

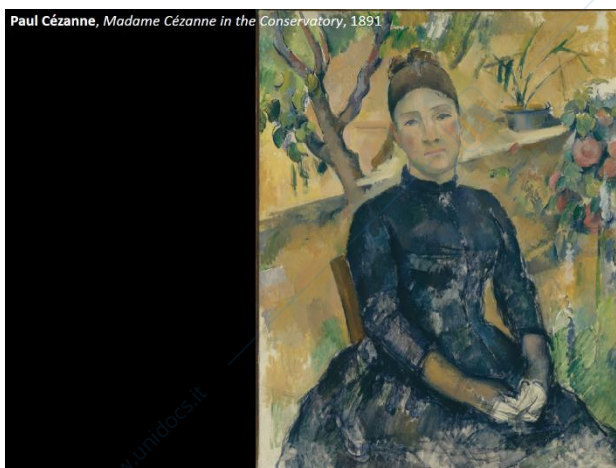
48 PORTRAITS

The representation of people's faces has been a fundamental topic throughout the history of the arts. It is interesting to have a look at how faces have been represented and it is a kind of introduction to any experiment, any artist or movement we will talk about during these three months. It is said that the eyes are the mirrors of the soul, so eyes are usually extremely important in portraying and in general it is a fundamental field of research throughout the history of the arts. Eyes reveal or are the mirror of the soul. We must admit that the concept of soul is quite a recent concept in the history of arts; it belongs to the romantic tradition. A romantic tradition means the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century. Before that period, artists were not involved in this stuff. Soul was a matter of religion. When they started investigating on the topic, more or less parallel to the art of painting, a new technique appeared in the mid-19th century or early 19th century that was photography. There was a competitor; not only painters could portrait but also photographers could take a picture. From this competition, not only in the field of portraying but also in the field of arts itself starts a big revolution. The very starting point of this revolution is the beginning of the 20th century and the period of the avant-gardes.



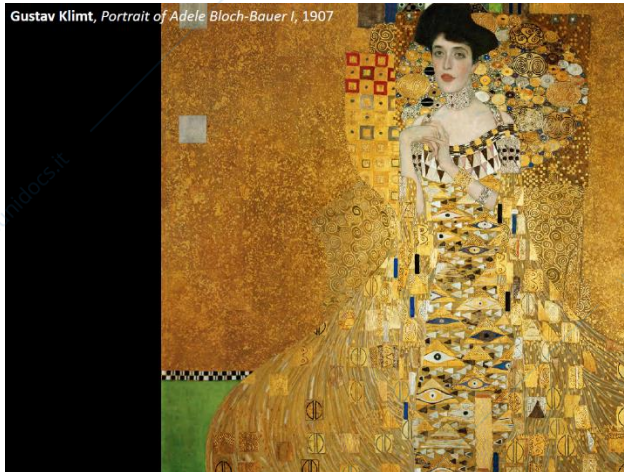
Madame de Loynes is a painting part of the exhibition of Musée d'Orsay in Paris. It was painted in 1862 by Amaury-Duval. He was a pupil of Ingres, who was a master of French neoclassical painting. He is the one who fixed the features of good painting for the very first beginning of the century and all these pupils developed his same style. It is a matter of showing, the best the painter can, the personality of the person and specially focusing on the face. There is a story behind each portrait. The story behind this beautiful girl is a very interesting one.

Originally, she was born in a very poor family in 1837. The person that is painted in the painting is 25 years old (very young). When the painter portraits her at 25 she is a rich woman married with a noble man, she belongs to a very restricted group of people gravitating around the empire of Napoleon III and particularly his brother. This career was developed very quickly, in less than 10 years. When she arrived in Paris, she was a very poor girl and she entered a family simply as a maid when she was 15-16 years old. Because she was beautiful and she was able to use her beauty as a tool, she climbed up very quickly (all the stairs of society) becoming a very wealthy person. She was a protagonist inside the apolitical environment in Paris until the end of the century.



Here we have again a woman black dressed, but in a completely different environment. This is the portrait of Madame Cézanne (Paul Cézanne's wife). We are almost at the end of the century (1891), in a conservatory (open space with nature and flowers) in the south of France. The style is very different: there is no more the matter of representing precisely all the details of a face or a dress; to be as precise as a photographer can be, but to represent through the painting techniques an idea of what painting can

be. It is an experiment related to the development of new styles in painting. As you can see, the very completed part of the painting is around the face and if you look at the borders are not finished, are not interesting. This is precisely because it is an experiment. There is also this diagonal line cutting the surface of the painting in two and helping us viewers to focus on the face of the person. She is very beautiful and sweet; but it is asked to be a patient participant of his own experimentation (Paul Cézanne's). Probably Madame Cézanne doesn't look like this; what is really interesting for Cézanne was to find up the hidden geometry of nature. That is why the face is a perfect oval. The idea of perfect geometry that we can understand or decode from the accidental aspects of nature or environment. This is precisely the attempt for Cézanne does in his paintings, not only in this one but in every time he is painting.



Moving 10 years further we find a wonderful masterpiece painted by Gustav Klimt, master of a movement that was developed throughout Europe from the end of the 19th century up to the beginning of the World War I (for about 20 years). It has different names in each language and it is an attempt to find a completely new language for the coming century. It is specially focused on the stylized representation of nature, specially mixing up technology and nature. In this particular case you see the fundamental difference between this

painting and the previous one; here you have no space, it is completely flat. The only 3D representation is about the face and hands of this very beautiful young woman who is Adele Bloch-Bauer. The rest of the canvas is covered by gold colour and very complex decorations. We can interpret it as the background and the dress she is wearing, but there is nothing that really describes this part of the painting for real objects, it is more a matter of complex flat golden decoration. It is golden because there is an attempt to find a link between the contemporary age and a very old style 150 years (byzantine style); between the modern period and the very past tradition of the arts which is recognized in the byzantine style.

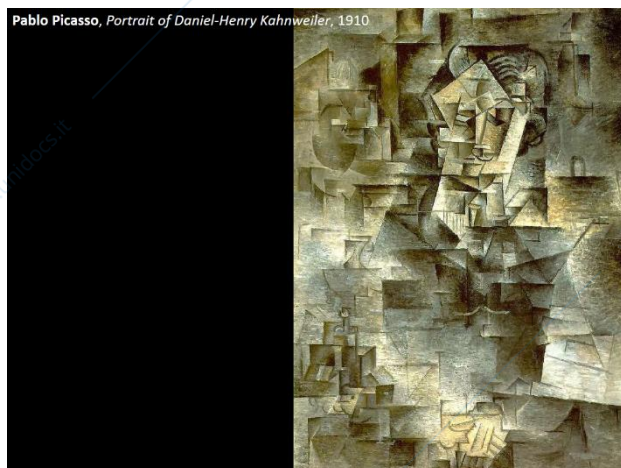
Who is Adele Bloch-Bauer? She is the daughter of a very rich Austrian entrepreneur in the field of ceramics. For this reason, the father asked Gustav Klimt to paint this portrait.



