

5 The Canon, Popular Culture and Contemporary Thought

5.1 Appropriation, Cult

Tradition At the beginning of the previous chapter, it was noted that Otto Dix saw a mythical element in the cities featured in his work. This is a trail that can lead to an investigation of Joyce as a model for artists when using mythology and other traditions.

According to Philip Leider, Edward Hopper's bleak street scenes and interiors need to be viewed through Vermeer's mediation.

Only by way of ironic counterpoint to the richness of the past could the present be spoken of at all. It was Joyce's *Ulysses* above all [...] that provided the method. As Eliot observed: 'in using myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him [...] Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method. It is, I seriously believe, a step toward making the world possible for art.'¹

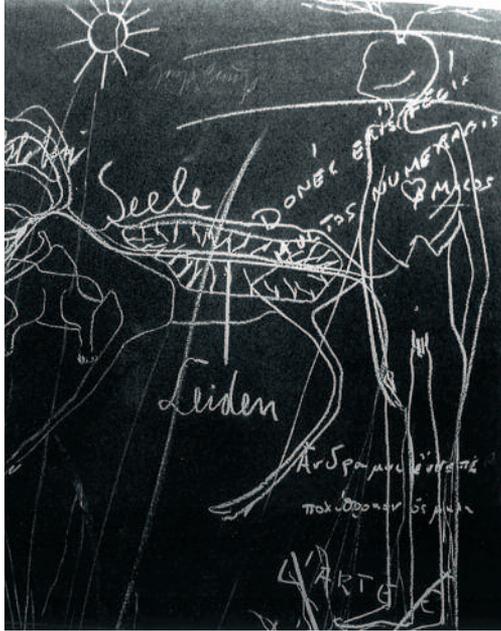
While Hopper may not have had Joyce in mind when proceeding in such a way, Joseph Beuys certainly had.² The conflation of Bloom and Odysseus under the name Penninus already suggested this, as well as the early watercolour *Odyseus*. When Beuys quoted the beginning of the *Odyssey* in Greek in his *Das Kapital Space 1970-77*, installed at Schaffhausen in Switzerland in 1984,¹⁵⁷ Joyce was on his mind even more than Homer. I can be sure, because he wrote the lines beside his antlered "everyman" figure that must be viewed in relation to Joyce's drawing of Bloom (which Beuys knew from reading Ellmann's biography) and Bloom's antlered appearance in *Ulysses* ("Circe"). Moreover, Beuys' *Kapital* deals extensively with the Joyce-related topics of Celtic and Irish migration, since Schaffhausen is within the area where Celtic La Tène and Hallstadt cultures originated. It is also near St. Gall, centre of manuscript production headed by Iro-Scottish monks. Beuys had discussed then current Irish emigration at a workshop that was part of his contribution to *documenta 6* in Kassel in 1977. Some of the blackboards that document discussions there became part of *Das Kapital*. They explain the political landscape in both parts of the island and give expression to Beuys' belief that Ireland was the "Brain of Europe".

In relation to Beuys's references to the *Odyssey* in a Joycean spirit, an "action" from 1966 is explicit. It deals with disability, namely

