

DEMONS IN THE UNDERGROWTH  
AMBIGUITY & PRECONCEIVED IDEAS

JOHN ATHERTON

DEMONS IN THE UNDERGROWTH  
AMBIGUITY & PRECONCEIVED IDEAS



**Royal College of Art**

John Atherton

School of Fine Art, Print Department

2018

word count: 6677

Tutor: Chris Fite-Wassilak

## Contents

---

1. Demons in the Undergrowth: Ambiguity and Preconceived Ideas (p.1)
2. The Vast Panorama (p.3)
3. Hypotheses: Definitive & Inquisitive (p.9)
4. The Shortcut to Originality (p.16)
5. The Marketplace and The Ivory Tower (p.21)
6. Abstract like Jazz (p.25)
7. Aggression (p.30)
8. Obscurity and Profundity: False Prophecy and Indecipherable Hieroglyphics (p.33)
9. Arbiters of Taste: Picasso and the Poster Boys (p.37)
10. Taking the Dog for a Walk: The Internal Debate (p.44)
11. The Blue Fan (p.55)
12. Art: Science and Belief (p.63)

### Bibliography

### Endnotes

### Illustration

Francis Campbell Boileau Cadell  
The Blue Fan  
1922

## Demons in the Undergrowth: Ambiguity and Preconceived Ideas

---

*I know there are no demons in the undergrowth  
At least I think so  
Forming faces in clouds and all manner of things  
Unlimited  
I see the angry face of a malevolent spirit  
a flaming giraffe  
a tea clipper in full sail  
I transform my perception  
I decide to build castles in the air  
Invent my own faces in the sky  
Literal recognisable objects incongruously appear  
  
The abstract experience*

If I find faces in clouds, envisage demons in the darkened undergrowth, this indicates the ability of my visual perception to be deceived, fall between different interpretations of the same apparition.

The shapeshifter archetype brings ambiguity, uncertainty to the theatrical or literary work, altering meaning, form, mood, interpretation.

The visual shapeshifter allows a wide variety of forms and images to be seen in the same host.

*Demonic from folklore  
An apparition, nocturnal  
Shapeshifter abstracted  
Demon and devil*

The demon perceived in the undergrowth is transitory, existing for a moment, demonstrating the ability to morph into alternative states and ambiguous relationships.

The artist's dilemma.

A demon of deception and perception.

A demon of ignorance and imagination.

A demon of design and serendipity.

A demon of science and art.

A demon of objectivity and subjectivity.

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

It's good to just stop, take a break, it helps to see things afresh.

I can let him off the leash from time to time. He loves the freedom. It is such a lovely day, only a few clouds in the sky.

A change of scene makes all the difference.

## The Vast Panorama

---

My culture is rich and diverse. Imagery demands my attention continuously. There is just too much to see, too much to take in. Visual information envelops me.

Ubiquitous and unavoidable.

A joy.

*My view is a vast panorama*

*Visual, architectural*

*Everywhere*

*in limitless manifestations*

*I'm trying*

*to make sense of it*

*A little at a time*

*Simple polarities*

It is everywhere.

Galleries and museums are full, jam-packed with art. Even gallery reserve collections are bursting at the seams.

A cornucopia.

*'The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman' is a memorial to makers and builders, all those countless un-named skilled individuals who have made the beautiful man-made wonders of history. They are an artist in the service of their religion, their master, their tribe, their tradition.* <sup>1</sup>

St Paul's Cathedral is a beautiful building.  
It is cold and draughty, a monument to religious superstition.

Meissen porcelain - named after the town where it was produced - became associated with the Teutonic ideal, as Edmund de Wall puts it: a pure white substance made from German earth.....Allach porcelain - prized by the rulers of the Third Reich - was created in the concentration camp at Dachau. <sup>2</sup>

Artsnight: BBC Culture

The stone-carved Moche altar at the summit of Cerro Campana is breathtaking.  
A cubistic masterpiece.  
Children were sacrificed here to placate the rain gods.

*It is possible because we have discovered a common element in all art (independent of representation), expression, or design, which has acquired a preponderant importance because of the aims of modern painters and sculptors. Our response to primitive works is, therefore, often only a search for qualities that we value in modern art.* <sup>3</sup>

Meyer Shapiro

Artists must face up to the implications of their work.

Human moods and perceptions of the world change continuously, touching on extremes, from one extreme to another. Both a blessing and a curse. A creative and destructive force. Writers, poets, visual artists, architects routinely exploit these polarities as a way of challenging and expressing new ideas.

Surprise it  
or  
turn it to the wall  
View it upside down  
or  
from afar  
Through a mirror  
or  
through a lens  
Hide it in a drawer

Surprise it

The best thing I've ever done.

*You are only as good as your last performance.  
Yet another well-known performer came out with this in an interview the other day.  
This is the somewhat unhealthy belief that your most recent experience both limits and defines who you are.  
It's like saying you're only as intelligent as the last thing you did or you're only as healthy as the last meal you ate.  
Using that logic, a Neuroscientist who just forgot their car keys is now stupid and an Olympic athlete who just ate a piece of cake is a couch potato.* <sup>4</sup>

Mike Cunningham

I like it or do I  
it works or does it  
it's beautiful or is it  
This is the place to start

Taste

My taste draws on distinctions between things: styles, manners, works of art and my relationship to them.

*Social inquiry of taste is about the human ability to judge, what is beautiful, what is good, what is proper.*<sup>5</sup>

Kenneth Allan

Taste, aesthetic taste, is a big problem, not just for me, it concerns us all, the day-to-day choices we make. Good taste and bad are equally mysterious, dangerous if used uncritically as the basis for our decisions.

*I dislike it  
Modernity that is  
Earlier is preferable*

*My choice*

*The Gothic style  
it's a façade  
Self-cleaning  
Pilkington  
and difficult to imagine*

Architects and town planners make taste judgements that potentially affect whole communities, literally millions of people.

Mere ants.

*A perfectly proportioned villa by Le Corbusier means so much more when you think how many bad post-war housing estates he inspired and reflect on the quasi-fascist views that allowed him to regard the inhabitants of his mega-projects as mere ants.*<sup>6</sup>

Mark Hudson

*Tastefulness  
I've changed my mind  
But then again  
Potential  
Spectacular  
A breakthrough  
New and unpredictable*

A sense of taste. A sense of smell. A sense of touch. A sense of time.

