), Bergson emphasizes the role of 'duration' in experience. With the passage of time the individual accumulates perceptual information about the external visible world. By merging multiple perspectives on the picture plane Cubism illustrates 'duration' (Fry 38).

The Cubist epoch culminated with the Great War. Differing from the conflicts that had preceded it, World War I was, as Kern has noted, a drama of simultaneity as millions of men entered into battle synchronized by their wristwatches and receiving orders over the telephone line (Kern 1983: 288). In addition to exemplifying the modern compression of time, the 'composition' of the First World War also reflects a shifting treatment of space. Quoting from Gertrude Stein's 1938 publication *Picasso*, Kern likens the organization of World War I to the compositional arrangement of Cubist paintings. Stein writes:

Really the composition of this war, 1914-1918, was not the composition of all previous wars, the composition was not a composition in which there was one man in the center surrounded by a lot of other men but a composition that had neither a beginning nor an end, a composition of which one corner was as important as another corner, in fact the composition of cubism. (Stein 11)

As Stein's quotation suggests, the spatiality of the First World War exemplified the shifting conceptions of space during this period. While Cubist canvases levelled the treatment of aesthetic space through the rejection of a centred, privileged perspective and the dissolution of the distinction between figure and ground, the war too was lacking a centre. Soldiers were stationed at the Eastern, Western, Turkish, and Mediterranean fronts and the war was being waged by land, sea, and air combat (Kern 1983: 299). While Stein uses the organization of Cubism as an analogy for the modern battlefield, this aesthetic theory can also be applied to the 'composition' of the Arensbergs' salon. How did Cubism as an artistic style factor in the Arensbergs' acquisitions of modern art?

The Armory Show

The Cubist movement made an explosive impact on the American art scene through its inclusion in the International Exhibition of Modern Art, more commonly referred to as the Armory Show. In the winter of 1913 Walter and Louise Arensberg made the trip from Cambridge to New York to attend this travelling exhibition. This excursion had an indelible effect on the course of their lives for it was through the exhibition that the Arensbergs not only made their first serious acquisitions of modern art, but they also befriended Walter Pach, and first encountered the work of Marcel Duchamp.

The Armory Show opened February 17, 1913, in New York City's 69th Regiment Armory on Lexington Avenue. Displaying approximately sixteen hundred works from at least half a dozen countries, the exhibit showcased the developments in modern art that had been occurring throughout Europe as well as a selection of modern works by American artists. Mounted by the Association of American Painters and Sculptors, the

Armory Show was spearheaded by the organization's president Arthur B. Davies and secretary Walt Kuhn. A third influential figure was Walter Pach, an American artist and critic who was well acquainted with the European avant-garde. Davies approached Pach to provide crucial assistance in selecting European works for the exhibition (Perlman 4).

The purpose of the exhibition was to end America's "reign of ignorance" towards modern art, as Walter Pach observes in his 1938 recollection *Queer Thing, Painting* (Pach 1938: 177). According to Pach, "America was living off the canned foods of art, the things held over from years before. It knew, vaguely, that there was fresh fruit, fresh meat on the tables of Paris, and it wanted its share" (Pach 1938: 177). At the time of the Armory Show, the collections in American galleries were chiefly restricted to classical works, or classical iterations completed by contemporary artists (Pach 1938: 201). The purpose of the show was to expose the American public to the latest developments in modern art, and in this respect the exhibition proved to be a rousing success. In the wake of the Armory Show several experimental galleries were founded in Manhattan devoted to the exhibition of modern art, and with the onset of World War I, New York became a hotbed of creative activity with national and expatriate artists contributing to the emergent American avant-garde.

Many of the European artists included in the exhibition had reservations about contributing their work for fear that it would be gawked at by an ignorant American public. These concerns proved legitimate—American visitors, unaccustomed to viewing modern art, were baffled, shocked, and even offended by the show. The exhibition organizers quickly found themselves at the centre of a scandal as accusations flew that they were promoting immoral, degenerate art. The Cubist room caused the most

controversy of all. Displaying some of the most extreme manifestations of modern art it was dubbed the “chamber of horrors” with Marcel Duchamp’s *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912) regarded as the “greatest horror of all” (Naumann 1994: 16).

The Armory Show received an incredible amount of press, with newspapers across the nation reporting on the exhibition. In New York, the show quickly turned into a society event, while in Boston academics assembled to scoff at the modern artwork. In Chicago the exhibition became intertwined with the city’s campaign against vice, which culminated in protesters burning an effigy of Pach and a reproduction of a nude by Matisse. This caused an even greater influx of visitors lured by the scandal of the show (Pach 1938: 195).

The New York opening of the exhibition was a remarkable success, welcoming approximately a quarter of a million visitors through the doors of the 69th Regiment Armory (Pach 1938: 193). Among the guests were President Theodore Roosevelt, philanthropist Otto Kahn, collector Henry C. Frick (Pach 1938: 200), and a married couple from Cambridge—Walter and Louise Arensberg. Like most attendees of the Armory Show, the Arensbergs had been isolated from the radical artistic developments occurring overseas.

Walter was immediately taken with the new and innovative forms of modern art. Louise, however, had a less favourable reaction to the exhibition, finding the deformed subjects of the modern paintings “grotesque” and even “frightful” (Naumann 1994: 25). In the end, Walter’s fascination won out, and the couple decided to purchase a work from the show (Naumann 1994: 25). The Arensbergs had attended the exhibition just prior to its closing in New York, and unfortunately many of the paintings which had caught

Walter's eye had already been sold. Eventually Arensberg settled on a Vuillard lithograph, at an investment of twelve dollars.

Evidently Arensberg was dissatisfied with this purchase, and he returned to the Armory Show in Boston to exchange the Vuillard lithograph. In Boston, Arensberg acquired prints by Gauguin and Cézanne and a painting by the Puteaux-Cubist Jacques Villon. The painting, a highly abstracted landscape,⁶ cost eighty-one dollars and was a considerably brave investment since Arensbergs' knowledge of Villon would have been limited to the Armory Show. Naumann has suggested that Walter Pach, who travelled with the Armory Show to Boston and Chicago, undoubtedly advised this bold purchase (Naumann 1994: 25). This was not the only time Pach would offer valuable input concerning the Arensbergs' collection. The two Walters became acquainted through the Armory Show and remained lifelong friends exchanging correspondences predominantly on the topic of modern art.⁷ It was also through Pach that the Arensbergs were first introduced to Marcel Duchamp, the artist whose infamous *Nude* they first encountered at the Armory Show (Cabanne 51-52). The Arensbergs would become lifelong friends and patrons of Duchamp, one of the most influential artists of the twentieth century.

A year after attending the Armory Show, the Arensbergs' art collection continued to grow, while their interest in Shady Hill, the couple's Cambridge estate, began to wane. The couple disliked the isolation of Shady Hill, and longed for the theatres, galleries, and

⁶ In his 1980 article "Walter Conrad Arensberg: Poet, Patron, and Participant in the New York Avant-Garde, 1915-20," Naumann identifies this Villon painting as *Sketch for "Puteaux (Smoke and Trees in Bloom, No. 2),"* p. 6. This painting will be explored in further detail below.

⁷ See the chapter "Walter C. Arensberg" in *American Artists, Authors, and Collectors: The Walter Pach Letters, 1906-1958*, edited by Bennard B. Perlman for the two Walters' correspondences.

events that New York City offered. In 1914 they selected a two-storey apartment on the Upper West side with expansive white walls suitable for the display of their burgeoning art collection (Naumann 1994: 25).

Initially, gatherings at the Arensberg's apartment consisted of the couple's friends and Walter's literary associates. The guest list for these gatherings included Wallace Stevens, a Harvard alumnus, insurance lawyer and poet; Carl van Vechten, a journalist, critic, and editor of the poetry review *Trend*; Van Vechten's wife Fania Marnoff, an actress; Allen and Louise Norton, a married couple who edited the avant-garde publication *Rogue*; and Donald Evans, the founder of Marie Claire Press (Naumann 1994: 27-8). Set against the backdrop of their ever-expanding art collection, the Arensbergs' soirées began to attract guests outside of the couple's circle of personal contacts. Word spread of the Arensbergs' warm hospitality and intriguing art collection and soon their home became a favourable destination for New York's bohemia. Influential members of the European avant-garde who had fled to New York invariably wound up at the Arensbergs' residence where they intermingled with American poets, performers, artists, and thinkers—creating, collaborating, and challenging the status quo. In New York the isolation of Shady Hill was a world away. Their apartment had become the nucleus of an artistic movement—the “womb” that produced New York Dada.