Again we walk around the German side of the arts. From Vienna to Germany and we find Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, who is the leader of a group named "Die Brücke" (the bridge). It was founded in 1906 in Dresden, being the movement named "Expressionism". Express means something that moves from the inside to the outside. Particularly Kirchner is expressing his own idea about what happens outside. There is a fundamental difference between people painting in France at the end of the 19th century ("the Impressionists" meaning they try to

represent the outside, what they look, impressions) and the one in the case of Kirchner ("the Expressionism" referring to one having his own idea or feeling and trying to express it).

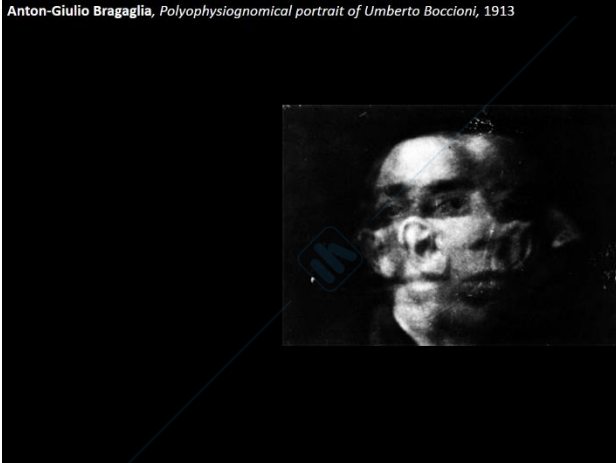
This is the portrait of Erna Schilling, who is Kirchner's girlfriend. We may ask Kirchner why is she yellow. In a certain sense, she is ugly. Why is she ugly? The thing is that is not Erna, it is the expression Kirchner has or wants to represent, and it is a kind of social condition that it is expressed by Erna's face. It is greenish and yellow as if it was sick. She was affected by a kind of disease which is not the pandemic, it is the disease of living in the early 20th century. Living in the early 20th century has become a very tough task. Technology has subverted the normal order of social life and particularly urban life. There is a very famous scholar named Georg Simmel who wrote a book about this new condition of living inside the big city. He has coined this term as "the high intensity of nervous life" (we are in a sense nervous in the new big city/metropolis: it is a completely new style nothing to do with villages, everything is accelerating...). Living in the big city is a demanding task; that is why she is yellowish as if she was affected by this disease.



We move back to Paris and come across with Pablo Picasso. He and his fellow Georges Braque developed a completely new style between 1908 and 1914. Then, this style was refined and developed after the World War I, becoming Art Déco. In this very moment they are trying to build up a new language. That is hard in art. They are trying to invent new words, new syntax; it is a matter of communication, what do they want to communicate is the fundamental difference that is between the situation of the early 19th century with respect of the end of 19th (art wants to give

an interpretation of this change). They are focused on one particular aspect of the art: the representation of a three-dimensional space. A painting only has two dimensions as it is flat, but for about 400 years starting from the 15-16th century artists had developed a new technique called perspective to draw a space using the rules of perspective. For 400 years all the painters developed this kind of technique until the end of the 19th century and the fundamental thing is that if you paint something in perspective you stop the flowing of time. The art of taking pictures was developed precisely according to these rules. A photographer is a technician able to take a picture that is stopping the time and showing it according to regular perspective. Now Picasso and Braque want to develop a new way of representing the space and particularly the flowing; possibility of describing an object not only from a single point of view but also the possibility of walking around and describing the object from different points of view. For doing this they have to deconstruct the two-dimensional space and reconstruct it in a different way. What they usually do is to add all these diagonal lines transforming the space into a series of splinters. The result is very chaotic and is very difficult to recognise the person that is represented here, who is Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, but we can understand that there is a face there because we have the notion inside our minds (we know the fundamental elements of a face; normally two eyes, one nose, one mouth, hair, etc). You can't miss where the face is.

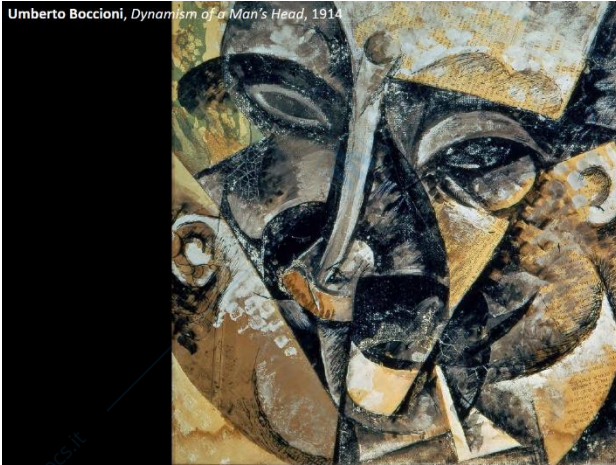
Who is Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler? He is an art merchant, a person in charge for selling Picasso's paintings.

Anton-Giulio Bragaglia, *Polyophysiological portrait of Umberto Boccioni, 1913*

From cubism to futurism. This is a photograph called Polyophysiological portrait of Umberto Boccioni. Umberto Boccioni is one of the most famous painters in the group of futurists, and Anton-Giulio Bragaglia is the one who plays the part of the photographer investigating the potential of the photography.

This is another attempt to represent the face of a person from different points of view, and to represent the flowing and speed of that time. The fundamental

concept of futurism is dynamism; they want to represent this new style that is related to technology. We live inside technology; technology has completely shifted our lifestyles. In a certain sense the attempt is to follow the rules of technology inside our own lives. This is one example. It is interesting because Bragaglia is using photography in the wrong way instead of fixing the time in one single photograph, he is trying to represent the flowing taking at least three different pictures of the same subject on the same surface (photograph). So he is working with the error, fundamentally using technology in the wrong way to produce art.

Umberto Boccioni, *Dynamism of a Man's Head, 1914*

Here is Umberto Boccioni (subject of the previous portrait). Here the interesting thing is that Boccioni at this period is trying to mix up different techniques and summing up, different research that has done previously. There is a lot of Picasso's cubism in this painting: the structuring of the face, also an attempt of combining different geometries, the fact that the painting is painted on the surface of a newspaper (kind of collage not using a white canvas). The latter has a meaning: reality and art are the same thing, you cannot switch or divide them; your

everyday life is part of the language and part of the art. You can read a newspaper and find it inside the surface of the painting.