A sense of space. A sense of distance. A sense of beauty.

A sense of poetry. A sense of the divine. A sense of history.

A sense of art. A sense of perception.

A sense of nostalgia. A sense of fear.

A sense of anger.

A sense of claustrophobia.

Taste, aesthetic taste, personal choices are an incalculable measure, algorithms of spontaneous and pragmatic thought, made in a moment of insight.

A moment of clarity.

The province of revelation.

Eureka!

All but unfathomable.

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

We're lucky where we are, so close to the park, there is a sense of optimism here, even a sense of euphoria, a sense of openness, fresh air, apparently limitless space.

Panoramic views. Idyllic.

## Hypotheses: Definitive and Inquisitive

---

Your work doesn't tell me anything about you.

But, it's not about me.

It's about the work.

Science

Hypotheses are speculative, sometimes highly speculative. Until the weight of evidence allows the hypothesis to progress to a theory and eventually to a law.

Art

*Theory*

*They speculate*

*on new ideas*

*Interrogate the facts*

*The freedoms of our time*

*Abstract and lawless*

The intellectual life.

The life of the senses.

Our contact with the world.

Our contact with one another.

*There's something curious about professors in my experience - not all of them, but typically, they live in their heads. They live up there, and slightly to one side. They're disembodied, you know, in a kind of literal way. They look upon their body as a form of transport for their heads. Don't they? It's a way of getting their head to meetings.<sup>7</sup>*



How can we know and experience the world except through our senses?  
Bishop George Berkeley figured that out centuries ago in his Principles and Three Dialogues:

*PHILONOUS (Greek: lover of mind) You acknowledge then that you cannot possibly conceive, how any one corporeal sensible thing should exist otherwise than in a mind.*

*HYLAS (Greek: matter) I do.*<sup>8</sup>

George Berkeley

Do objects continue to exist when we are not perceiving them?  
Berkeley argues that God continues to perceive them on our behalf.

*PHILONOUS TO HYLAS To me it is evident, for the reasons you allow of, that sensible things cannot exist otherwise than in a mind or spirit. Whence I conclude, not that they have no real existence, but that seeing they depend not on my thought, and have an existence distinct from being perceived by me, there must be some other mind wherein they exist.*<sup>9</sup>

George Berkeley

The artist's dilemma.

Rely on the evidence of your senses.  
The evidence of your senses is unreliable.

Science

*[Subatomic particles] are supposed to exist in the natural world whether or not humans are present - that is, they are thought to be perceiver-independent categories. If all human life left this planet tomorrow, subatomic particles would still be here.*<sup>10</sup>

Lisa Feldman Barrett

Do sounds and colours exist when we are not perceiving them?  
No, because sounds and colours do not exist independently of a mind.

*From changes in air pressure, we construct sounds. From wavelengths of light, we construct colours.*<sup>11</sup>

Lisa Feldman Barrett

The artist's dilemma.

Rely on the evidence of your senses.  
The evidence of your senses is unreliable.

*I've overgeneralised  
made it a rule of thumb  
It's clearly objective  
Intellectual, dispassionate, disinterested  
Disinterested in construction  
But sometimes subjective  
It emanates from me*

I'm emotional.  
I'm disinterested.

*My art objects are total, complete, and disinterested. They are made of non-organic, non-polar, completely synthetic, completely unnatural, yet of conceptual rather than found materials.*<sup>12</sup>

Joseph Kosuth

Hypotheses are speculative, sometimes highly speculative. Until the weight of evidence allows the hypothesis to progress to a theory and eventually to a law.

The artist's dilemma.

*Rely on the evidence*  
*Verify the evidence*  
*Interrogate the evidence*  
*Reconsider the evidence*

*The evidence of your senses*

The artist's dilemma.

Habits of mind can be stultifying.  
Thoughts tramlining in the same direction  
with no discernable conclusion in sight.  
A cul-de-sac of preconceived ideas.  
The end of the trail predetermined.  
The shortcut to originality.

The long way round.

I rely on my instincts, react to the unanticipated.  
I am irrational and uncalculating.  
I rely on my knowledge, accept the anticipated.  
I am rational and calculating.

Take a chance, see what happens.

Things can fall apart and pull together.  
Things can lapse into chaos and reorganise.  
Things can be moribund and revived.

Experiment.

All but unfathomable.

*A choice*  
*The defining choice*  
*Rational*  
*Calculated*  
*And clear*

*A choice*  
*The defining choice*  
*Unexpected*  
*Spontaneous*  
*And free*

*Think about it*  
*React*

*This ism, that ism; land art, y'know, all those things going on, conceptual art, found art, happenings, think-about-it art. Think-about-it art?*<sup>13</sup>

*It should be straightforward  
the contrast  
It's ever-present  
A vital part of my daily routine  
Nevertheless  
a minefield*

*Just make a decision*

*There are so many  
Decisions, that is  
The fork in the road  
The journey  
Explore  
This way or that*

*A pause for thought  
A dangerous choice  
But most importantly  
New  
Horizons*

*All but unfathomable*

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

The park will be full of people enjoying the early morning sunshine. Joggers out before work. Sleep-deprived parents pushing prams. Dog-walkers sitting on park benches chatting with friends. Sunbathers incongruously motionless.

Balancing work and leisure time, that's the trick.

## The Shortcut to Originality

---

Preconceiving the total art object at the very beginning of the production process has become the paradigmatic template, the orthodox process of Contemporary Fine Art.

Art is the conscience of society, the conscience of taste, civic and democratic values.  
Art is the challenger of society, the challenger of taste, civic and democratic values.

*...make art which states the problems or wounds of society; which makes people aware of the underpinnings of the society and wakes them up to act or make changes in their lives or in their communities.*

*...make art which offers an alternative; that demonstrates human behavior which becomes a paradigm for what creativity, cooperation, freedom and playfulness could be.*

*...make art which in itself provides glimpses of a larger consciousness or reflects upon the inexplicable.*<sup>14</sup>

Steve Durland

*Challenger  
of the status quo  
Over-turner  
of apple carts  
Rebel  
and revolutionary*

Why would I consider such a long-winded process, the path of the visual interrogator? I have such wealth of visual influence, pictorial reference at the touch of a keyboard. I can afford to skip to the final product, the weight of history and modernity there in an instant.