The Arensberg Collection

Growing more rapidly than the Arensbergs' impressive guest list was their extensive collection. In fact, by 1951, when Walter and Louise Arensberg finally documented their holdings for tax purposes, it had expanded to one thousand two hundred and fifty items

ranging from Pre-Columbian pottery to landmark works in modern art (see figs. 1-2 for pages excerpted from this document). Among the possessions included on the itemized list was the small Villon landscape purchased from the Boston leg of the Armory Show (Walter and Louise Arensberg Papers PMA). The painting, *Sketch for "Puteaux (Smoke and Trees in Bloom, No. 2)"* (1912), was a study that preceded one of Villon's most influential early Cubist works: *Puteaux (Smoke and Trees in Bloom)* (c. 1912). The sketch was one of four paintings completed in preparation for *Puteaux*, all of which were included in the Armory Show ("*Sketch for Puteaux*" 1). While the sketch represents a *preliminary stage* in Villon's painting process, in the context of the Arensbergs' collection, the small canvas represents a daring *preliminary investment* in modern art.

Composed predominantly of modulations of green, blue, and grey, Villon's sketch depicts flowering trees against geometric renderings of smoke and landscape (see fig 3). More naturalistic in style than the final Cubist painting, the small sketch demonstrates the manner in which Villon extracted geometric shapes from the Puteaux countryside to create a final composition imbued with rhythm and characterized by an extreme degree of abstraction ("*Sketch for Puteaux*" 1). While the small canvas served as a midpoint in Villon's process of abstraction, its distance from naturalistic painting surely would have situated this work among the "horrors" encountered by Armory Show visitors who ventured into the Cubist Room.

This preliminary investment in modern art would quickly become one of numerous Cubist-style paintings displayed throughout the private residence of Walter and Louise Arensberg. A mere five years later, when Philadelphia-based painter and photographer Charles Sheeler was commissioned to document the Arensbergs' collection

in a series of remarkable photographs (see figs. 4-7),⁸ each wall of the couple's central studio space would boast art work belonging to or influenced by the Cubist movement. For example, in close proximity to the Arensbergs' brick fireplace, Sheeler's photograph of the salon's east elevation captures three compositions by Georges Braque— *Musical Forms* (1913), *Still Life* (1912), and *Musical Forms (Guitar and Clarinet)* (1918) (see fig. 4). Completed by one of the originators of Cubism, these multimedia collages, known as *papiers collés*, depict musical instruments as a series of abstract shifting planes, highlighting the flatness of the canvas while simultaneously suggesting a dynamic viewer moving through space.

The same photograph by Sheeler also captures *Physical Culture* (1913) by Francis Picabia displayed on the opposing side of the Arensbergs' fireplace. This painting completed in the Orphic Cubist style builds on the geometric abstraction of the Cubists while rejecting subject matter entirely in favour of pure lyric abstraction. Below *Physical Culture* hangs *Yvonne and Magdeleine Torn in Tatters* (1911) by Marcel Duchamp. This oil painting references Picasso and Braque's *papiers collés* through the integration of torn paper throughout the composition. Other Cubist characteristics of this painting include the treatment of the entire picture plane as positive space, and the incorporation of multiple perspectives into a single composition through repetition and the disjunction of scale. Similar to Braque's multimedia works, the 'multiperspectivism' of this painting

⁸ Between 1918 and 1919 Sheeler extensively photographed the Arensberg collection, documenting individual artworks as well as the display of the collection within the salon. Originals of these photographs can be found in the permanent collection at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and in the Lane Collection housed at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. A selection of these photographs have been reproduced in Naumann, *New York Dada: 1915-23*, pp. 26-27, and in Stebbins, *The Photography of Charles Sheeler: American Modernist*, pp. 52-53.

offers a dynamic rendering of space and time through the simultaneous depiction of multiple viewpoints.

The northwest elevation of the salon, also photographed by Sheeler, further emphasizes the predominance of Cubist-influenced art within the Arensbergs' collection (see fig. 6). Hanging above the left end of the sofa is a *papier collé* by Picasso entitled *Violin and Guitar* (1913). This synthetic Cubist work, like the Braque compositions discussed earlier, emphasizes the flatness of the picture plane through the collaged application of multiple media. At the opposing end of the sofa hangs Picasso's oil painting *Female Nude* (1910). This painting belonging to the analytic phase of Cubism abstracts the female form almost beyond recognition, transforming the subject into a tower of fluctuating geometric shapes. Completed in a monochromatic scheme, the painting equally emphasizes the figure and the ground surrounding it, utilizing luminescent highlights and dense lowlights throughout.

Off to the right of Sheeler's photograph, hangs Morton Schamberg's oil painting *Mechanical Abstraction* (1916) and a conté drawing by Sheeler entitled *Barn Abstraction* (1917). Arguably, these artworks, both completed by American artists who were *habitués* of the Arensberg salon, were influenced by the Cubist work displayed throughout the Arensbergs' residence. Schamberg's painting renders an automated wire stitcher with the precision of a mechanical drawing. Instead of applying shading to create the illusion of depth, this painting abstracts the subject into a series of flattened geometric forms. Similarly, Sheeler's drawing explodes a rural barn into a pile of geometric shapes that advance and recede into the picture plane provided by his white drawing paper.

Providing the central focal point above the Arensbergs' sofa is Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 3* (1916). This multimedia work is a reproduction of *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2* (1912), which Duchamp completed for the Arensbergs when they had difficulty acquiring the original oil painting for their collection. The Cubist composition of *Nude* abstracts the human figure into what Beatrice Wood described as "a wild bedlam of exploding shingles" (26) fusing multiple views of the subject in descent with an equally complex background. In addition to the obviously Cubist composition of *Nude*, the artist's emphasis on the dimension of time, through his depiction of various moments in the figure's descent also incorporates Futurist sensibilities, as well as references Eadweard Muybridge's pioneering work which used emergent photographic technology to study human locomotion.

The dynamism explored through Duchamp's intellectual depiction of a subject in motion through the use of multiple, shifting perspectives was characteristic of the dynamic spirit promoted by the Cubist poet Apollinaire and expressed by the Cubist paintings of Braque and Picasso, which invigorated the surface of the canvas with 'new' approaches to perception. Breaking entirely from the classical legacy of linear perspective the Cubists created dynamic compositions that simultaneously displayed multiple overlapping perspectives. During this era of the machine, speed was supreme, and the single static viewpoint of illusionistic painting had become outmoded (Gray 28-37).

While the Cubist art in the Arensberg collection celebrated the vitality of the twentieth century, the atmosphere of the salon also reflected the *esprit nouveau* of this era. The salon itself was a dynamic environment with an ever-expanding guest list.

Habituée Louise Varèse recalled that at the Arensbergs “you might meet anyone from poets and painters and scholars to musical comedy dancers and Hollywood stars” (Varèse 202), and this interdisciplinary group would participate in conversation, games, drunken revelry, and artistic production. Varèse recounts one lively evening in which the trailblazing modern dancer Isadora Duncan consumed too much alcohol and—with an overzealous embrace—accidentally knocked out Walter Arensberg’s teeth (Varèse 202-203). In addition to the unpredictable behaviour of habitués and the ever-changing guest list, the art produced by the Arensberg salon was also remarkably dynamic. The New York Dada movement was characterized by a nihilistic desire to break from the past while generating new and exciting forms of expression. Like Apollinaire, many of the *habitués* would turn to modern machines for artistic inspiration.

Through the assembly of a diverse group of individuals ranging from “scholars” to “Hollywood stars,” the salon became a synergistic environment for artistic innovation. In addition to connecting a diverse circle of guests, the Arensberg salon also reflected the new dynamism of the era by placing disparate objects in contact within one another within the circumscribed space of the salon. How does this process of collecting parallel the amalgamation of multiple perspectives within the Cubist canvas? Also, how does the radical display of this collection within the Arensbergs’ private residence parallel the perceptual experience promoted by a Cubist composition? Broadening my focus from the fractals of Cubist art found throughout the Arensberg salon, the remainder of this essay will use Cubism as a lens to examine the unconventional display of modernist art, decorative arts, and ‘primitive’ artefacts within the Arensbergs’ living space.