El Lisickij, *Design for a Lenin-tribune, 1920*

In between, between the previous and this painting, there is a war: the World War I, that fundamentally changed all the balancing between the nations and brought Russia into a revolution. A completely new government was started that is called socialism or communism. The name itself of the nation changed from Russia to USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). The leader of this big revolution is the person in this portrait: Lenin. The painter is El Lisickij and he is one of the masters of this movement called constructivism. It was developed

between more or less 1920 and 1930 in the USSR. It is a very interesting representation here because you see again the goal: to find a new language that is suitable for this new world, the world of communism (a completely different social and political organization of society). It is again founded on technology and on the industrial revolution but in a completely different way with respect to capitalism. Technology is fundamental, even in the social's world, and in fact helps Lenin to be more powerful. When you look at this painting, the body of Lenin and the big metal beam belong to the same structure. That is why they bend in the same direction. It is the representation of a kind of lift that helps Lenin reaching the tribune and start his speech. On top of Lenin's body there is this big board with "proletarian" written on it in Russian. So the people who had the power are usually describing this painting as a kind of exoskeleton (structure helping the body to become more powerful) because it is designed according to the same lines of the body, but it is a kind of big technological robot helping Lenin to be more effective in his speech.



We now move to Dada. Tristan Tzara is the leader of the group; he is a poet and also the one who wrote the Dadaist manifesto, listing all the features of this movement. They are substantially against; their fundamental task is to dismantle all the art of the past and rebuild it. They don't rebuild anything but in the end the result is a new language. Their goal is simply to dismantle everything, all the values of the art of the past. Here you have this photograph taken by Man Ray (great photographer and artist during the 1920-30-40s and

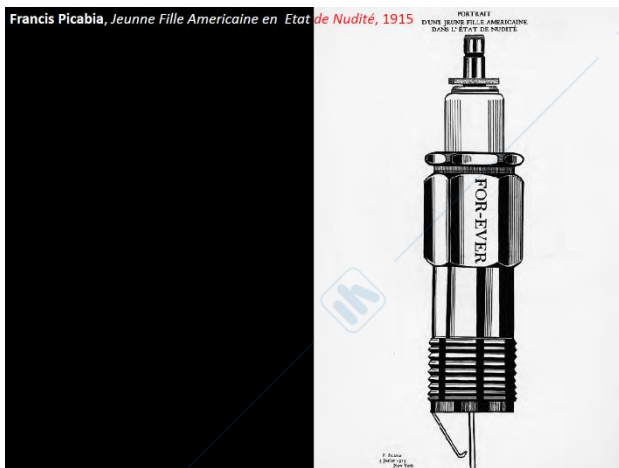
belongs to the same movement). You can see Tristan Tzara sit on top of the wall smoking. There is a ladder and there is a ghost-shaped woman, very big one, on the other wall. According to Sigmund Freud, according to the psycho-analytical interpretation of dreams, when you want to climb up a stair is because you want to make love with somebody. In a certain sense, it is the representation of desire. Desire is a fundamental part of this language. Desire means the perspective men have looking at women, and the representation of women in this case is like a big ghost monster. It is a big question mark: men do not understand the feminine universe, still we need to investigate since it is part of our life.

The axe and the clock that appear behind the man represent the passing of time. It is kind of representation which is Latin is said *memento mori* meaning "remember that you have to die". For Dadaists art is a matter of life, it is fundamentally the representation of life but life in the end has to die so there is also that other part. Clock representing the counting of the time passing and the axe for that death.



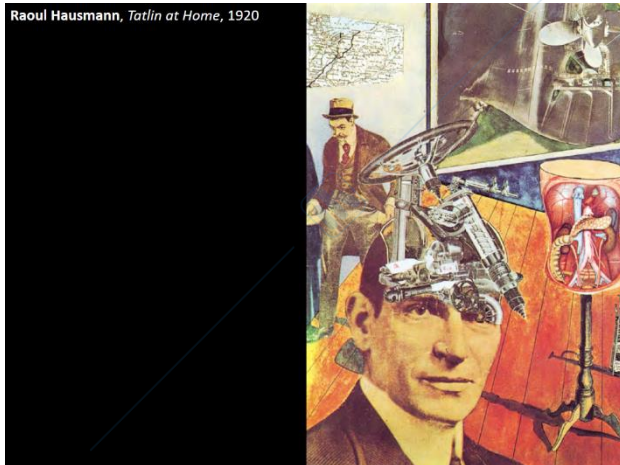
Again, Dadaists made a lot of very interesting experiments. Here you find Marchel Duchamp dressed up as a woman and entitled Rose Sélavy (love is life). Again a mater of eroticism. It is probably the first time we have a man dressed up as a woman inside the visual arts. It is a kind of investigation of this changing of gender; the representation of the feminine and masculine inside the same picture and using the same person. It is the very beginning of what we call body art: using your body as an artistic expression. This happens in the art in the

1920s but for example in other arts like theatre there is a very much longer tradition of actors, particularly male actors acting as women starting from the 16th century or even 15th century. Specifically in the visual arts we have this new experiment at the beginning of the 20th century.



Again we are talking about sex and eroticism. All these artists are trying to understand this mysterious and absolutely common activity for everybody. This is a portrait of a beautiful American young girl who is in the nude, but we see the representation of a spark plug.

We started with a very beautiful portrait of a very beautiful 25-year woman with green eyes and absolutely attractive, and in less than 100 years (more or less 50 years) we find a beautiful young girl in the nude transformed into a spark plug. Things are changing very quickly in the field of the arts in the 20th century. Francis Picabia likes very much joking, pulling our legs and playing with technology. In a certain sense he is precisely the opposite of futurism. Futurists are fascinated by technology and would like us to become lovers of technology, they would like ourselves to transform our lifestyle according to the language of technology. This is precisely the opposite; Picabia is trying to humanize technology, to look at machines as if they were humans. Why is he talking about sex in this particular case? To understand it you need a little bit of notion of what an engine that you have in your car does, how it works. Usually, inside the engine of your car there are between 2-4-6 cylinders that are empty. Inside of each cylinder there is a piston and moves inside the cylinder. The movement is substantially similar to that of an act of sex between a man and a woman. But where is the engine in the spark plug? It is the equipment that lets the piston move; without it, this movement wouldn't start. That is why there is this kind of metaphor between desire/sex appeal and the act of love. That is why it is a joke (which professor likes very much).



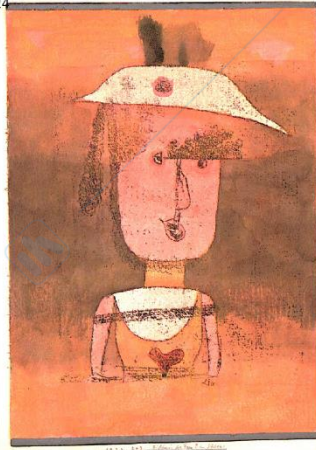
This is not a painting, it is a collage. The artist is Raoul Hausmann, a German Dadaist of the period between the two World Wars. The collage is devoted again to Tatlin, who is a fundamental protagonist in the arts debate during the 1920s. He is a Russian artist, leader of constructivism. Hausmann is representing Tatlin as a portrait but as the technique is a collage, the face of the person here is not the face of Tatlin. It is an interesting face that Hausmann simply found in the cover of a magazine. All the elements inside this collage are

simply pieces of printed paper chose from magazines and reorganized to describe the personality of this very famous person. The wooden floor comes from a de Chirico painting, so there is a quotation of another artist inside the collage. It is an attempt to finding connection or playing games, engaging art in a dialogue. All these bits and pieces describe the personality of Tatlin without portraying Tatlin himself. He is a man of big ideas and in fact on top you see a big detail of a ship. He thinks in terms of technology and in fact his brain is substantially a big machine because the constructivism is an attempt to make a kind of strong link between social life and technology. He is not interested in money; there is a man behind with empty pockets. No money is an idealist; he works for the society without thinking about himself. He is a man who likes to have different experiences talking with many people around the world; in fact there is a map on top representing a journey. In this collage we can see elements connected one to the other to represent this person and what he thinks. But collage is also an attempt to find a new technique instead using traditional techniques such as oil on canvas, watercolours, etc. but picking up real objects (usually paper) and putting them on the surface of the canvas. It is a real piece of object (paper) that becomes part of the world of the art (goes inside the painting).