The validator of my work.

*The New  
The narrow-minded  
The shortcut  
to originality  
Isolated  
with only the past to build on  
Wealth  
at the touch of a keyboard  
Skip to the end  
with history behind you  
Modernity in an instant  
there to validate you*

Why do artists flip between styles and concepts, from one preconceived idea to the next?

I see contemporary artists life-cast human figures, sit them as bronze dog-walkers resting on park benches, place them in shopping malls, on railway platforms.

Confusing literal and visual interpretations. Bronze replicas.

The shortcut to originality.

The shortcut to conformity.

Opportunities for creative ambiguity are lost in a predetermined vision of the end product. The concept set in stone at the very beginning, no room for manoeuvre, adjustment or changes of mind.

Interpretations relinquished to expediency.

Discoveries abandoned to obscurity.

Interpretations liberated by exploration.

Discoveries stimulated by diversity.

*It's a precarious task*

*Meticulous*

*Our public heroes*

*Athletes*

*and others*

*Raise them onto pedestals*

*Bronzed humans*

*Dog-walkers*

*rest on park benches*

*shopping malls*

*railway platforms*

*Set in stone*

*Definitive*

*And fast*

This landscape has changed.

Defying immobility, the stationary art object, unfolding its meaning over time. Ambiguous interpretations, subtleties of form, revealed, as the viewer moves to experience the work.

Order and chaos.

Conflicting opinions.

Revelations and disappointments.

Describing the concept of stasis, between action and reaction.

Exploiting ambiguous interpretations, expressing movement or anticipated movement. Avoided or abandoned altogether.

The shortcut to originality.

The shortcut to conformity.

Action at the point of stasis. This is a visual device I've used in my work to express or imply movement. Despite the obvious fact that the art object itself remains resolutely motionless.

Silent.

*Each one of the paintings in a completely different way creates a radically abstract space of silence in the head, with a stillness that contains movement, with a presence of an absence, with something for the eyes to chew on.*<sup>15</sup>

Portraits stored in museums remain unmoved in their isolation.

Silent.

Defining their immobility.

Defining their immortality.

Stasis is the tipping point of ambiguity, no definitive conclusion can be predicted, only speculated.

The defining choice.

The preconceived idea and the direct route to originality.

The preconceived idea and the direct route to conformity.

*I try not to work in a prescribed way. Clay is slippery and my position within it is deliberately precarious. Skills and craft values are subsumed into this process, not as ends but as means.*<sup>16</sup>

Rebecca Warren

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

If we avoid the direct route through the park and take one of the other scenic options through the lanes or along the elevated walkway, with a bit of luck we may find a shortcut to the High Street.

Sometimes a shortcut can take longer.

## The Marketplace and The Ivory Tower

---

Exploit your talents.

*It is an absolute bloody disgrace that students will not be able to get degrees in the arts near where they live. Two of six great things Britain still has going for it are our universities and our culture. We are about to make a mess of both. There is a battle to be fought.*<sup>17</sup>

Melvyn Bragg

Philosophy and metaphysics are the vast panorama of the fine-art practitioner. Surveyed from the sanctuary of the Ivory Tower, the panorama is a rich and profound landscape of ideas.

*Britain is one of the leading places for study of the arts. That will drain away. It's not because of some artistic genius that sprouts out of the ground like dragon's teeth - it has been built up over decades.*<sup>18</sup>

Melvyn Bragg

The artist's dilemma.

Selling artwork is the measure of success.

Selling artwork is the price of integrity.

*The Marketplace*

*The top table*

*The target audience*

*The indispensable patron*

*The ambiguity of allegiance*

*The incompatible ambition*

*The idealist*

*The revolutionary*

*The freedom of expression*

*The unaffordable existence*

*The Ivory Tower*

The artist's dilemma.

*Ours is a business culture not a religious culture, and it is impossible to find spiritual significance in what Warhol called business art. I submit to you that Warhol's art is a celebration of business, which is in part why it sells.*<sup>19</sup>

Donald Kuspit

Your work doesn't tell me anything about you.  
But, it's not about me.  
It's about the work.

I, the patron, sit down in anticipation, a willing participant in the experience ahead.

Consumed, curious, considered, captivated, involved, detached and opinionated.

I, the artist, sit down in anticipation, a willing participant in the experience ahead.

Consumed, curious, considered, captivated, involved, devoted and vulnerable.

The artist's dilemma.

*The money that my work fetches these days makes me a bit uncomfortable, but that's an easy problem to solve - you just stop whingeing and give it all away. I don't think it's possible to make art about world poverty and then trouser all the cash, that's an irony too far, even for me. I love the way capitalism finds a place even for its enemies.*<sup>20</sup>

Banksy

*I've set a place at the top table*

*for myself*

*but it's fine*

*It could be Grand*

*or Great*

*I accept there is a distinction*

*High and Low*

*Baroque seems perfectly fitting to me*

*But what about the poor*

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

The Grand Arch and the statues make an impressive entrance to the market. A poor homeless guy and his dog are there, same spot, most days. Behind him the advertising hoarding screams out its message: Just Do It.

I don't have any change to give him.

## Abstract Like Jazz

---

Architecture has always been abstract.

Confronted by a work of architecture I rarely ask the question:  
What does it represent?

*...it makes no difference whether a work is naturalistic or abstract; every visual expression follows the same fundamental laws.*<sup>21</sup>

Hans Hofmann

It is what it is:

form

colour

mass

void

light

dark

and all the rest of the visual things.

Architecture has always been abstract.  
It does not represent anything directly.

Or so I thought.

The Shard,  
The Walkie Talkie,  
The Toast Rack,  
The Armadillo,

all testify to the literal interpretation of architectural form.



Are these the whimsical interpretations of the general public?  
Do they find familiar objects in the abstractions of architecture?  
Does the general public misinterpret the architect's intentions?  
Did the architect intend to be so literal?  
Maybe it's an oversight on her part, a missed opportunity.

Demons in the undergrowth, faces in the clouds.

Exploit ambiguous meanings.  
Exploit literal meanings.