Part 2: Fractals of Life:

The Modern Exhibition Space from the Arensberg Salon to the MoMA

The Arensbergs were collectors—the first in America to respond to modern art. Their large two-storey duplex had a sitting room full of oriental rugs, carefully chosen early American furniture and comfortable sofas and chairs. But there on the walls—not only in the sitting room but in the hall, the bedroom, bath and kitchen—hung the most hideous collection of paintings I had ever seen.

--Beatrice Wood, *I Shock Myself* (26)

The apartment of Walter and Louise Arensberg follows in the tradition of Enlightenment salons, which transformed the home into a domestic exhibition setting. Originating in France during the seventeenth century, salons were one of the first institutions of modern culture. Held in the drawing rooms of such influential women as Madame Madeleine de Scudéry (1607-1701), Madame Germaine de Staël (1766-1817), and Madame Marie-Thérèse Rodet Geoffrin (1699-1777), salons bridged the public and private spheres, providing a liminal space where stimulating conversation and artistic experimentation could take place, yielding social impact beyond the domestic milieu (Bilski and Braun 1).

In 1812, the French artist Anicet-Charles-Gabriel Lemonnier represented the salon as a domestic exhibition setting in his painting *Une Soirée chez Madame Geoffin en 1755* (see fig. 8). Surviving as an iconic image of the French Enlightenment, Lemonnier's painting provides an artistic recreation of the illustrious salon gatherings of Madame Geoffrin (Bilski and Braun 9-10). For the purposes of this investigation, what is most

fascinating about Lemonnier's painting is his documentation of the renowned *salonnière's* extensive art collection. While the Arensbergs' apartment also displayed an extensive collection of art, the atmosphere of this New York salon and the exhibition style implemented by its hosts varies drastically from the scene depicted in Lemonnier's painting.

As a leading patron of the arts, Geoffrin transformed her salon into an exhibition space and salesroom—Mondays she hosted an artistic salon comprised of painters and connoisseurs, where artists could market themselves by presenting their works (B. Scott 99). In addition to providing an environment where artists and patrons could network, Geoffrin supported the arts through her own commissions and purchases, including the paintings *La Lecture espagnole* (c. 1755) and *La Conversation espagnole* (1754) by Carle Van Loo (1705-1765) and assorted works by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725-1805), Claude-Joseph Vernet (1714-1789), and Joseph-Marie Vien (1716-1809) among others (Barker 588-89; Bilski and Braun 9). Madame Geoffrin's collection of Enlightenment era paintings hung two and three rows high provides the backdrop for the mise-en-scène depicted in Lemonnier's oil painting.

As this essay has previously established, the Arensbergs, like Madame Geoffrin, were supportive patrons of the arts with an extensive collection of 'new' art.⁹ However, the radical nature of the Arensbergs' art often incited an adverse reaction which deviates

⁹ In *New York Dada, 1915-23*, Naumann notes that the Arensbergs' passion for the arts extended well beyond their roles as collectors and patrons. From an early age Louise was enrolled in piano lessons and possessed an extensive knowledge of musical forms ranging from the baroque to the most recent modernists. Walter actively pursued a career as a poet, contributing to the little magazines of the period including Man Ray's ephemeral *TNT*, and publishing two volumes of collected verse—*Poems* (1914) and *Idols* (1916) (24-28). However, as Arensberg's lifelong companion Duchamp noted: Walter "wasn't recognized very quickly or completely as a poet" (qtd. in Cabanne 51).

from the polite atmosphere depicted in Lemonnier's painting. On one occasion the art critic Henry McBride brought a bourgeois friend to the Arensbergs' apartment. His friend found Walter and Louise "delightful but raving lunacy was to him the only explanation for the possession of the works of art that adorned the Arensberg salon" (McBride 156). While shock was a common response to the Arensbergs' overwhelming domestic exhibition, guests who continued to frequent the space, won over by the Arensbergs' warm hospitality, often developed a deep appreciation for their radical collection. As noted in the introduction, Beatrice Wood recounts such a transformation in her autobiography crediting the Arensbergs with exposing her to "the culture of the day," and turning her "away from the exhibitionism of the theatre to the subtler esthetics [sic] of the other arts" (Wood 28).

A comparison can be drawn between the domestic exhibition space of Madame Geoffrin's salon, represented in Lemonnier's oil painting, and Sheeler's photographic documentation of the Arensbergs' residence. While these images represent an Enlightenment era Parisian drawing room and a World War I era Manhattan apartment respectively, they both provide a glimpse of the salon as an exhibition space, giving insight into the manner in which art was displayed in these homes. Both Geoffrin's drawing room and the Arensbergs' apartment boast extensive art collections hung making full use of the expansive ceiling height in each residence. In each salon, the paintings on display exemplify the style of the period.

In Lemonnier's representation of Madame Geoffrin's salon, the bulk of paintings recreated within the composition are Baroque-style portraits and picturesque Rococo landscapes. Aimed at producing an illusionistic representation of the physical world, the

paintings in Madame Geoffrin's salon utilize linear perspective, which privileges a single, stationary vantage point in order to transform the canvas into a window on the world. Through an emphasis on imitating the physical world, these eighteenth century compositions privilege visual reality, which contrasts with the Cubist treatment of vision as an intellectual process. By capturing a single moment in time from a fixed viewpoint, the Enlightenment era paintings are static in comparison to the dynamism explored in the Arensberg collection.

Stasis is also suggested by Madame Geoffrin's salon through the arrangement of artwork. Displayed within a symmetrical room, which was typical of the architecture of the period, the paintings in Geoffrin's collection are arranged using bilateral symmetry. Centred on the wall behind the *habitués*, a classical style bust is displayed with static frontality. Flanking the sculpture, two Rococo-style landscape paintings are hung in perfect balance. Above the landscapes hangs another symmetrical vignette created by an oil painting bordered on the left and right by oval-framed portraits. The entire arrangement is composed between the symmetrical doorways that provide access to the drawing room, creating an overall sense of harmony and formality within the space. Further, the paintings are all surrounded by matching gilded frames which add to the cohesion of the space. The combination of artwork and the manner in which it is displayed creates a space that is formal, harmonious, and cohesive.

Contrasting Lemonnier's painting, Sheeler's photographs capture a different atmosphere. Influenced by Cézanne and the Cubists, the art in the Arensbergs' home depicts subject matter from multiple perspectives, treating vision as an active process. Interestingly, the compositions of these canvases are mirrored by their dynamic

arrangement throughout the Arensbergs' apartment. Sheeler's photographic documentation of the east elevation of the salon illustrates the hanging style utilized by the Arensbergs (see fig. 5). While Madame Geoffrin's collection is organized in orderly rows, the paintings in this photograph are loosely grouped in columns and hung at different heights. While Duchamp's large works *Portrait (Dulcinea)* (1911) and *The King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes* (1912) form a visually dense display stretching from the piano to the ceiling, these oil paintings are surrounded by smaller works of varying sizes which are erratically spaced and hung in an asymmetrical style. By rejecting bilateral symmetry, the dynamic hanging style documented in this photograph encourages the viewer's eye to dance from painting to painting.

The Cubists' positive treatment of negative space is also referenced by the Arensbergs' sprawling collection. While Classical iterations of painting present a hierarchical relationship between the subject and background, Cubist-style paintings eradicate the traditional figure-ground distinction. Every corner of a Cubist composition is important, and the boundaries between figure and ground are porous. In a Cubist painting the distinction between a subject and the space surrounding it is constantly in flux. Appearing as a series of fractured planes which simultaneously advance and recede, the Cubist composition blurs the classical hierarchy between subject and background.

Paralleling the Cubists' positive treatment of negative space the Arensbergs' extensive collection of decorative arts blurred the boundary between their fine arts acquisitions and the space that housed them. In addition to collecting modern art, the Arensbergs possessed an impressive assortment of oriental rugs, and Shaker and early American furnishings. While it is not possible to discern the origins of the rugs in

Sheeler's photographs (see figs. 4 and 7), the Arensbergs did itemize their holdings of decorative arts in their 1951 documentation of their collection. By this time, the Arensbergs had amassed over one hundred rugs originating from a diversity of nations including China, Persia, and Turkey. From the tax listing it can be discerned that these rugs represented a precious facet of the Arensberg collection—in fact, the document valued one Tabriz carpet at one thousand three hundred and fifty dollars, and many other rugs were identified as antiques (Walter and Louise Arensberg Papers, PMA). Boasting sophisticated patterns constructed through the arrangement of geometric shapes on a two-dimensional plane, these rugs mirror the Cubists' acknowledgement of the inherent flatness of the canvas and as well as their abstract use of geometric forms.