From dadaism to surrealism. Surrealism is about investigation on the notion of dreams (investigation inside what Sigmund Freud has defined as subconscious, the deeper part of our mind that we do not really know and can experience only when we dream). In many cases, these paintings represent dreams. In this particular case, we have the portrait of Mae West (famous American actress) who was a star in American cinema in the 1930s. Because we are investigating the inside/subconscious part of our mind, why not

represent it as an interior? In fact, this is an interior and all the elements in her face become part of a kind of furnishing (sofa for lips, fireplace for nose and two painting for the eyes). This painting in Salvador Dalí's museum has been really built as an interior.

Paul Klee, *Portrait of Mrs. P. in the South*, 1924

represent childish content). There is this kind of shift in the meaning of his art.

There are many personalities in this period who developed different research. One of them is Paul Klee. He has a completely personal language. He is very much interested in childhood as he thinks that period of our life is the one in which we are more creative and we build up our personal way of looking at the world. Investigating that period you can find the very foundation of our lives and arts. His style is similar to the one a child could have or choose, but at the same time is not at all a childish style (doesn't

Otto Dix, *Portrait of the Journalist Sylvia von Harden*, 1926

for describing a personality. This of the 1920s is a very interesting period for the development of the role of women in society. That is why there are so many different representations and portraits of women.

The woman in here is Sylvia von Harden. She is a journalist in Germany in the 1920s. She represents a new kind of woman in society. She is an opinion leader so what she writes on the newspaper is very influential. She has adopted a new style, not feminine at all; the hair cut is as if she was a man, she is wearing a monocle as many men used to do, she smokes and drinks alcohol. These are all things that women did not do at that time. She is not at all the angel of fireplace, and she is very aggressive; the fingers look like claws. It is another way of using expressionist style

Tamara de Lempicka, *Self Portrait*, 1925

car. This represents a whole world that is developing, and women are at the centre of this new world in France and in Northern Europe in that period. The style of the painting is a development although very naturalistic of cubism at least in the using of lines. In fact we are in the period of Art Déco, that is a translation of the figuration of the style that Picasso and Braque had developed before the World War I.

Tamara de Lempicka was a very famous painter in Paris during the 1920s. She became very important in society because of her style. She was an absolutely independent women and she is representing herself as a very powerful woman driving her own car. Still nowadays there are places in the world in which women cant drive a car and have to fight for getting a license. In that period (100 years ago) in Europe was very hard for a woman to drive a car. Not only because it was hard to have the license but hard to have the money to buy the



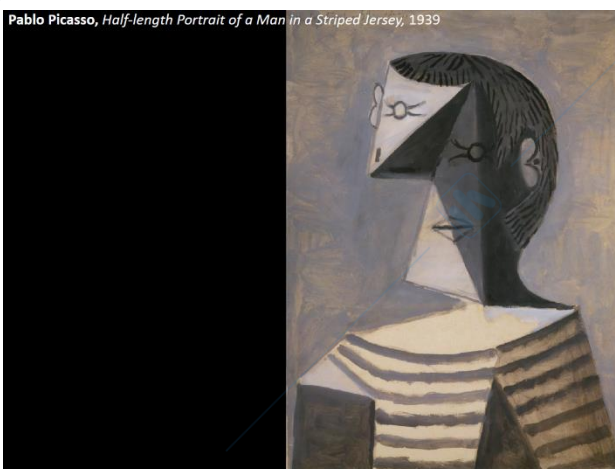
Another woman. Meret Oppenheim is one of the masters of surrealism and she has a very interesting personality. It is one of the first examples of an almost actual woman making art. This sculpture is the representation of her *Ma gouvernante* meaning "my maid". She says she has a maid at home and that she is in love with her, she wants to make love with her. She is a maid because of the white shoes she wears (part of the maid's uniform). There is this representation of love as a kind of "will of eating the lover". In fact, this paper element on top of the heels can usually

be found in chicken chops. The maid is a lover that you can eat because it is desired. Professor finds interesting the way Meret Oppenheim tries to express sexual desire, which is completely different from a style a man could use. We could compare this with the picture of Tristan Tzara (the one with the ladder) representing his desire for a woman in a completely different way with the help of Man Ray.



Constantin Brancusi is another alone personality. He was not belonging to any movement; he developed his own style during the 1920-30s. He is interested in the purity of forms. Many of his sculptures had an oval shape; they look like eggs. The egg is representing the beginning of the world/ origin of everything and is usually a perfect shape. In this case we have a strange shape because is symmetrical and asymmetrical at the same time and it is obviously the interpretation of a heart and a body of a person. The person is

Eileen Lane, one of the women that was model for Brancusi. He had a very strange love affair with her. This complex shape that is kind of contradictory with other sculptures he did represent this kind of contrast.

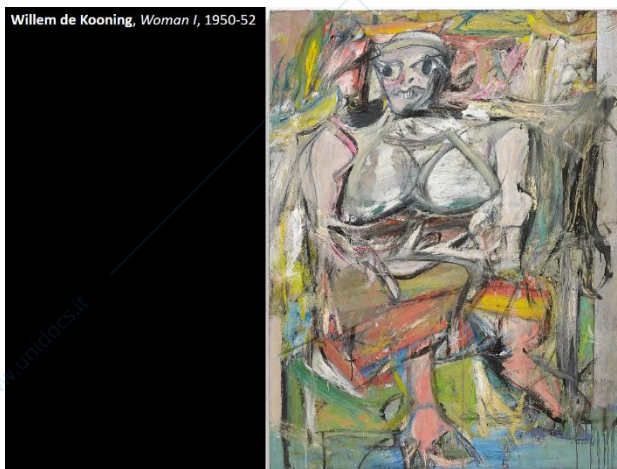


Here we have Picasso in one of his really typical portraits. It is a portrait of a man we don't know the name. He developed his previous cubist style into this one, that is definitely his one manner (the way which he has developed his paintings throughout the rest of his life and for which he is very well known and acknowledged all around). The face becomes a collection of triangle shapes and deconstructed and deconstructed representation of a head.