Architects create visual concepts, artist impressions, CAD drawings, make scale models, before handing the plans to constructors. The concept is only fully realised when the building is complete,

set in stone, unalterable.

Architects and designers use recognisable objects, natural forms and visual references of all sorts as inspiration for their projects:

spinnaker sails  
an ocean-going liner  
leaves and branches

Literal and metaphorical symbols of freedom, growth and prosperity.

Sydney Opera House  
The British Library  
Scottish Parliament

Literal and monumental symbols of freedom, growth and prosperity.

Glasgow School of Art has a newly opened prestige building directly opposite the Charles Rennie Mackintosh masterpiece.

Critical comparisons are inevitable.  
Opinions are divided and antagonistic.

Symbiotic.  
They visually repel.

The Mackintosh building is a joy.  
A joy to work in.  
A joy to look at.

One of Britain's favourite buildings.

The studios are the best in the world.  
Filled with northern light.

*- his [Charles Rennie Mackintosh's] masterpiece is undoubtedly the Glasgow School of Art, one of the great buildings of all time.*<sup>22</sup>

Jonathan Glancey

Mackintosh knew that artists and designers need practical, versatile, adaptable spaces to work in.

The Mackintosh building is a historic monument, too precious to be used, as originally intended, for artists to work in.

The artist's dilemma.

The Reid building is designed by architects for architects. It is spectacular, monumental, inspiring. The architect, Steven Holl, has created a masterpiece.

*He has a reputation as one of the more poetic of American architects, who has based designs on the music of Bartók, the paintings of Klee and the phenomenological philosophy of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. He aims, in his words, to realise space with strong phenomenal properties while elevating architecture to a level of thought.*<sup>23</sup>

Rowan Moore

Acoustic drift in the new building from atrium to interior work spaces is unresolved.

There are not enough sinks.

The artist's dilemma.

*Decorum refers to the suitability of a design. In the past designers had to articulate the significance of a building, defined in terms of use, social status, and physical location. In many respects. Such an approach implied an analogy between built form and oratory.*<sup>24</sup>

Architecture Handbook, University of New South Wales

A masterpiece of the future.

There are not enough sinks.

Minor problems can be resolved.

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

Another enormous advertising scaffold has appeared on the skyline. It is unavoidable. It covers at least two floors of the brand-new tower block. It will provide, the building developers announce, exclusive top-of-the-range luxury apartments at affordable prices.

Get real. It's too good to be true.

## Aggression

---

Visual art is aggressive, unavoidable.

Advertising execs exploit the power of the visual image, infiltrating our taste, distorting our decisions.

We can't avoid their influence.

Visual art is aggressive, unavoidable.

Political activists exploit the power of the visual image, infiltrating our taste, distorting our decisions.

We can't avoid their influence.

The symbols of aggression

The military violence

The speech for freedom

The freedom of speech

The captive

The liberated

The memorial

Foreseeing the future

Make sense of the world

Predictions, uncertainties and wrongs

The symbols of oppression

Aggression

Adding incongruous objects or making inappropriate interventions to architectural and sculptural monuments have powerful symbolic and far-reaching implications and unforeseeable consequences.

Removing statues from their pedestals.

Taking down paintings from gallery walls because they might offend public taste or decency is a worrying trend.

*Removing Waterhouse's painting from view in the Manchester Art Gallery may have been a clumsy gesture - but it stimulated an important debate.*<sup>25</sup>

The Guardian

We must be allowed to interpret the works in our own way and form our own opinions.

The Duke of Wellington statue, high on a plinth, is incomplete without its hi-vis red and white traffic-cone hat.

Most of the citizens of Glasgow enjoy the traffic cone joke. It is a symbol of the lighthearted, irreverent, egalitarian values of the people.

The symbolic traffic cone hat is exploited for its humour by advertising execs to welcome tourists to the friendly city.

The equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington by sculptor Carlo Marochetti was originally erected to celebrate the military victory at Waterloo.

It is a permanent memorial, a reminder of the horrors of the Napoleonic Wars.

And all war.

Remove statues from their pedestals, take down paintings from gallery walls, offend public taste and decency.

Buck the trend.

Reinstate statues on their pedestals, replace paintings on gallery walls, offend public taste and decency.

*So will they tear down Churchill, Gandhi and Mandela, too? Historian says it's absurd to remove Bristol slave trader's statue as few great figures stand up to modern PC scrutiny.*<sup>26</sup>

Dominic Sandbrook

Carve off the chains from statues, liberate the slaves, in retrospect.

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

I notice the memorial statue at the entrance has been restored and reinstated on its decorated plinth. The stone surface affected by years of pollution, good to see it returned to pristine condition.

Stub ends and coffee cups, paper and packaging.

## Obscurity and Profundity: False Prophecy and Indecipherable Hieroglyphics

---

Obscurity is not the same thing as profundity.

*Moments of clarity  
specific and true*

*Internal monologues  
Confused  
and unclear*

*Thoughts and ideas  
the shadows  
obscure*

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

I have an internal video playing in my head, a visualising debate with myself, a box set, an omnibus programme, an ongoing series played out in real time. Of course most of my musings are confused, riddled with ambiguities and obscurities. But some of my musings have moments of clarity, moments of insight, moments of inspiration.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

Sometimes my internal video is interrupted with happenings of real life, I have to stop, clear my mind, press pause, take the dog for a walk.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

For an artwork to communicate with its audience it must explain itself. Artistic obscurity is intriguing, mysterious. Also confusing and frustrating if the meaning of the work is impenetrable to the viewer.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

The artist must communicate her ideas to the viewer, the viewer must be given the chance to make sense of the work.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

If ideas remain locked-in, out of reach, in a language the rest of us find difficult to understand, is the artist getting the message across? Is the artwork and its message lost in its own obscurity, its attempts at profundity?

There is no shortcut to profundity.

There is no shortcut to originality.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

There are no demons in the undergrowth.

At least I think so.

*Press pause  
clear your mind  
take the dog for a walk*

*Locked out  
impenetrable  
frustrated, confused*

*Lost in obscurity  
isolated, unmoved*

*Moments of clarity  
specific but rare*

Artists must not avoid difficult issues. The degree of difficulty should not deter. Profoundly difficult concepts must be tackled head-on, interrogated, investigated, even if this means the concepts under scrutiny fall beyond the cognitive, perceptual expectations of the audience.