The Shaker furnishings positioned throughout the Arensbergs' Manhattan residence also contributed to the couple's collection. Constructed by a religious communal sect, these furnishings boast a harmonious use of form. The Shakers created functionalist objects, not because they had modernist sensibilities, but because they believed that ornamentation promoted unnecessary vanity. Below Duchamp's *Chocolate Grinder, No. 2* (1914) is a three-slat side chair, the Shakers' most iconic design, originating in the New Lebanon Shaker community around 1830, but also produced by sects in Hancock and Watervliet, New York (see fig. 7). A second Shaker chair photographed to the right of the fireplace (see fig. 4) can be identified as a dining chair due to its low back, designed to tuck beneath the profile of the dining table (Kassay 74-79). Like the hand-woven rugs layered on the floor, these furnishings were the product of patient craftsmanship and an aesthetic eye for formal organization (Rieman 48-49). While Shaker furniture would become a valuable antique in the first half of the twentieth

century due to the dissolution of Shaker communities, the Arensbergs were presumably attracted to the formalist aesthetic of these furnishings.

These careful acquisitions of decorative arts expanded the scope of the Arensbergs' collection, extending it beyond the walls and making it sprawl throughout the Arensbergs' living space. Returning to the Cubists' eradication of the figure-ground distinction, the Arensbergs collection transformed everything in the residence, from the paintings to the furnishings, into a work of art and craftsmanship that reinforced modernist aesthetics. The domestic space that provided the backdrop to the Arensbergs' acquisitions thus became an active element of their collection with flooring and seating all reinforcing the Cubist emphasis on form. As Henry McBride declared in an essay published in *The Dial* in 1920: "The Arensbergs' big studio on West 67th Street is exclusively modern" (156). In the Arensberg apartment, like the modernist composition, every corner takes on importance.

"At Home with American Art"

The Arensberg salon privately showcased new, and for its time, provocative art, generating interest in the European avant-garde and celebrating American modernism during an era when major public institutions, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, were disinterested in contemporary work. While the Armory Show of 1913 had piqued the public's curiosity in new forms of modern art, the display of what was termed "progressive"¹⁰ art was mostly limited to Alfred Stieglitz's Photo-Secession gallery known as "291" and a handful of experimental art galleries: the Bourgeois, Daniel,

¹⁰ During this period the term "progressive art" was used to describe the emergent forms of modern artistic experimentation.

Carroll, Washington Square, and the Modern Gallery, a commercial offshoot of “291” managed by Stieglitz’s colleague Marius de Zayas (Naumann 1980: 10).

Both Stieglitz and de Zayas were fascinated by the impact of ‘tribal’ art on the development of new modern forms, and displayed African and pre-Columbian sculpture alongside modernist works in their gallery spaces. Presumably, the ahistorical displays in “291” and the Modern Gallery are what aroused the Arensbergs’ interest in ‘primitive’ art, and the couple purchased their first pre-Columbian sculpture, an Aztec figure carved from out of Basaltic rock, from de Zayas in 1915 (shown in front of the fireplace in fig. 4 and in the foreground of fig. 7) (Naumann 1994: 27; Kubler 27). Displaying a growing collection of African and pre-Columbian artefacts amongst their modern collection, the Arensbergs’ residence boasted a collage of objects from different temporal, geographical and cultural origins.

Nearly a decade after the Arensberg salon dissolved large-scale institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and the Whitney Museum of American Art were founded with the mission to exhibit modernist works. An analysis of these two different museum institutions, both intended for the display of modern art, can offer insight into the unique exhibition format used in the Arensberg home. In her essay “En/Gendering the Whitney’s Collection of American Art” Evelyn C. Hankins contrasts the ‘white cube’ format of the MoMA with the design of the Whitney Museum of American art, which “deliberately invoked the discourses of modern domesticity” (163).

The MoMA was founded in 1929 by three influential patrons of the arts—Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Lillie P. Bliss and Mary Quinn Sullivan. The gallery itself was housed in several temporary locations before settling in 1939 into its well-known

permanent location—a building completed in the International Style on West Fifty-Third Street. One of the temporary locations was a nineteenth-century townhouse that had belonged to Rockefeller. Under the supervision of the museum's first director Albert Barr, the townhouse was transformed into a gallery space, and all vestiges of the building's domesticity were eliminated. Some walls were removed while the remainder were covered in off-white monk's cloth, and the closets and fireplaces throughout the Beaux-Arts building were closed off. Barr deliberately made the building conform to the International Style by stripping away all superfluous ornamentation, and transformed the home into a public space by removing all signifiers of its history as a private dwelling (Hankins 180). Despite the MoMA's townhouse setting, Hankins notes that Barr's contemporaries "adopted the discourse of science to describe the museum," referring to the space as "a laboratory for trial and experimentation" (Hankins 182).

Both the MoMA's temporary townhouse location and its permanent structure were designed to conform to the aesthetic of the International Style. Key tenets of this modern architectural approach include: the expulsion of superfluous ornamentation; the use of contemporary industrial materials; and an emphasis on functionalism, succinctly aphorized by Louise Sullivan, the inventor of the modern skyscraper, as "form ever follows function" (Sullivan 111). Modernist architects who popularized the International Style, including Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe, believed that their revolutionary approach to architecture produced buildings that were able to transcend 'style.' This belief is clearly expressed in Le Corbusier's 1923 publication *Vers une architecture*:

Whereas the history of architecture evolves slowly over the centuries in terms of structure and décor, in the last fifty years iron and cement have brought gains that are the index of a great power to build and the index of an architecture whose code is in upheaval. If we set ourselves against the past, we determine that the “styles” no longer exist for us, that the style of an era has been elaborated; there has been a revolution (Le Corbusier 89).

Promoting an “aesthetic of the engineer,” Le Corbusier viewed buildings as machines, and as such, their appearance was to be determined solely by their function (Le Corbusier 85). Through this functionalist approach, Le Corbusier and his contemporaries believed they could create buildings based on mathematical harmony that would possess a universal beauty, and as a result, an ability to transcend time. According to the International Style, ornamentation was superfluous since it did not contribute to the function of the building, and it also had the detrimental effect of historicizing a particular structure by making it conform to a temporally-specific ‘style.’ This argument was central to Adolph Loos’ 1908 seminal text *Ornament and Crime*, in which the Austrian architect posits that ornamentation is “wasted manpower” since it requires increased labour and capital to produce objects that will become obsolete because they are associated with a particular ‘style’ (Loos 33). Loos also provocatively proclaims that ornamentation is “criminal” and “degenerate,” associating it with tattoo art and the scribbles of children (Loos 29).

International Style, with its lack of ornamentation, its distinctive use of geometric forms and its celebration of machine aesthetics, produces buildings characterized by a masculine aesthetic. While the MoMA’s temporary townhouse location was originally

doubly feminized by its domestic history in a Beaux-Arts townhouse adorned with gendered ornamentation, Barr masculinized the site by stripping away decorative and domestic elements. This transformation was ultimately reflected in the scientific discourse adopted to describe the gallery. The MoMA's permanent gallery structure continued to promote the scientific display of art through its hermetic 'white cube' format. Featuring a non-descript white interior, the MoMA's permanent structure displays art in orderly succession as specimens on the wall.

Founded in 1930, a year after the MoMA, the Whitney Museum of American Art was also established with the specific mandate to display modern art; however its founder Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney and founding director Juliana Force took a very different architectural approach. Whitney and Force believed that the imposing and authoritarian design typically adopted by museums and galleries hindered the public's enjoyment of artworks. Determined to create an environment that not only made visitors feel comfortable but also made them feel "at home with American art," the pair set out to create a gallery space that referenced modern domesticity (Hankins 165).

Using a team of architects and professional interior decorators, the Whitney townhouse was outfitted with the latest trends in modern domestic design. The renovation preserved the intimate, domestic scale of the individual rooms and the floor plan promoted casual roaming as opposed to a single prescribed route through the gallery space. The scale of each room varied as well as the ceiling heights, and each space featured coordinating upholstery, treatments, and wall colours. While modern art museums such as the MoMA's permanent location were often finished in industrial materials, the Whitney townhouse featured plush carpet underfoot, which evoked the

comfort of a residence as opposed to the sterility of a laboratory. Similarly, each room was furnished with comfortable lounges, settees, and chairs, which welcomed visitors to sit and contemplate the art displayed in any particular room (Hankins 169-173).