Now we are going through the World War II. What it is interesting is that the art after the World War II is fundamentally different from the art before the World War II. There are obviously linkages but there is a fundamental disaffection in the art of the second part of the century, at least at the beginning in the 1940-50s, for rational thinking. Most of the artists were following or developing languages related to surrealism (absolutely not rational) rather than the tradition of constructivism, abstract art and so on, because rational thinking resulted into the atomic bomb or tragedy involving the old world and humanity.



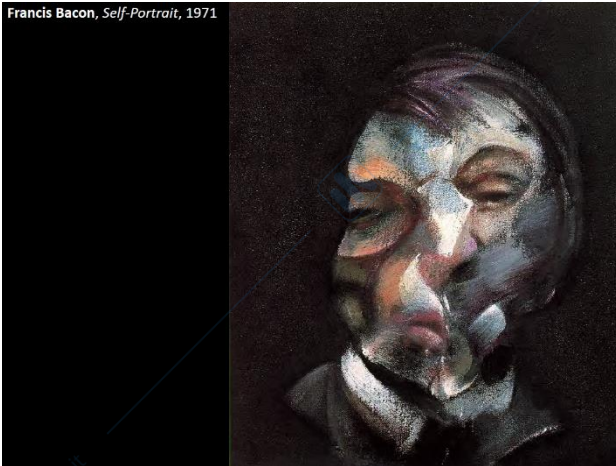
Artists worked using this kind of style. This is Robert Motherwell, who is an American painter and in fact, the World War II is also a shift in the whole global geography. The power (political and cultural) moved from Paris to New York. Big things in the field of the arts happened in New York from 1945 until now. In the last 20 years there was a kind of renaissance (of focus) of London specially in the art market but all the second part of the century is a kind of American story. Here you have Robert Motherwell portraying himself and we don't even know if the description of a face or a body. It doesn't matter in reality, the thing is that we know the lesson, we are used to this new language that was developed in the first part of the century and we could pick up shapes, forms, colours and made them as a composition and prototype to become something we can interpret.



This is another example of figurative action painting. Willem de Kooning, originally Dutch painter moved to New York started developing this kind of art. It is a woman again. We are talking about how a man represents a woman, and you see many of the features of the previous part of the century. She is a monster. She is very aggressive, dreadful and powerful. The body is a mess, all around there is a space difficult to interpret; it is a collection of signs and colours. Action painting is a matter of action, what it is important is the way in which the painter acts onto the surface of a canvas: the gestures, using of brushes (if he uses them) has to represent that body acting on the surface.

Alberto Giacometti, *Diego*, 1953

Here the Swiss painter Alberto Giacometti made an interesting portrait. He is famous as a sculptor and all his sculptures that are usually human figures, very thin walking humans are the representation of life as a hard task. Each one of us because we are living are heroes, because it is hard to live. This is the reason why professor is not really enthusiastic of Giacometti (he has a different idea of what life is). Giacometti was very successful in the field of the arts and that is why he subverts the normal relationship between the painter and the subject. This is a painting (portrait) of Diego, who is Giacometti's brother. A brother painting the portrait of his own brother. We usually think of a painter in front of a subject with a canvas looking at the subject and painting. The subject never sees what is happening on the canvas. In this particular case, Giacometti is painting the image of Diego reflected on a mirror. Diego and Alberto in this case are close to each other so Diego can look at his own brother painting (both looking the same image). It is a very interesting way thinking on the relationship between the painter and the subject. It is an interesting experiment.

Francis Bacon, *Self-Portrait*, 1971

In a certain sense, we can think Alberto Giacometti as a follower of expressionism, for sure Francis Bacon is a follower of expressionism. He is probably the most famous, together with Henry Moore, British artist in the 1950-60s. As you see, as a very troubled image, it is a self-portrait and represents a man in trouble. A very sad man. Bacon is a very cultivated artist, he knows a lot about the history of the arts and always tries to interpret the history of art throughout his paintings. In this particular case he is evoking a sequence of a film called *Battleship Potemkin*. On it, there is the face of a woman, all the scene is focused on her face. Bacon is trying to represent himself in the same way as if he was a woman, being part of the film (trying to find a linkage between painting and cinema, history of cinema and modern painting). The other reason why he tries to represent himself as a trouble woman is because he is homosexual in the British culture of the 1950s, and it was very hard to be homosexual in that society: still in the 50s in UK if you were homosexual you were put in jail (it was a crime). This painting represented a condition.



of cars to make these big sculptures. In this case, the relics of a pink car are use and for this reason it is called Miss Lucy Pink (a girl). A beautiful attractive girl, as beautiful a car can be. There is a very easy metaphor; beautiful car-beautiful girl. It is a typical advertising strategy in the market of the 1950s because the customer is usually a man, buys a car and the car becomes his girlfriend. (very easy message).



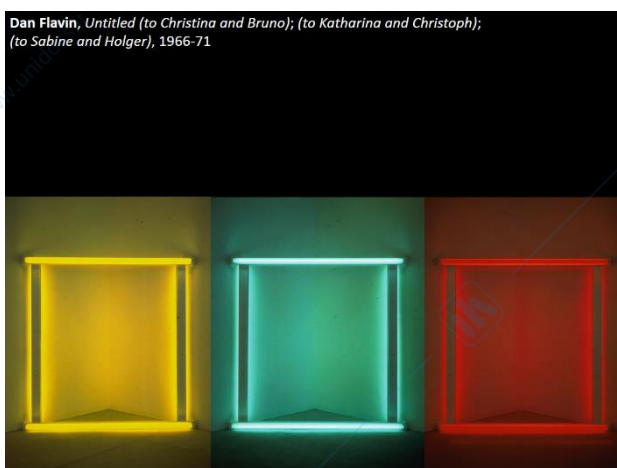
This is one of the biggest protagonists of the 1960 and 70s, Andy Warhol, the leader of Pop Art (although it is not a movement). Here he is talking about consumerism; the rules of society and the way in which society provides us with information. Marilyn is a very beautiful actress, everyone knows her. There is a whole industry that has been build around her image. But Marilyn is a product, it is an icon (not a person). She doesn't add any depth, she is simply an image on top of a surface and the market acts using the strategy of repetition as if she was an industrial product. What happens if you repeat this kind of piece of information? On the one hand you have the coloured side that is the simply representation of repetition and on the other hand you have the representation of this image that progressively disappears, dissolves transforming into nothing. The strategy of the market using repetition is to let a product become not more appealing, no more fashionable so you can replace it with a new product. This is the typical strategy of the market. The image disappears and the person is out of fashion, needing to be replaced with another star or icon. Right colours, beautiful images but remember Andy Warhol is not a happy artist. There is nothing happy in Pop Art.



fundamentally alone. This is a very sad representation of consumerism. Nothing to laugh about. We are more or less at the end of the 1960s.



everything is in gold and she is dressed up in gold. It is a very luxury image but on top of her head there is painting of a woman killed during a bombing in the Vietnam War. Inside this beautiful luxurious environment there is the tragedy of the war.