Artists must make their work accessible to the widest possible audience.

Artists must not compromise the integrity of their work by embracing popular taste without question.

Getting your head to the meeting is not enough.

You have to make an intelligible contribution to the debate.

*those who fail as artists pose as prophets*<sup>27</sup>

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

I'll take the other path, it's more interesting anyway, let the dog off the lead so he can explore. He chases another black dog into the woodland and out of sight, the simplest things can fall into confusion and chaos.

The dogs are back on the leash and under control.

## Arbiters of Taste: Picasso and the Poster Boys

---

Histories embellished by the victor.

The established.

The establishment.

The trajectory is fixed, a self-fulfilling prophecy, a cynical manipulation, a mythology of ideas and vested interests.

Preserved.

Predetermined.

The future of contemporary art is diverse, its direction of travel divergent, the possibility of a definitive post-contemporary art movement adrift in limitless manifestations, plots and sub plots, genres within genres, isms within isms, revolutions within revolutions.

The landscape has not changed.

The arbiters of taste have not changed.

The future of contemporary art is diverse, its direction of travel divergent, the possibility of a definitive post-contemporary art movement alive in limitless manifestations, plots and sub plots, genres within genres, isms within isms, revolutions within revolutions.

The landscape has changed.

The arbiters of taste have changed.

The Untitled Spotify Playlist:

countless mishmashes of genres  
countless mishmashes of musical eras  
countless mishmashes of style  
countless mishmashes of taste  
countless mishmashes of personality  
countless mishmashes of image  
countless mishmashes of allegiance

Fast forward, go back, pause,  
save.

Fast forward, go back, pause,  
delete.

Individuality lost in countless mishmashes of arbitrary identities.

Individuality revealed in countless mishmashes of arbitrary identities.

I don't watch movies anymore, I just watch Netflix.

A wealth of possibilities relinquished to expediency.

A wealth of possibilities at the touch of a keyboard.

Picasso and the poster boys are no longer the arbiters of taste.

We are our own arbiters of taste, we can create our own histories, Google our own timeline, fix our own eras, choose our own styles, celebrate our own victors, confident in our own individual identities.

Spotify Playlist

Title:

Bridget Riley and the Poster Girls

Fast forward, go back, pause,  
save.

Fast forward, go back, pause,  
delete.

*Futures established*

*The new  
establishment*

*Fixed  
and set in stone*

*Unalterable*

*The arbiters of taste  
their interests*

*Take stock*

*Go back to the start  
Challenge, rethink and reset*

*A ritual cull*

*A new generation*

*Koonzy*

*Who's in*

*Who's out*

*Ground zero*

PD: You mentioned Gary Hume, who appears to be currently feted and influential, what do you think of his work?

JH: I don't think he is influential and he makes Patrick Caulfield look like Leonardo. Don't forget his teacher was Michael Craig-Martin. They make me think of an advert on television, with a kid being asked by a teacher what lesson are you doing this morning and the kid answers "colouring-in".

Adami, the Italian artist, who came out of Leger and Juan Gris and Lichtenstein, wasn't that good, but did something far more interesting. Some contemporary painters have lost me along the way. They have a technique at Royal Academician (RA) meetings of suddenly putting on their solicitor's hat. The nearest analogy I can give you is Lichtenstein's brush strokes or illustrations of brush strokes. Now it's Walt Disney meets Tokyo that's all the rage. It's all Jeff Koonsy, empty, shallow, done without feeling, no emotional content, decorative pretty glitter - they are terrible.<sup>28</sup>

John Hoyland

No feeling  
No emotion  
Decorative and pretty

Do anything  
Do nothing  
Make a decision

See how it goes  
Cross that bridge  
Go against the grain  
But don't overwork it

Out of sight  
Out of mind  
Embrace the mistakes  
See it afresh  
Don't worry  
Just do it

Who's in who's out



The life of the artist can be a lonely place, the internal debate, confusion with moments of clarity, disappointments with occasional euphoria, chaos and order. I've reached yet another fork in the road, this way or that, decision time.

All but unfathomable.

The tightrope of danger.

There is no shortcut to originality.

The life of the artist can be a wonderful place, the internal debate, confusion with moments of clarity, disappointments with occasional euphoria, chaos and order. I've reached yet another fork in the road, this way or that, decision time.

All but unfathomable.

The balancing act.

There is no shortcut to originality.

They survey the price of my integrity from the Ivory Tower. They measure my success from the Marketplace. This unaffordable existence.

I can't avoid their influence.

I can't afford their influence.

Your work doesn't tell me anything about you.

But, it's not about me.

It's about the work.

It is what it is: form, colour, mass, void, light, dark. All in unlimited manifestations. A cornucopia, the new, the unpredictable, the challenge, another fork in the road.

A glimpse of a new idea,  
a reaction based on instinct,  
a possibility,  
a step in the right direction,  
a new direction,  
a turning point,  
a breakthrough.

The province of revelation.

Eureka!

Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

In the market everything is on special offer, antiques and bric-a-brac, an overwhelming treasure trove of things of all sorts, miscellaneous and unidentifiable, the unfashionably fashionable, the uniquely popular.

That table is perfect for the flat. I love it.

## Taking the Dog for a Walk: The Internal Debate

---

It's good to just stop, take a break, it helps to see things afresh.

I can let him off the leash from time to time. He loves the freedom. It is such a lovely day, only a few clouds in the sky.

I have an internal video playing in my head, a visualising debate with myself, a box set, an omnibus programme, an ongoing series played out in real time. Of course most of my musings are confused, riddled with ambiguities and obscurities. But some of my musings have moments of clarity, moments of insight, moments of inspiration.

*Stop  
Start again  
And take a break  
Ask for help  
Don't  
Be helpless  
See it afresh  
Don't be blinded  
A blinder*

*Let it out  
Tie it down  
Find the time  
And get it done  
Pause*

*Find love  
Play it safe  
Find freedom  
Play it safe*

*Enjoy your day  
But hide inside  
Make a change  
It'll make a difference  
Conform*

*Always conform*

A change of scene makes all the difference.