While Barr's contemporaries described the MoMA's gallery space in scientific terms, reviewers of the Whitney depicted the space "almost exclusively in terms of the warmth and intimacy associated with feminine domesticity" (Hankins 173). Unlike the MoMA's temporary townhouse location, which Barr transformed into a hermetic, scientific space, Whitney and Force deliberately maintained an informal, intimate atmosphere through their evocation of the domestic sphere (Hankins 173).

In *Irrational Modernism*, Amelia Jones disrupts dominant readings of modernism through her exploration of the irrational underside of New York Dada. Written from a feminist point of view, Jones' book offers a counterpoint to masculine aesthetic promoted in the architectural theory of Loos and Le Corbusier and exemplified by the MoMA. Jones argues that the highly rationalized, austere, and logical architectural aesthetic of the International Style served to contain the *irrationality* of the modernist period (Jones 14). International Style has been historicized as the pinnacle of modernist design and the white-cube format of galleries such as the MoMA has been widely adopted for the display of modern art. While the architecture of the MoMA adheres to revolutions in modern architecture it also promotes the hermetic presentation of art through its clear distinctions between figure (the art on display) and ground (the surrounding gallery space). In contrast, the type of viewing encouraged by the domestic exhibition style adopted by the Whitney and prevalent in the Arensberg salon encourages the same dynamic non-linear perception explored by the Cubist painters and poets.

The type of spectatorship promoted by the domestic exhibition site encourages viewers to search for visual affinity and consider the collection as a whole. Situated in a home, the salon environment offers a viewing experience that differs from the public gallery space. As Reesa Greenberg describes in her essay “The Exhibited Redistributed,” exhibition sites that include comfortable chairs or sofas connote a leisurely and contemplative aesthetic experience (Greenberg 247). In contrast, public gallery spaces like the MoMA promote a linear approach to looking. Offering minimal seating, the format of the MoMA forces the spectator to walk through the space, experiencing each work individually and in succession. In addition, the ‘white cube’ format of the typical modern art gallery promotes a linear gaze through its non-descript décor. This hermetic presentation of art eliminates any elements that could interfere with the viewer’s reading (O’Doherty 85).

Like the Whitney, the Arensberg salon provided a space where guests could be at “home” with art. While the feminized space of the salon, situated in the domestic sphere, strays from the masculine-style buildings used to historicize modernist art, the type of looking promoted by the Arensbergs’ arrangement of art coalesces remarkably with the type of perception incited by a Cubist painting. In contrast to the conventional public gallery, the compact residential space of the Arensbergs’ apartment, overwhelmed with art and artefacts, encourages viewers to contemplate the collection as a whole. Similar to the post-modern art gallery, which utilizes vistas to encourage comparative looking (Krauss 347), the visual proximity of objects within the Arensbergs’ residence encourages guests to view the collection as an ensemble. Contrary to the sequential presentation of art in ‘white cube’ galleries such as the MoMA, the Arensbergs’ salon

brought disparate objects into contact within a single circumscribed space. These surprising combinations of temporally diverse objects, produced by the organization of this domestic exhibition setting, mirrors the simultaneity explored through the Cubist amalgamation of perspectives, as well as the collapse of time characteristic of modern experience. Further, by juxtaposing temporally distant art objects that share a common focus on re-creation, as opposed to the illusionistic representation of a subject, the Arensberg salon presents the history of art as cyclical as opposed to chronological. Within this context, pre-Columbian sculpture, with its emphasis on form, is transformed from traces of a former culture into signifiers of modernist aesthetics.

The Arensberg salon also encouraged modernist modes of perception through the plethora of seating positioned throughout the couple's living space. Providing guests with ample opportunity to sit and contemplate the art that surrounded them, the salon promoted a non-sequential, non-linear gaze, in which there was no single, prescribed method to view the collection. This non-linear mode of looking reflects the manner in which the Cubists re-created their subjects through the intellectual and intuitive process of vision, as opposed to representing them from a solitary, static and privileged viewpoint. In addition to the modern perception incited by the Arensbergs' distinct exhibition setting, a final aspect of the Arensberg salon that contributed to its Cubist organization was its status as a collection amalgamating objects from disparate origins. Thus, the conclusion of this essay will explore the dynamism inherent in the Arensbergs' collection.

Conclusion:

From Cubist *Wunderkammer* to Open House

The Cubist-influenced paintings acquired by Walter and Louise Arensberg reflected ‘new’ ways of looking at the world impacted by recent shifts in the conception of time and space. Further the asymmetrical and ahistorical display of the Arensbergs’ holdings throughout their private residence paralleled the spatio-temporal collapse experienced during this period. To conclude this theorization of the Arensberg salon as a Cubist space this final section will examine how the process of collection also mirrors modern modes of perception.

The Arensbergs’ residence, with its display of heterogeneous objects, belongs to the tradition of *Wunderkammern*, or cabinet of curiosities, which emerged in Europe during the sixteenth century. The rise of the *Wunderkammer*, situated at the threshold of modernity, resulted from the European expansion, which facilitated the acquisition of diverse artefacts (Stafford and Terpak 148).

One of the most renowned *Wunderkammern* belonged to early eighteenth-century Dutchman Levinus Vincent. While Vincent’s collection belonged to a very different historical-cultural context many affinities can be drawn between the Arensberg salon and Vincent’s extensive *Wunderkammer*. Vincent’s impressive collection included coins, porcelain, lacquerware, ethnographic objects, prints, and drawings (Stafford and Terpak 148-150). Similarly, the Arensbergs displayed a comprehensive collection comprised of tools, apotropaic objects, ‘tribal’ sculpture, modern art, Shaker furniture, and oriental rugs, as noted earlier.

Vincent's *Wunderkammer* was displayed in his home, yet he opened his doors to the public, welcoming guests ranging from the czar of Russia to working-class Dutch families (Stafford and Terpak 148-150). Likewise, the Arensbergs welcomed friends and strangers alike into their home to participate in their salon and admire their collection. In contrast to other Manhattan salons of this period, such as the circle maintained by the Stettheimer sisters, participation in the Arensberg salon did not require a formal invitation (Naumann 1994: 27). Like Vincent, the Arensbergs' home became a liminal space straddling the private and public spheres, which made their private collection accessible to a public audience. While the conflict of World War I established clear demarcations between ally and enemy, the welcoming, liminal space of the salon offered a collaborative environment that promoted artistic production through cultural mixing (Jones 9-10).

Also opposing the binary worldview heightened by war, the Arensbergs' collection promoted similarity over difference. When the Arensbergs' collection of twentieth century art was displayed at the Art Institute of Chicago from October 20th through December 18th 1949, curators Katharine Kuh and Daniel Catton Rich praised the formal continuity of the collection. The curators emphasized the visual affinity within the collection as a whole, applauding the Arensbergs for their discerning taste, namely, their "eye to the deep interrelationships which exist between vastly separated epochs" (Kuh and Catton Rich 5). Here, an emphasis is placed on the morphological similarity of the Arensbergs' collection. Despite the far-reaching and diverse origins of these objects, covering a period of over four centuries, the collection is marked by a formal continuity.

As previously argued, the juxtaposed arrangement of art and artefacts within the salon was intended to promote comparative or ensemble looking. Sheeler's photograph documenting the east wall of the Arensberg apartment shows an African figure displayed on the right side of the mantel and a Brancusi sculpture, *The Prodigal Son* (c. 1915), on the left (Naumann 1994: 27) (see fig. 4). The juxtaposition of these contextually remote sculptures encourages the viewer to search for affinity between the 'tribal' artefact, and the modern interpretation of the 'primitive.' Contributing to the aesthetic comparison, the pair of wooden carvings are roughly the same height, and are both mounted on white pedestals. Integrated into the Arensbergs' modern collection, the histories of the Arensbergs' ethnographic objects and artefacts are not discernable to the eye; instead unity is imposed by the common emphasis on plastic forms throughout the collection.

Hal Foster's essay "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art" problematizes the juxtaposition of modern art and 'tribal' artefacts in Western art galleries. One area of concern is that galleries in the past have failed to adequately contextualize 'tribal' artefacts. The geographical and historical coordinates of 'tribal' artefacts are left unspecified, which allows the objects to be framed from a wholly Western perspective. Modern values of "intentionality, originality, and aesthetic feeling," are imposed on the objects with no concern for the "ritualistic, apotropaic, decorative," or "therapeutic" purposes of the artefacts (Foster 45). A similar argument can be constructed in regards to the Arensberg salon. Uncontextualized, the 'tribal' objects in the salon are silently juxtaposed with modern art works, and separated from their intended purposes and cultural origins. By affixing ethnographic objects and ritualistic artefacts to the wall or

displaying them on pedestals alongside modern art, the Arensberg salon rewrites the meaning of these objects, transforming them into works of art to be admired.