the names. The shape and place are all with the saying, the only thing that changes is the kind (colour) of light. It is a very interesting experiment because looking at the originals, when you are in front of them you really see that the square cuts the space in two. The corner is inside the sculpture (becomes part of it) and the rest of the room simply disappears. So it is a way to destroy the architectural space and integrate part of the environment inside the sculpture. Why a couple

There is nothing happy in consumerism even in this case. Duane Hanson is a sculptor and investigates this new spectacular technique of using raisings and real materials and representing real persons at real scales. In this case we have the Supermarket Lady. She looks like a real person and represents a consistent part of society: a woman that finds the reason to life in buying good (particularly food, that why she is so fat). She doesn't care at all about her image, she is represented by this enormous amount of goods inside her trolley, and she is

There is nothing to laugh about even in these series. Martha Rosler is really an interesting artist. This is a series of portraits that represent very powerful women in the American society. In this case, she is the First Lady (Richard Nixon's wife). The picture portraits herself inside the White House, in this luxury sitting room, with all these pieces of furniture coming from the 18th century. This is a kind of style that immediately let us think about France just before the revolution (king Louis and so on). She is a queen;

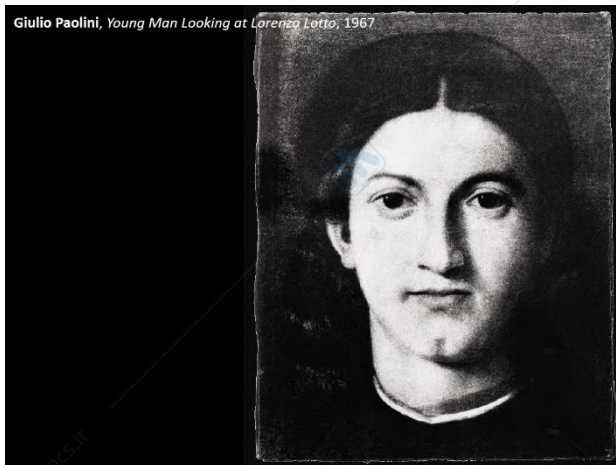
This is a very interesting series of portraits by Dan Flavin, who is one of the most remarkable artists in the minimal movement. He only uses these objects: a fluorescent tube, sometimes white and usually coloured using the typical fluorescent colours you can find in market (red, blue, green, yellow and two types of whites). All these lamps are more or less 8 feet and are shaped as a square. They occupy the corner of a room. Each one of this sculpture is a representation of a couple; husband or wife, or simply boyfriend and girlfriend. In fact, there are

is represented by a square? In western countries you always think of a couple as a relationship between two. You use the minimum figure that you can use and in that case it is a square (two sides). In fact you see two fluorescent tubes are facing the viewer and the other two are facing the corner (kind of dialectic between two). Specially we attribute the square a meaning; the quality of stability (something that is not for a triangle or hexagon).

Segundo link, 47:25



This is a very beautiful piece called Clara-Clara. Clara is Richard Serra's wife, and two sea-shaped metal slabs are an environmental installation. It is very big and interesting experience because the two slabs are guiding the wind (flow of wind inside). There is a beautiful tension produced simply because the two slabs are progressively going to touch as a kind of kiss. Potentially it is the representation of a kiss. Serra is another master of this period.



Giulio Paolini is probably one of the most interesting representatives of the group called Arte Povera: using poor materials and strategies for producing communication in the art. In this particular case, the technology is simply using a copy machine. It is a photocopy. The very interesting thing is in the title; this is the photocopy of an artwork. The original artwork was painted by Lorenzo Lotto, who is a painter of the renaissance period and painted the original one around 1509. The original one is exhibited

in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. The original title is Portrait of a young man. Paolini does a very poor action: he simply makes a photocopy of the painting and changes the title. The title becomes Young Man Looking at Lorenzo Lotto. When you read the title, suddenly a completely different world comes into your mind; the direction or relationship between the subject of the portrait and the painter is completely shifted: it is not Lorenzo Lotto who is painting someone, it is the young man that is looking into our eyes. This is an absolutely extraordinary experience because for the first time you look at this young man, it is looking at you for 400 years distance and looks alive simply because Giulio Paolini has changed the tittle. Professor finds this an extraordinary strategy made with nothing. This is more or less the meaning of Arte Povera in professor's view (which is not a codified idea).

Roman Opalka, *Opalka 1965/1-∞, details 2075998, 2081397, 2083115, 4368225, 4513817, 4826550, 5135439 and 5341636*



This is a completely different strategy. It is always the portrait of the same person; the artist, named Roman Opalka, and it is a kind of research. Each day of the year for about 40 years, Roman Opalka took a picture of himself in the morning always dressed up with the same white shirt in the same light. This way, he had 100.000 pictures representing the same face, and in this case with 8 of these pictures you can see the transformation of this man and therefore face (passing of the time on the surface of a pace of the face of the man). In fact, Opalka is particularly interested in describing the passing of time. Professor thinks it is a really emotional and effective way of representing this passing of time, but it is described in a kind of scientific way as a process like if it was a scientific experiment.

Gilbert & George, *Underneath the Arches – Singing Sculpture, 1970*



Here we are in the 1970s and these two men are a couple (even in their private life) called Gilbert & George. This is probably their first performance. They are very young students in the academy, and it is the first performance they produce in an art gallery. Both of them are dressed up as the typical middle class British workers of the 1960s. Their face is painted in bronze (face and hands) as if they were sculptures or monuments. They stand on top of a table, which is a kind of base of the sculpture, and they sing a song. It was a very popular song in the 1930s in the UK. The singers are also a couple, Flanagan and Allen. It was very popular song sang by a typical couple of workers of the middle class meaning that the people are the subject of the arts and particularly the typical British middle-class women and man are the very subject of the arts (not any other). They have to be represented in monuments, that is why they are painted in bronze. There is a very strong social meaning in this performance.

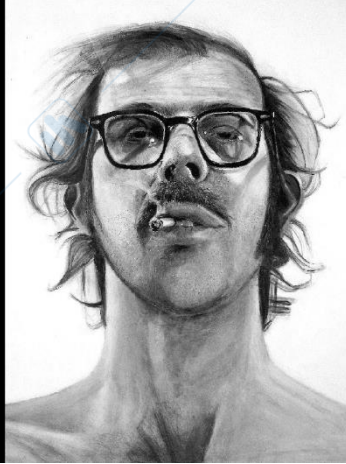
Dan Graham, *Two Viewing Rooms, 1975*



This is simply a spot, short description of a wider movement usually named video art. Artists, from the beginning of the 1960s, try to test the possibility of video (new technologies related to video recording). Television and all these new media become part of the art. In this particular case, it is an interesting performance that again dealt with normal people. It is an interior cut in two parts: in one part the viewer goes in and finds himself in front of a mirror with a television. On the other part of the mirror, where there is a glass, there is a video recording which is recording the image of the person behind the glass. The person can at the same time look at himself reflected on the mirror and recorded by the video recorder, and the image transmitted inside the television. Because of the

usual kind of disconnection in timing, things happening in the monitor are not synchronized with things that happen inside the room. You have a kind of shifting of time in the two representations. It is a matter of understanding or building knowledge about media.