We're lucky where we are, so close to the park, there is a sense of optimism here, even a sense of euphoria, a sense of openness, fresh air, apparently limitless space.

I have an internal video playing in my head, a visualising debate with myself.

*Be lucky  
Get jinxed  
Stay close  
And reach out  
Optimise  
Your optimism  
Worry  
But don't*

*Act disinterested  
And be more open  
Protect what you have  
Remember what you've lost*

*Find space  
And enjoy the view  
Good times  
Bad times*

*I've seen this a thousand times*

Panoramic views. Idyllic.

The park will be full of people enjoying the early morning sunshine. Joggers out before work. Sleep-deprived parents pushing prams. Dog-walkers sitting on park benches chatting with friends. Sunbathers incongruously motionless.

I have an internal video playing in my head, a visualising debate with myself, a box set, an omnibus programme.

*Be more sociable  
Don't get distracted  
Exercise more  
But have an excuse*

*Get some sleep  
And wake up early  
Get some sleep  
And wake up tired  
Repeat*

*Get some sun  
Stay out late  
Be still a while  
Be still  
For a while*

*Work hard  
Work less  
Work hard*

*Less*

Balancing work and leisure time, that's the trick.

If we avoid the direct route through the park and take one of the other scenic options through the lanes or along the elevated walkway, with a bit of luck we may find a shortcut to the High Street.

I have an internal video playing in my head, a visualising debate with myself, a box set, an omnibus programme, an ongoing series played out in real time.

*Be more direct  
And find an alternative  
Give yourself options  
But stick to your guns*

*Be lucky  
And flawed  
Decisive  
But fair  
Always be fair  
Travel*

*It will save you money*

Sometimes a shortcut can take longer.

The Grand Arch and the statues make an impressive entrance to the market. A poor homeless guy and his dog are there, same spot, most days. Behind him the advertising hoarding screams out its message: Just Do It.

Of course most of my musings are confused.

*Think big  
With attention to detail  
Make an impact  
But be restrained*

*Share your ideas  
Close to your chest  
Watch your back  
And keep on moving*

*Be grounded  
With them on side  
Win them over  
But hold your ground  
Be supportive*

*Try to be supportive*

I don't have any change to give him.

Another enormous advertising scaffold has appeared on the skyline. It is unavoidable. It covers at least two floors of the brand-new tower block. It will provide, the building developers announce, exclusive top-of-the-range luxury apartments at affordable prices.

Of course most of my musings are confused, riddled with ambiguities and obscurities.

*Avoid the problem*

*What problem*

*Don't bite off more than you can chew*

*Bite off more than you can chew*

*But cover your tracks*

*Let loose*

*Be good*

*Be mistaken*

*Make mistakes*

Get real. It's too good to be true.

I notice the memorial statue at the entrance has been restored and reinstated on its decorated plinth. The stone surface affected by years of pollution, good to see it returned to pristine condition.

Of course most of my musings are confused, riddled with ambiguities and obscurities. But some of my musings have moments of clarity.

*Be more astute*

*And act your age*

*Think about your future*

*Regret the past*

*Think about your health*

*And get back on top*

*Make love*

*But play it safe*

*Don't drop litter*

*Drop litter*

*But pick it up*

Stub ends and coffee cups, paper and packaging.

I'll take the other path, it's more interesting anyway, let the dog off the lead so he can explore. He chases another black dog into the woodland and out of sight, the simplest things can fall into confusion and chaos.

Of course most of my musings are confused, riddled with ambiguities and obscurities. But some of my musings have moments of clarity, moments of insight.

Make a choice  
Ignore it  
Watch what you do  
But don't do what you say  
  
Keep things simple  
And don't get cross  
Control your emotions  
  
And give in to your demons

The dogs are back on the leash and under control.

In the market everything is on special offer, antiques and bric-a-brac, an overwhelming treasure trove of things of all sorts, miscellaneous and unidentifiable, the unfashionably fashionable, the uniquely popular.

Of course most of my musings are confused, riddled with ambiguities and obscurities. But some of my musings have moments of clarity, moments of insight, moments of inspiration.

Offer more  
But find your niche  
Tighten up  
You'll be less precious  
  
Identify the problem  
And let it go  
Be unique  
While you follow the crowd  
  
Clean the flat  
And leave it as you found it  
Fall in love  
Shy away  
Fall in love  
  
And shy away

That table is perfect for the flat. I love it.

Dogs converge from all directions and race to retrieve the stick. Owners gather to witness the spectacle. Perhaps it was a mistake to throw the stick into the river.

Sometimes my internal video is interrupted with happenings of real life.

*Gather your wits  
And close your eyes  
Choose your path  
Choose wisely*

*Win the race  
Lose the battle  
Win the battle  
Lose the race*

*Embrace mistakes  
While being diligent  
Cross that bridge  
Cross any bridge  
See what happens  
What happens*

*Happens*

## The Blue Fan

---

If I find faces in clouds, envisage demons in the darkened undergrowth, this indicates the ability of my visual perception to be deceived, fall between different interpretations of the same apparition.

*The peppermint wall behind the yellow ochre table  
The pastel pink tea cup with the white glaze inside  
The accompanying chair  
Draped fabric, both purple and cream  
The blue ceramic jug, the large ceramic bowl  
The titled Blue Fan  
and the abstract black dog*

*The abstract black dog bites the hand that feeds it*

Once seen can never be unseen.  
Once revealed can never be hidden.



Francis Campbell Boileau Cadell  
The Blue Fan  
1922



Press pause. Take the dog for a walk.

still life objects  
space between shapes  
in front behind illusion  
on top underneath prepositions of place  
flat plane matt black  
on a surface weightless  
materials and surface textures  
connections in/by pattern and colour  
a fan, a jug, a sugar bowl, a larger white ceramic bowl with a delicate pattern and  
black outer-edge rim  
foreground background plane unclear

familiar and pleasant  
pleasing design  
utility and decorative  
about juxtapositioningness  
(chic) décoratif couleuriste  
properties/behaviour of materials  
over the back of a chair  
over the edge of a table  
cut off corner, covered up corner  
corners, curves  
rounded edges  
stripes, borders, rim, edging  
crisp/stark outline negative space  
crisp/bold meeting of object edges  
definite  
a stray piece of cornicing  
a stray black dog  
a stray sprig  
a stray curlicue

## **Art:** Science and Belief

---

Encompassing both science and belief, art is a vast panorama of ideas and experiences. Evidence-based objectivity and belief-inspired subjectivity are the polarities that define the diversity of art.