The Arensbergs' collection offers a narrativization of art history that visually establishes the influence of the 'tribal' on the modern; thus it is important to note the limitations of the collection. While the collection contains art objects from a wide range of temporal periods, the modern artworks in the collection are exclusively Western. The bulk of the twentieth century paintings displayed in the salon were completed in Paris, and the remainder were created by Western artists working throughout Europe and America (Kuh and Catton Rich 5-6). While the Arensbergs displayed pre-Columbian and African artefacts among their modern artworks, absent from the collection is the inclusion of any recent artistic production from these geographical regions. Ultimately the collection is limited to modern displays of the West, and 'primitive' representations of the *Other*. Furthermore, the artworks documented in Sheeler's photographs are created exclusively by male artists including Pablo Picasso, Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, Henri Matisse, Joseph Stella, and Charles Sheeler among others (Naumann 1980: 8).

In addition to the narrativization of diverse artefacts within a liminal exhibition space, a final similarity between Vincent's *Wunderkammer* and the Arensbergs' collection can be identified—both collectors hoped to pass on their collections intact. In his essay "Unpacking My Library: A Talk About Book Collecting," Walter Benjamin states that "the most distinguishable trait of a collection will always be its transmissibility" (66). Once objects are inserted into the narrative of a collection their individual meaning is secondary to the constellation formed by the collection as a whole.

Aware of the importance of his *Wunderkammer*, Vincent attempted to sell his collection intact as he neared the end of his life (Stafford and Terpak 150).

In 1950 the Arensbergs donated their collection to Philadelphia Museum of Art, but as early as 1945, they began searching for an appropriate institution to house their cherished collection of art and artefacts. On January 11 of 1945 Walter Arensberg wrote his lifelong friend Marcel Duchamp to announce that he would be donating the collection to the University of California at Los Angeles, which in turn had promised the “perpetual display of the collection.” Unfortunately this arrangement fell through, and archived correspondences between the Arensbergs, Duchamp, and numerous museum directors reveal the care Walter and Louise took in selecting a new institution. In a hopeful letter dated May 11, 1949 Arensberg informs Duchamp of an exciting proposal from the University of Minnesota, that offers to integrate the collection into an academic program focused on the study of modern art. A later correspondence sent from Arensberg to Duchamp on April 8, 1950 entertains the possibility of donating the collection to the Metropolitan Museum of Art under the direction of Francis Taylor. This letter also reveals insight into the Arensbergs’ deliberately ahistorical organization of their collection:

In regard to the exhibition of the Pre-Columbian material, we have come to feel very strongly that, to the contrary of our showing it in the house together with the paintings, it should be shown in the museum in a separate gallery. Having it shown with the pictures as it is at the present time in the house was a very exciting experience for us for many years, because it created so many interesting juxtapositions. And of course we really had no alternative either, since we had no

separate space. But we came to feel, at the time of the Chicago exhibition, when the paintings were all out of the house, that the sculpture that remained in solitary possession became much more impressive, and actually filled all the space that the paintings had left empty. In a sense we were actually, we felt, seeing the sculpture for the first time. (Walter Arensberg, Walter and Louise Arensberg Papers PMA)

Illustrating the dynamic nature of collections, this excerpt establishes the Arensbergs' intentional juxtaposition of temporally diverse art objects, while also acknowledging how the sculptures in their pre-Columbian collection were transformed by the absence of the couple's modernist paintings. Inclusion in a collection transforms individual objects into elements of an overarching "narrative," making the meaning of any given object dynamic within the context of a collection (Dilworth 7). The collector removes heterogeneous objects from their original context and integrates them into new constellation, and through this act of possession and categorization the collector "exercise[s] control over the outer world" (Baudrillard 1994: 9). As objects are added to a collection, its meaning evolves. As a result, a collection is not a static tableau, but rather a series of new and dynamic relationships between disparate items (Stafford and Terpak 2001).

As I have argued in this essay, by its nature, collecting is a dynamic process that actively constructs meaning amid the chaos of the world. By placing diverse art objects in contact within the circumscribed space of their salon, Walter and Louise Arensberg constructed a dynamic space that served as a microcosm for the rapidly changing world beyond their domestic milieu. Uniquely displayed within their home, the collection promoted a non-linear gaze from the salon's *habitués*, transforming the appreciation art

into an active *process* that mirrored the Cubists' treatment of vision as an intellectual *process*.

In analyzing the Arensbergs' collection within their Manhattan salon using the lens of Cubist aesthetic theory, this essay has identified parallels between the Arensbergs' unconventional domestic exhibition space and the culture of modernity. Focusing on the new dynamism promoted by the Cubists' *esprit nouveau* and modern shifts in the conception of time and space, this essay has argued that the display of art within Arensbergs' apartment was a historically specific cultural phenomenon.

While the artistic impact of the Arensberg salon has been extensively documented for its role in the development of a vernacular American modernism, this essay instead has delved into an examination of the salon as a space that incited modern modes of perception, in order to suggest the transformative influence this artistic laboratory and domestic exhibition setting had on the Arensbergs' *habitués*. Underpinned by the aesthetic principles of Cubism, the Arensberg salon was distinctly of the moment. This statement refers not merely to the activities of the innovative artists that formed the Arensberg circle, whose work became emblematic of New York during the era of World War I. The space itself was also informed by modern modes of perception. From the collection, which reflects the spatio-temporal collapse experienced during this period, to its nonlinear, ahistorical display in a liminal environment, the Arensberg salon was a decidedly modern affair.

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Appendix

597. Oil on canvas. Albert Gleizes: Woman at the Piano.
 598. Water color sketch. Albert Gleizes: for painting, Woman at Piano.
 599. Oil painting on canvas. Jacques Villon: Seated Figure of a Woman.
 600. Oil painting on canvas. Francis Picabia: Culture Physique.
 601. Encaustic. Knud Merrild: Portrait of D. H. Lawrence.
 602. Encaustic. Knud Merrild: Abstraction.
 603. Water color. Charles Sheeler: Landscape.
 604. Drawing. Georges Braque: Musical Forms.
 605. Painting, tempera. J. Clemente Orozco: The Beggars.
 606. Oil painting on wooden panel. Ara: Mother, Standing Figure, and Child.
 607. Oil painting on canvas. Maria Izquierdo: Seated Child.
 608. Water color. Carlos Merida: The Window.
 609. Oil painting on canvas. Roberto Montenegro: The Double.
 610. Oil painting on canvas. Georges Braque: Musical Forms.
 611. Oil painting on canvas. Feininger: Village Street.
 612. Oil painting on canvas. Gromaire: The Night Watchman.
 613. Painting on paper. Severini: Birds and Still Life.
 614. Oil painting on canvas. Max Ernst: Avions Gobbe. (Or Gobbi?)
 615. Drawing. Henri Matisse: Still Life.
 616. Oil painting on canvas. Fernand Léger: Figure of a Man.
 617. Ready-made. Marcel Duchamp: Apollinaire Enamelled.
 618. Photograph, framed. Of three Duchamp brothers.
 619. Colored lithograph, large. Paul Gauguin: The Bathers.
 620. Chest front, carved wood. Gothic.
 621. Oil painting on canvas. Fernand Léger: Contrast of Forms.
 622. Oil painting on canvas. De la Fresnaye: Landscape.
 623. Oil painting on canvas. Helion: Abstraction.
 624. Water color. Miro: Torso.
 625. Oil painting on panel. De la Fresnaye: Nude Figure (Female).
 626. Oil painting on canvas. Gris: Fenetre Ouverte.
 627. Oil painting on canvas. Fernand Léger: Typograph Etat d'Infinif.
 628. Oil painting on canvas. Marcel Duchamp: Portrait.
 629. Stencil or water color. Georges Braque: Still Life.
 630. Stencil or water color. " " " "

Fig. 1: Listing of Art Collection for 1951 Tax Purposes, 1951, p. 18. Typescript with handwritten notations. Walter and Louise Arensberg Papers (1912-1982). Philadelphia Museum of Art Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