Chuck Close, *Self-portrait*, 1968



Chuck Close is very famous for these very large paintings. This one is more or less 3x2 m (huge face). This face is Chuck Close's face. It comes from a picture and it is particularly interesting because of the technique. He cut the image in a very thin grid, so the image is divided in several very small squares. Each square is identified with specific kind of white, grey or black. These colours are reproduced on the big canvas. When you look at it very closely you see the technique (division in very small dots). When you are at a distance, you look at it as if it was a picture or kind of photorealistic picture. It is interesting because it is the same technology we use in our computers (pixels).

Gerhard Richter, *Ema – Nude on the Stairway*, 1966



This is similar. It is a painting from a picture. In this case Gerhard Richter is representing a beautiful woman descending the stairs in a kind of out of focus representation. It is a question about what is real; what kind of technique makes the representation real or not. It is also a quotation from a very famous series of paintings by Marcel Duchamp called *Nude descending stairs*. In that case the nude was a man, in this case a woman (Ema).

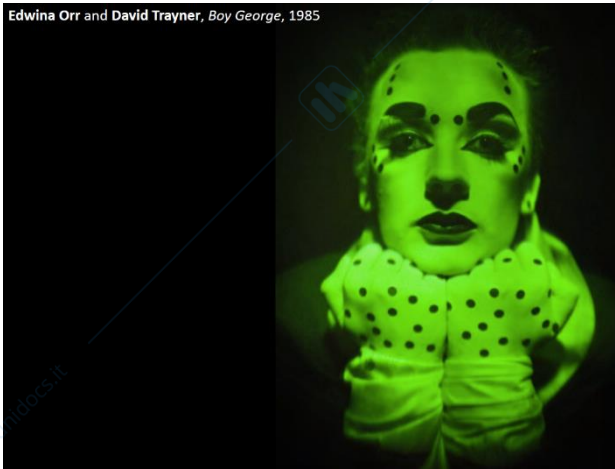
Thomas Ruff, *Portrait (Andrea Knobloch)*, 1990



Taking pictures or photographs representing the face of the typical style of official records: in the 1990s, when you were asked to provide the picture to put into the driving license or into the identity card, you were supposed to take a particular kind of pictures (not laughing, steady, looking directly to the camera...). This is the official image that bureaucracy (the power) asks us for official records. In this case again the strategy is to print this picture enlarging the scale (more or less it is a 2.5x1.8m). If you look at it closely you

can find all the imperfections of the skin (pores, black dots, etc). You can really go very deep in the knowledge of the surface of the face, but still you know nothing about the person. Again, there is this kind of barrier. It is the opposite of the philosophy of the portrait in the mid-19th century (for example, Amaury-Duval was trying to paint Madame de Loynes and to represent her personality best). In this case you have an enormous representation of a person but we know

nothing about her. It is representing this contradiction that comes out from the style that is specifically related to the official records. Power doesn't care about us; they only want to have a good picture of us because in case we committed crime they can arrest us. That is why the picture has to be very clear and nothing else.



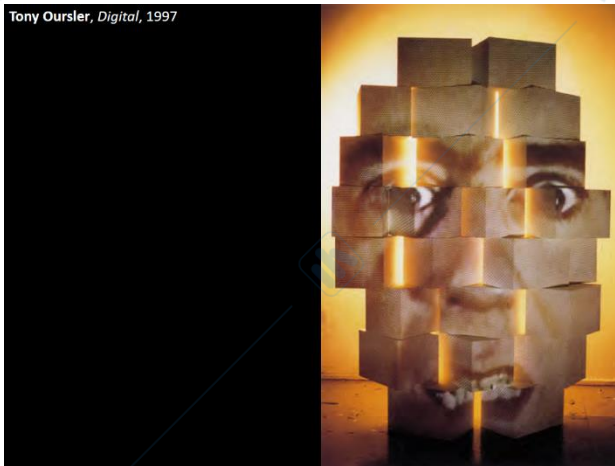
We are now approaching the 1980s. This is not a work of art, it is a holography (3D representation, you can walk all around it) of the face of this very famous singer: Boy George. He was very successful at the end of the 1980s. It is interesting because it is a holography; it looks like an art piece but is a commercial gadget. The two people (Edwina Orr and David Trayner) are not artists but technicians, and nevertheless the pieces was very successful, and many people thought it was a piece of art. The interesting part for us is the way in which Boy George (a pop singer) is represented,

and particularly the way in which he looks at us. The typical situation of the 1980s is "just look, don't criticize" and it is represented very effectively by this holography.



Probably this is a very interesting and surprising portrait. The artist is Felix Gonzales-Torres, who is a Mexican American artist. This bunch of candies represent Ross in L.A., who is Felix Gonzales-Torres boyfriend. The total weight of the candies is equivalent to the weight of Ross, so in a certain sense, it is Ross's body. Because the candies, people go into the gallery, can pick up a candy and eat it. Again, this metaphor as love feeling hungry; this idea of eating the body of the lover. There is also another

very interesting strategy in this piece. Obviously if everyone picks up a candy, at the end of the day maybe the sculpture is disappeared. All the body has been eaten by the visitors. So, at that very moment the galleries can choose what to do; her or she can replace the candies so next morning the sculpture will be new. It is a kind of resurrection. The gallerist can decide not to replace the candies and in this case the sculpture slowly completely disappears (it dies). It is a message that is strongly related to the tradition of Christian religion; in fact, Christ died to save us (mankind) and in the ritual of Mass we eat the "Christ's body" (communion). There is this mixing of love between two people and love by Christ for mankind. Two very different levels all condensed inside this coloured bunch of candies. It has a very deep meaning in a certain sense.



Tony Oursler with Digital talks about the problem of communication. We usually think that the face communicates something of the personality of the person represented. We should be able to understand the person simply looking at her or him but, in this case, we have a very gigantic portrait (1.5m high). It is a video, so the person is not simply represented but it is acting and speaking. He is looking at us with these dramatic eyes. We don't really understand why he is trouble, but we feel he is trouble. The thing is that he

speaks a language no one knows so we can't understand what he is talking about. This is peak contradiction between the fact that we understand that he is in trouble (in a very painful situation) but we cannot do nothing because we do not understand what he is saying. Moreover, this is a video (not an image) and if you switch off the light, the face disappears, and you look at an assemblage of white cubes. Nevertheless, you feel very worried. This is the overall experience: even a person you do not understand what he is saying, you still are empathetic. In a certain sense it is about the power of media. It is digital so it is usually something we can watch on a screen with all this contradictory implication of this kind of representation.