There are about seven-and-a-half billion people living on Earth.

For most people trying to make sense of the world and their place in it is the journey of a lifetime.

Appreciating the wide diversity in art is the first step on the journey.

## Bibliography

- Allan, Kenneth, 'Chapter 17 Exposing Sex', *Contemporary Social and Sociological Theory, Visualising Social Worlds*, third edition, Teresa Herlinger, (Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore; Washington DC: Sage, 1951) p.381
- Banksy, *Art Now. Volume 3*, edited by Hans Werner Holzwarth, (Cologne: Taschen, 2005), p.34
- Barrett, Lisa Feldman, 'Emotions as Social Reality, Chapter 7', *How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain*, (U.K; New York: Pan, Macmillan, 8 February 2018) pp. 128-129
- Barrett, *The Secret Life of the Brain*, pp.128-129
- George Berkeley, *The Second Dialogue, Principles of Human Knowledge and Three Dialogues*, edited by Howard Robinson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 26 February 2009), location 2808 of 4729, Kindle edition.
- George Berkeley, *The Second Dialogue, Principles of Human Knowledge and Three Dialogues*, edited by Howard Robinson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 26 February 2009), location 3015 of 4729, Kindle edition.
- Melvyn Bragg, 'Bragg joins revolt as arts degrees axed,' *The Sunday Times*, 10103 (29 April 2018) p.13
- Mike Cunningham, 'Mind Training for Performance' [mikecunningham.co.ukm](http://mikecunningham.co.ukm) (accessed 30 April 2018)
- Dominic Sandbrook, 'So will they tear down-Churchill, Gandhi and Mandela, too?', *Mail Online*, (27 April 2017), [dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4453488/Will-tear-Churchill-Gandhi-Mandela-too](http://dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4453488/Will-tear-Churchill-Gandhi-Mandela-too) (accessed 2 May 2018)
- Donald Kuspit, 'Reconsidering the Spiritual in Art,' *Blackbird Archive*, an online journal of literature and the arts, volume 2 (number 1) (Spring 2003), print version. [blackbird.vcu.edu/v2n1/gallery/kuspit\\_d/reconsidering\\_text.utm](http://blackbird.vcu.edu/v2n1/gallery/kuspit_d/reconsidering_text.utm) (accessed 10 April 2018)
- Jonathan Glancey, Glasgow School of Art: One of the great buildings, BBC Global News Limited, Culture. (19 March 2015) [bbc.com/culture/story/20150319-one-of-the-great-buildings](http://bbc.com/culture/story/20150319-one-of-the-great-buildings) (accessed 7 April 2018)
- Hans Hoffman quoted by Alena Hennessy, 'October: Abstract', *Intuitive Painting Workshop, Techniques, Prompts and Inspiration for a Year of Painting*, (Cincinnati, Ohio: North Light Books, 30 July 2016), p.210
- Mark Hudson, 'The question, 'Should we celebrate art by bad people?' *The Royal Academy of Arts Magazine*, 138 (Spring 2018) p.41
- John Hoyland, *Six Days in September*, Arena, BBC TWO, 20 February 1980, 19.45
- Joseph Kosuth, 1967, *Six Years: The dematerialisation of the art object from 1966 to 1972*, edited and annotated by Lucy R. Lippard, (California: London: University of California Press, 1997), p.24
- Rowan Moore, 'Reid Building review - Mackintosh's 1909 Glasgow School of Art has a new neighbour,' *Culture, The Guardian*, (2 March 2014) [theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/mar/02/reid-building-review-mackintosh-glasgow-school-art-steven-holl#comments](http://theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/mar/02/reid-building-review-mackintosh-glasgow-school-art-steven-holl#comments) (accessed 30 April 2018)
- Grayson Perry, *The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman*, (London: The British Museum Press, 2011), press introduction
- Peter Dickinson, 'John Hoyland in Conversation with Peter Dickinson,' *Turps Banana* (issue 9) p16/78 [turpsbanana.com/issue-pdfs/2/issue-9-preview.pdf](http://turpsbanana.com/issue-pdfs/2/issue-9-preview.pdf) (accessed 16 April 2018)
- Robert Inchausti's comment on William Gass's quote on Solzhenitsyn, Chapter Three, *The Ignorant Perfection of Ordinary People*, (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991), p.36
- Meyer Shapiro, 'The Fine Arts and the Unity of Mankind', *Worldview in Painting-Art and Society*, published by George Braziller, Inc. (New York, 1999), pp. 232-247 (p.234)
- Sir Ken Robinson, 'Do Schools Kill Creativity?' TED Ideas worth spreading, [ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_says\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity?language=en](http://ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity?language=en) (February 2006)
- Steve Durland on 'Artist in Society,' at Boulder, Colorado, quoted in Meredith Monk, 'Some Thoughts About Art, America And Jumping Off The Cliff', *Gifts of Speech* (1990) [gos.sbc.edu/m/monk1.html](http://gos.sbc.edu/m/monk1.html) (accessed 3 April 2018)
- 'The secret Nazi history of porcelain,' *Arts Night BBC Culture*, 12 and 13 March 2016
- The Guardian view on Hylas and the Nymphs: not censorship, *The Guardian*, Editorial, [theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/07/the-guardian-view-on-hylas-and-the-nymphs-not-censorship](http://theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/07/the-guardian-view-on-hylas-and-the-nymphs-not-censorship) (accessed 10 May 2018)
- University of New South Wales, Australia *The Handbook 2011, Archive Edition, Undergraduate, Built Environment Faculty: Architecture Program*, (2011) [handbook.unsw.edu.au/undergraduate/courses/2011/BENV2253](http://handbook.unsw.edu.au/undergraduate/courses/2011/BENV2253) (accessed 9 May 2018)
- Charline von Heyl, *Art Now. Volume 3*, edited by Hans Werner Holzwarth, (Cologne: Taschen, 2005), p.150
- Rebecca Warren, *Art Now. Volume 3*, edited by Hans Werner Holzwarth, (Cologne: Taschen, 2005), p.282