	1223.	Costarican. Metate. Four-legged animal form. (52)
	1224.	" Oval Metate (123)
	1225.	" Grinder for Metate (55)
	1226.	Pre-Col. St. Nicholas Island Boat
200.00	1227.	" " " " Pipe
	1228.	" " " " Whale
85.00	1229.	Zuni. Fetish
	1230.	" "
150.00	1231.	Peruvian? Black Clay Figure. Childbirth (861.)
375.00	1232.	Pre-Col. Palm. Man washed with wings. Stone (S 1592)
250.00	1233.	" Dog. Terascan. Ceramic. (S 1577)
210.00	1234.	" Female Stone Figure. Tampoco. Yaca Tustacan. (S 1582)
350.00	1235.	" Feathered Serpent. Stone. (Red form) (S 1590)
500.00	1236.	" Acrobat. Terascan. Ceramic. (S 1575)
700.00	1237.	" Tiger. Stone (S 1584)
375.00	1238.	" Stylized Serpent Head. Architectural detail. Stone (S 1596)
375.00	1239.	" " Death head. Palm. Stone. (S 1591)
1700.00	1240.	" Totopos Head. with large hair dress. Stone (S 1595)
600.00	1241.	" Head. Hatchet form. Stone (S 1597)
500.00	1242.	" Head. Hatchet form. Stone (S 1597)
	1243.	" Idol. Olmecoan. Stone. (S 1594)
300.00	1244.	" Head. Olmecoan. Stone. (S 1579)
400.00	1245.	" Grasshopper. Stone. (S 1596)
400.00	1246.	" Hatchet Head. Stone (S 1599)
35.00	1247.	Peruvian Painting on Cloth (S 74)
50.00	1248.	Llama Peruvian. (L 1590 238)
300.00	1249.	Tlaloo. Pre-Col. Stone. (S 1593)
500.00	1250.	Pre-Col. Palm. Veracruz. Stylized arrow. (S 1591)
	1251.	Peruvian. Llama (L 1590 237)

#403,356.50

Fig. 2: Listing of Art Collection for 1951 Tax Purposes, 1951, p. 34. Typescript with handwritten notations. Walter and Louise Arensberg Papers (1912-1982). Philadelphia Museum of Art Archives, Philadelphia, PA.

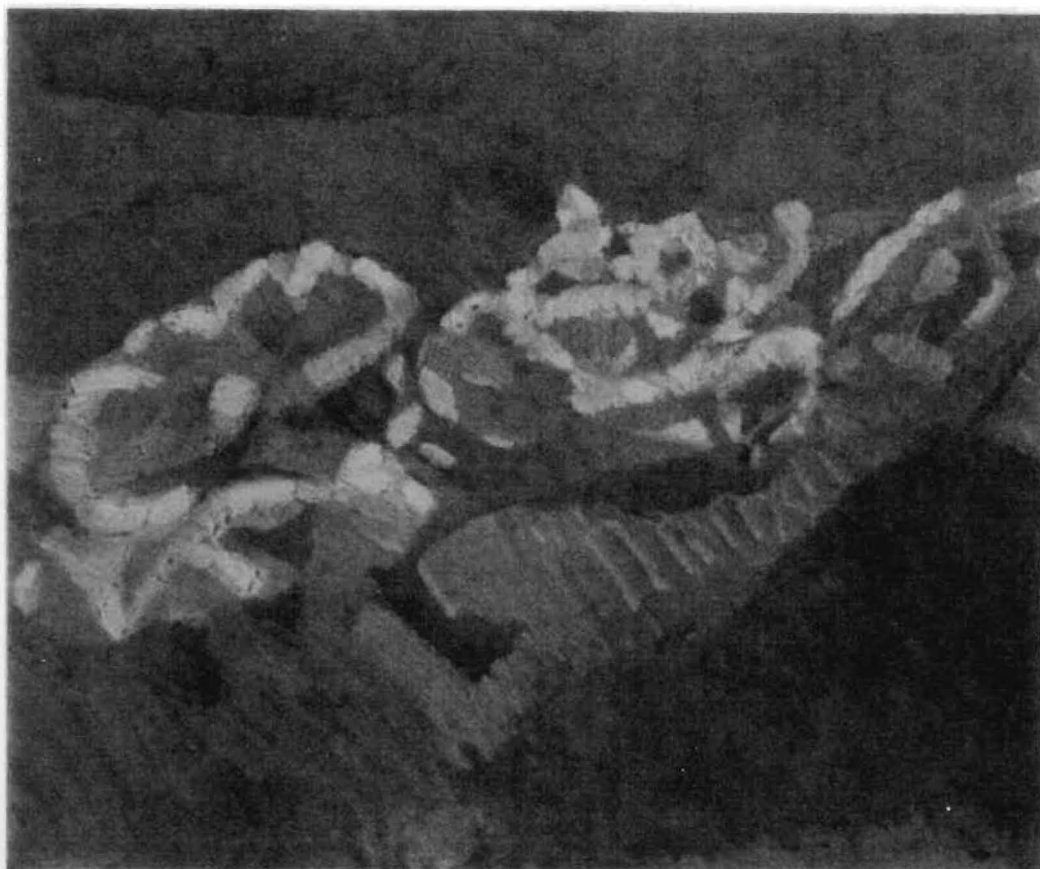


Fig. 3: Jacques Villon, *Sketch for "Puteaux (Smoke and Trees in Bloom, No. 2)." 1912.* Oil on canvas, 18 ¼ x 21 ¾" (46.4 x 55.2 cm). *The Walter and Louise Arensberg Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA.* "Walter Conrad Arensberg: Poet, Patron, and Participant in the New York Avant-Garde, 1915-20." By Francis M. Naumann. *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 76.328 (Spring 1980): 5.



Fig. 4: Charles Sheeler, *Walter and Louise's New York Apartment*. c. 1918-1920. Photograph. Collection Charles C. Arensberg, Pittsburgh, PA. *New York Dada, 1915-23*. By Francis M. Naumann. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1994. 26.

Key to objects displayed in the Arensberg salon (fig. 4)

Bolded items are identified here for the first time; others are identified in Naumann's 1980 article "Walter Conrad Arensberg: Poet, Patron, and Participant in the New York Avant-Garde, 1915-20," pp. 8-10.

1. Marcel Duchamp, *Chocolate Grinder, No. 1* (1913)
2. Francis Picabia, *Physical Culture* (1913)
3. Henri Matisse, *Mlle Yvonne Landsberg* (1914)
4. Georges Braque, *Musical Forms* (1913)
5. Georges Braque, *Still Life* (1913)
6. Henri Rousseau, *Village Street Scene* (1909)
7. Marcel Duchamp, *Yvonne and Magdeleine Torn in Tatters* (1911)
8. Constantin Brancusi, *The Prodigal Son* (c. 1915)
9. Paul Cézanne, *Still Life with Apples* (c. 1880-85)
10. Paul Cézanne, *Group of Bathers* (1892-94)
11. Charles Sheeler, *Barn Abstraction* (1918)
12. Georges Braques, *Musical Forms (Guitar and Clarinet)* (1918)
13. Henri Rousseau, *Landscape with Cattle* (c. 1906)
14. Paul Cézanne, *Landscape with Trees* (1890-94)
- 15. Dining Chair. Shaker.**
- 16. Figure. Balsatic rock. Aztec. 19" high. Central Mexico. Terminal period (1300-1500AD)**



Fig. 5: Charles Sheeler, *Walter and Louise's New York Apartment*. c. 1918-1920. Photograph. *Whitney Museum of American Art*, New York, NY. *New York Dada, 1915-23*. By Francis M. Naumann. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1994. 27.