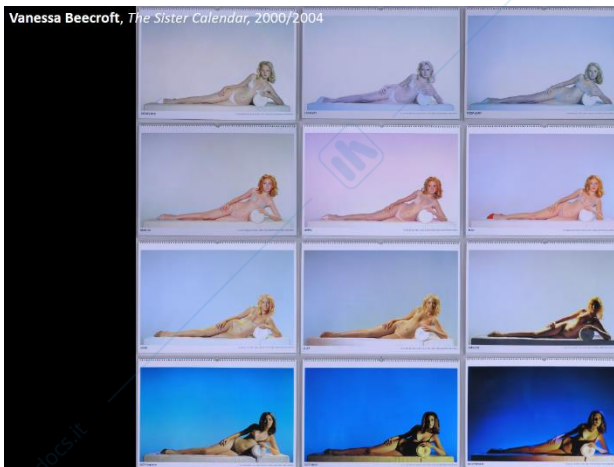


This is Michelangelo Pistoletto, who belongs to the same movement of Giulio Paolini (Arte Povera). This is a mirror, but you have to imagine a room with 18 very big mirrors (you can understand the size simply looking at the person inside the mirror, like 4x2m). To understand the meaning of this big installation you have to know that at the very beginning Michelangelo Pistoletto was very famous because of his reflecting/mirroring portraits. There were big metal slabs reflecting the person that it was looking

at them. At the very beginning, it was an attempt to bring the visitor inside the work of art. The direction was from outside to inside the world of the arts, to be part of the art piece. All these mirrors have been broken so something like in 35 years' time, the research is ended (there is nothing more to say) so Pistoletto decides to break the mirrors and state that kind of research is ended. (That is why this piece needs a bit of knowledge about the artist and about the history of the arts in Italy in the last 40 years). It was part of the Venice Biennale in 2009 (12 years ago).



This one as well was part of the Biennale. It is a calendar. It evokes a typical advertising strategy. Calendars are used for many communication goals and particularly there is this tradition of calendars with very beautiful girls (sometimes completely in the nude) that are used to advertise products. In this case, Vanessa Beecroft uses calendars for this kind of research, and it is called The Sister Project. There are 12 portraits of this very young girl. She is more or less 16 years old and she is lying in a kind of sofa in a very formal way. If you are accustomed to the tradition of sculpture, you can immediately recognise a kind of neoclassical posture, it could be a marble of Canova. But suddenly, at the end of the 19th century or beginning of 20th century, you don't use marble anymore but use the real body of the person to transmit a new kind of communication, and to represent the passing of time that is typical in a calendar. Also, to represent female beauty in a different way. This is a tricky thing because you can look at it as the typical instrumental way of using female beauty as in the calendar used by firms as an advertising or the female beauty as it is represented in the history of arts (looking at the neoclassical tradition). This picture corresponds to the month of May.



This is the total presentation of the calendar. So you see the variation of light and colours representing the passing of time, with the typical colours in each month. It is another very interesting way of using photography, history of arts and it is typical of this particular moment in the art research.



Sarah Jones is an artist that uses pictures to make this kind of research. Again, it is a series so there is a kind of ethnographic method. This project went on for 5 years. She used to contact people to take picture of them in the intimacy of their house and usually in their bedrooms. She used to take many pictures and select 3 of them. The whole project represents many people in 5 years' time and each one of these is represented by 3 pictures. They are all teenagers and all girls. The research is an investigation about this very complex period of life that is being a teenager and the way in which each of this person is facing the typical problems of that age. At the same time, (this is an ethnographic research) they are represented inside their own bedroom;

represented in a place that we think it might be representative of their own life, family, tradition and culture.



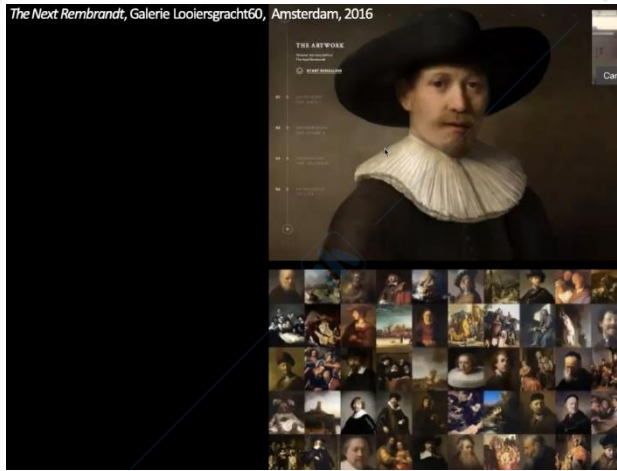
This picture doesn't represent the sculpture as you usually come across it, it is part of Pino collection and it is in Venice, in the Palazzo Grassi. Maurizio Cattelan is the artist (probably one of the most famous Italian artists of the moment). Professor thinks his strategy is a Dadaist strategy: the fundamental thing in his own strategy is to shock people. Usually, he shocks people using very famous subjects. In this case it is Adolf Hitler and in other cases, for example, it was the pope. Climbing up a stair of the Palazzo Grassi, you find this small chair on his

knee on the corner because he has been naughty. The teacher told him to go to the corner since he has been punished. But you see the back, so you do not know who this small child is. Only approaching the sculpture and turning around you realise that this naughty boy is him and it is really shocking because it is really about the personification of evil. There are two possibilities: he was in punishment (teacher sent him) but is it because he was naughty even when he was a child? Is it because he is the personification of evil? Is there any chance for humanity in the end? This is the very big question. If we cannot save even a child, it is really hard. In this particular case, Maurizio Cattelan is very strong.



She is an Aluminium Girl and the artist in the American Charles Ray. It is a very interesting piece because it talks about the distance between the traditional way of making sculpture and the way in which someone could represent the theme of beauty or simply a human body nowadays (at least in 2003). First of all, Charles Ray made a big research about what was the best technique to reproduce this female body. In the end he found out that the best was aluminium casting; with the help of a software, it could really reproduce perfectly all the

aspects of this body. As you see, it is not perfect. It is not the emblem of perfect body. It is not like a Greek statue. It is a real person, a real woman. We have a completely different perspective onto what is beauty. We can appreciate the shift specially because aluminium was painted in white; painted precisely in the same colour of marble. This is the reason why you can make easily this comparison.



This is called The Next Rembrandt. It is a portrait painted in the style of Rembrandt, who is probably the most famous Dutch painter active in the 17th century (probably one the best-known painter ever happened in the history of the arts). He painted several art pieces, and this is a work that was economically sponsored by ENG Dutch Bank (one of the first European bank using digital services and home banking; physically disappearing from the urban space). They are very much involved in these new technologies, in coding. They sponsored

this research and paid experts to write down an algorithm supposed to learn how to paint as if it was Rembrandt. They gave the algorithm to read all these paintings made by Rembrandt throughout his own life, the algorithm learnt and, in the end, they asked him to paint as if it was him, to paint a portrait. This is the result. Again, a portrait to underline the importance of portraying in the history of the arts. This is a portrait made by an artificial intelligence and not by an artist. There is a lot of rumours around it, specially among critics and also among public because in the end, it became part of the bank collection and then went to an auction. It has a strong economic value and has become part of a private collection. It is definitely part of the arts and is the history of nowadays.