## Endnotes

1. **Perry Grayson**, *The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman*, (London: The British Museum Press, 2011), press introduction.
2. 'The secret Nazi history of porcelain,' Arts Night BBC Culture, 12 and 13 March 2016
3. **Meyer Shapiro**, *Worldview in Painting-Art and Society*, (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1999), p.234.
4. **Mike Cunningham**, 'Mind Training for Performance', [mikecunningham.co.uk](http://mikecunningham.co.uk) (accessed 30 April 2018)
5. **Kenneth Allan**, *Contemporary Social and Sociological Theory, Visualising Social Worlds*, (Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore; Washington DC: Sage, 1951) p.381
6. **Mark Hudson**, 'Should we celebrate art by bad people?' *The Royal Academy of Arts Magazine*, 138 (Spring 2018): p.41
7. **Sir Ken Robinson**, 'Do Schools Kill Creativity?' TED Ideas worth spreading, [ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_says\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity?language=en](http://ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity?language=en) (February 2006)
8. **George Berkeley**, *Principles of Human Knowledge and Three Dialogues*, (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 26 February 2009), location 2808 of 4729, Kindle edition.
9. **George Berkeley**, *Principles of Human Knowledge and Three Dialogues*, (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 26 February 2009), location 3015 of 4729, Kindle edition.
10. **Lisa Feldman Barrett PhD**, *How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain*, (U.K; New York: Pan, Macmillan, 8 February 2018) pp. 130-131.
11. **Barrett**, *The Secret Life of the Brain*, pp.128-129.
12. **Joseph Kosuth**, *Six Years: The dematerialisation of the art object from 1966 to 1972*: (California: London: University of California Press, 1997), p.24
13. **John Hoyland**, *Six Days in September*, Arena, BBC TWO, 20 February 1980, 19.45.
14. **Steve Durland** on 'Artist in Society,' at Boulder, Colorado, quoted in Meredith Monk, 'Some Thoughts About Art, America And Jumping Off The Cliff', *Gifts of Speech* (1990) [gos.sbc.edu/m/monk1.html](http://gos.sbc.edu/m/monk1.html) (accessed 3 April 2018)
15. **Charline von Heyl**, *Art Now. Volume 3* (Cologne: Taschen, 2005), p.150
16. **Rebecca Warren**, *Art Now. Volume 3*, edited by Hans Werner Holzwarth, (Cologne: Taschen, 2005), p.282
17. **Melvyn Bragg**, 'Bragg joins revolt as arts degrees axed,' *The Sunday Times*, 10103 (29 April 2018): p.13
18. **Melvyn Bragg**, 'Bragg joins revolt as arts degrees axed,' p.13
19. **Donald Kuspit**, 'Reconsidering the Spiritual in Art,' *Blackbird Archive*, an online journal of literature and the arts, volume 2 (number 1) (Spring 2003), print version. [blackbird.vcu.edu/v2n1/gallery/kuspit\\_d/reconsidering\\_text.utm](http://blackbird.vcu.edu/v2n1/gallery/kuspit_d/reconsidering_text.utm) (accessed 10 April 2018)
20. **Banksy**, *Art Now. Volume 3*, edited by Hans Werner Holzwarth, (Cologne: Taschen, 2005), p.34
21. **Hans Hoffman** quoted by **Alena Hennessy**, 'October: Abstract', *Intuitive Painting Workshop, Techniques, Prompts and Inspiration for a Year of Painting*, (Cincinnati, Ohio: North Light Books, 30 July 2016), p.210
22. **Jonathan Glancey**, *Glasgow School of Art: One of the great buildings*, BBC Global News Limited, Culture. (19 March 2015) [bbc.com/culture/story/20150319-one-of-the-great-buildings](http://bbc.com/culture/story/20150319-one-of-the-great-buildings) (accessed 7 April 2018)
23. **Rowan Moore**, 'Reid Building review - Mackintosh's 1909 Glasgow School of Art has a new neighbour,' Culture, *The Guardian*, (2 March 2014) [theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/mar/02/reid-building-review-mackintosh-glasgow-school-art-steven-holl#comments](http://theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/mar/02/reid-building-review-mackintosh-glasgow-school-art-steven-holl#comments) (accessed 30 April 2018)
24. **University of New South Wales**, *Australia The Handbook 2011, Archive Edition, Undergraduate, Built Environment Faculty: Architecture Program*, (2011) [handbook.unsw.edu.au/undergraduate/courses/2011/BENV2253.html](http://handbook.unsw.edu.au/undergraduate/courses/2011/BENV2253.html) (accessed 9 May 2018)
25. **The Guardian** view on Hylas and the Nymphs: not censorship, *The Guardian*, Editorial, [theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/07/the-guardian-view-on-hylas-and-the-nymphs-not-censorship](http://theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/07/the-guardian-view-on-hylas-and-the-nymphs-not-censorship) (accessed 10 May 2018)
26. **Dominic Sandbrook** 'So will they tear down Churchill, Gandhi and Mandela, too?', *Mail Online*, (27 April 2017), [dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4453488/Will-tear-Churchill-Gandhi-Mandela-too.html](http://dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4453488/Will-tear-Churchill-Gandhi-Mandela-too.html) (accessed 2 May 2018)
27. **Robert Inchausti's** comment on **William Gass's** quote on Solzhenitsyn, Chapter Three, *The Ignorant Perfection of Ordinary People*, (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991) p. 36
28. **Peter Dickinson**, 'John Hoyland in Conversation with Peter Dickinson,' *Turps Banana* (issue 9) p16/78 <http://turpsbanana.com/issue-pdfs/2/issue-9-preview.pdf> (accessed 16 April 2018)
29. **Nicki Gillard**, writer, poet, written for this dissertation in response to *The Blue Fan* by Francis Boileau Cadell



I know there are no demons in the undergrowth  
At least I think so  
Forming faces in clouds and all manner of things  
Unlimited  
I see the angry face of a malevolent spirit  
a flaming giraffe  
a tea clipper in full sail  
I transform my perception  
I decide to build castles in the air  
Invent my own faces in the sky  
Literal recognisable objects incongruously appear

The abstract experience