Key to objects displayed in the Arensberg salon (fig. 5)

- 17. Morton Schamberg, *Mechanical Abstraction* (1916)
- 18. Marcel Duchamp, *The Chess Players* (1911)
- 19. Marcel Duchamp, *Portrait (Dulcinea)* (1911)
- 20. Marcel Duchamp, *The King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes* (1912)
- 21. John R. Covert, *Hydro Cell* (1918)

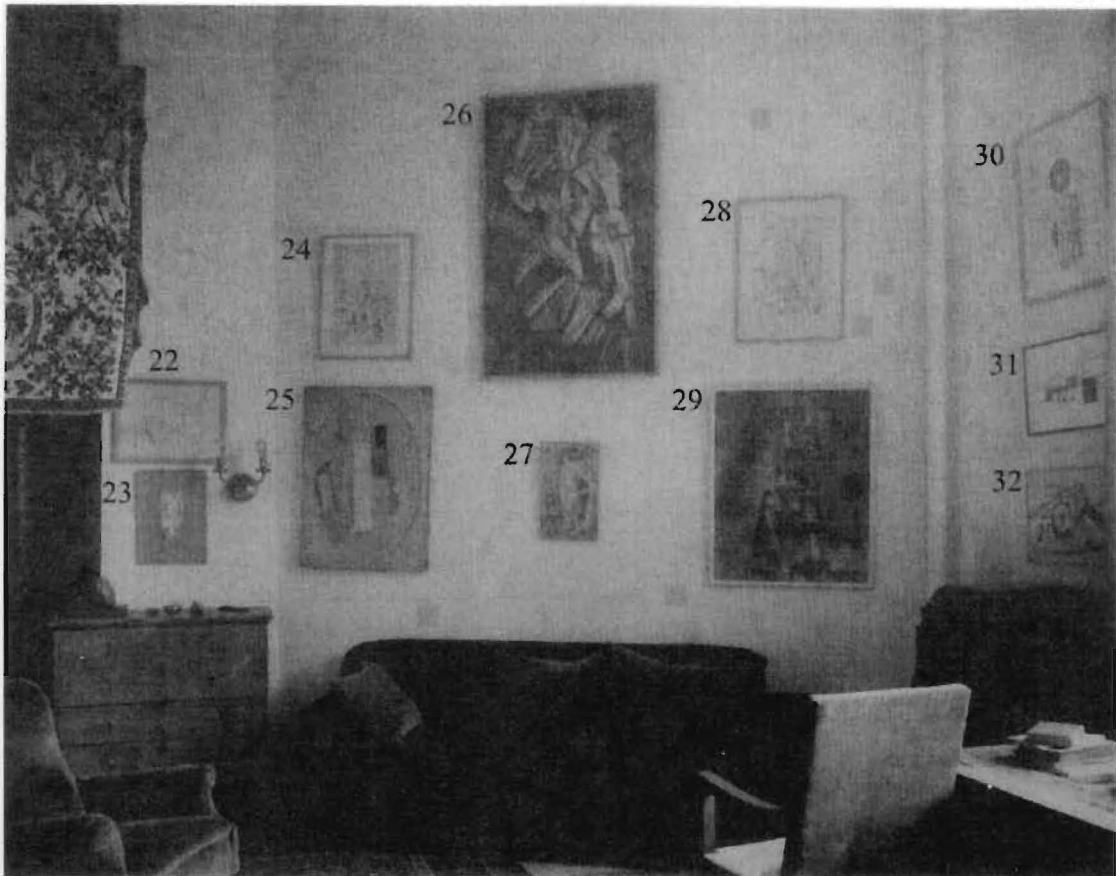


Fig. 6: Charles Sheeler, *Walter and Louise's New York Apartment*. c. 1918-1920. Photograph. *The Lane Collection, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, Boston, MA. *The Photography of Charles Sheeler: American Modernist*. Edited by Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr. New York: Bulfinch Press, 2002. 52.

Key to objects displayed in the Arensberg salon (fig. 6)

- 22. Joseph Stella, *Landscape* (1914)
- 23. André Derain, *Nude* (c. 1909)
- 24. Georges Braque, *Fox* (drypoint, 1912)
- 25. Pablo Picasso, *Violin and Guitar* (1913)
- 26. Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 3* (1916)
- 27. Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *The Bather* (c. 1917-18)
- 28. Pablo Picasso, *Still Life: Bottle* (drypoint, c. 1912)
- 29. Pablo Picasso, *Female Nude* (1910-11)
- 30. Morton Schamberg, *Mechanical Abstraction* (1916)
- 31. Charles Sheeler, *Barn Abstraction* (1917)
- 32. Charles Sheeler, *L'hasa* (date unknown)

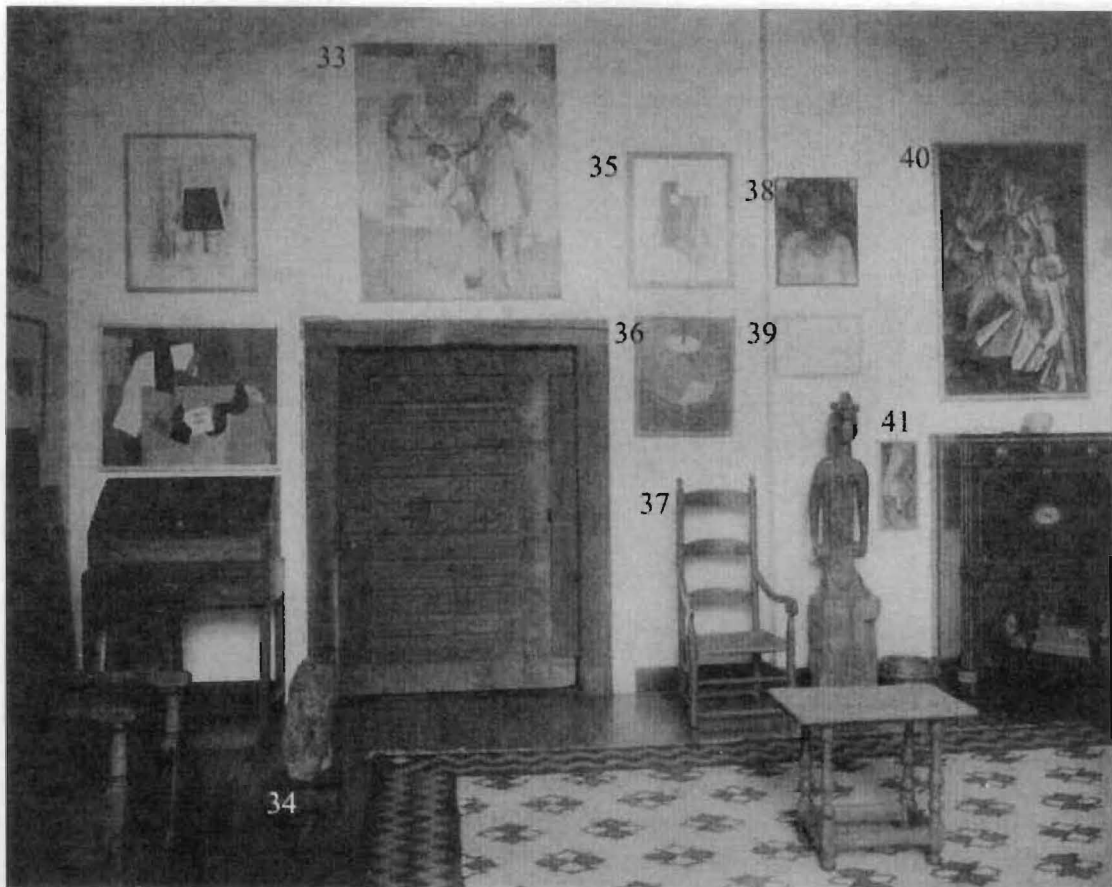


Fig. 7: Charles Sheeler, *Walter and Louise's New York Apartment*. c. 1918-1920. Photograph. *The Lane Collection, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, Boston, MA. *The Photography of Charles Sheeler: American Modernist*. Edited by Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr. New York: Bulfinch Press, 2002. 53.

Key to objects displayed in the Arensberg salon (fig. 7)

- 33. Marcel Duchamp, *The Sonata* (1911)
- 34. **Figure.** Balsatic rock. Aztec. 19" high. Central Mexico. Terminal period (1300-1500AD)
- 35. Georges Braque, *Still Life* (1913)
- 36. Marcel Duchamp, *Chocolate Grinder, No. 2* (1913)
- 37. **Three-Slat Side Chair.** Shaker, Mount Lebanon, c. 1830.
- 38. André Derain, *Woman* (c. 1914)
- 39. Paul Cézanne, *View of the Cathedral of Aix* (1904-6)
- 40. Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 3* (1916)
- 41. Joseph Stella, *Landscape* (1914)



Fig. 8: Anicet-Charles-Gabriel Lemonnier, *Une Soirée chez Madame Geoffrin en 1755*. 1812. Oil on canvas, 50 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 77 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (129 x 196 cm). Musée Nationale du Château de Malmaison, Reuil-Malmaison, France. *Jewish Women and Their Salons: The Power of Conversation*. By Emily D. Bilski and Emily Braun. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005. 10.