154 Jürgen Klauke,
Overly Terse
Trigger
1990-92

155 Jonathan Meese,
untitled
installation
1999

156 Thomas Chimes,
James Joyce
1974

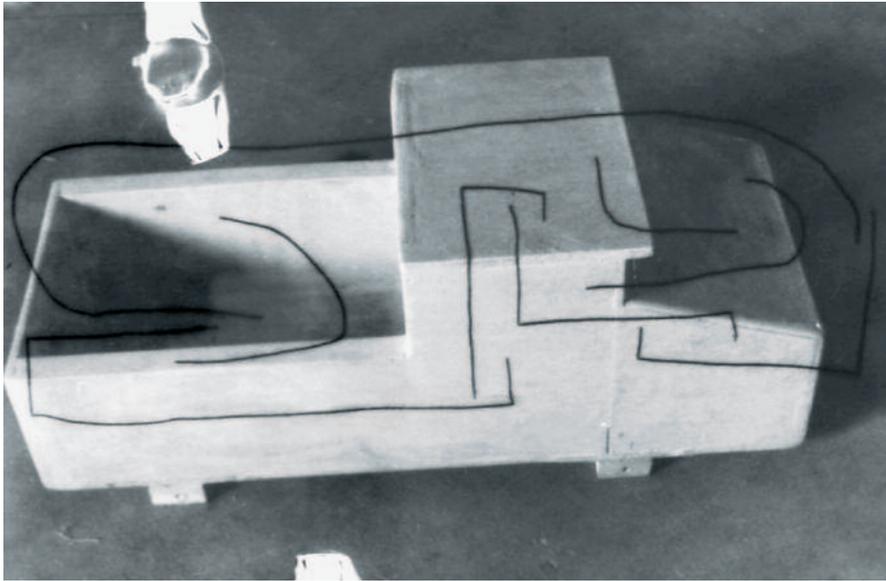


157 **Joseph Beuys,**
Das Kapital
 Space 1970-77
 detail, 1984

Thalidomide children. Beuys stopped his ears with wax, in the same way that Odysseus enabled his comrades to sail past Circe's island. Beuys had sewn a grand piano into an insulating skin of felt, thereby creating a double negative, according to which the piano could be perceived as sounding even more clearly and Beuys as hearing exceedingly well. This rather subtle commentary on or inversion of the "original" can in Beuys' case be traced to Joyce, whose modern-day Odysseus' heroism originated from empowering "disabilities".³

In current art, however, the motif-led, mythicizing approach seems to be rare. Jürgen Partenheimer's *Wanderings. Ulysses*, 1984,¹⁵⁸ achieves a palimpsest-like approach through double exposure, so that the ancient and the recent can coincide. Mimmo Paladino in his *Ulysses* works is the only one who shows D(a)edalus (or Icarus) with wings. The nineteenth-century depictions of the *Odyssey* that Joseph A. Kestner reproduces highlight how far removed from this realm Joyce and artists after him really are.⁴ The favoured approach, instead is one that focuses on Joyce's procedure in relation to traditions: appropriation.

Appropriation Within the realm of this investigation, appropriation should be understood as a broad term, referring to more than the re-



158 Jürgen Partenheimer, *Wanderings. Ulysses* 1984

paintings (with a difference) since the 1980s of Modernist works by artists like André Raffray. In the wake of Joyce, artists have been encouraged to “look at the old as though it were modernist [– or post-modernist in the current context]. The title [*Ulysses*] gently advises us to do what Homeric agents do: *peiraein* – test, try out, inquire, experience.”⁵ Among the “pirates” already introduced are Joseph Beuys for his use of *Das Kapital* (Karl Marx) as his Schaffhausen installation’s title,⁶ Sidney Geist ³⁵ and Felim Egan for their work using Brancusi’s *Symbol of Joyce*, and possibly Sorel Etrog and Timothy O’Neill for their use of typographical innovations from the Book of Kells and Dada. Jess’ earlier collages could be understood in this way, and John Cage’s practice of writing through *Finnegans Wake* also takes on new meaning in this context:

By divorcing Joyce’s word from his intentions, Joyce’s language become[s] Cage’s new work. By dismembering Joyce’s text, Cage also ‘remembers’ it through music. [... There is an] act of creative ventriloquism involved in such artistic appropriation.⁷

Remembering and dismembering are central notions here, as is dislocation into another artist’s oeuvre, another historical and art-historical context with their different parameters, and again dislocation with its

2.2 ←

Paris, July 1928



18 Rue D'Odéon
2 Festival of St. James

159 **F. Scott Fitzgerald, caricature of Bloomsday celebrations 1929**

resistance to being neatly comprehended and subsumed into a homogenous category.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's famous caricature of the Bloomsday celebrations of 1928 ¹⁵⁹ has been appropriated not once but twice. Peter Blake redrew and etched the scene, with Fitzgerald kneeling in front of a distressed "St. James", surrounded by "disciples". He exhibited this work alongside eight other Joyce portraits from photographs, as well as appropriations of two of Brancusi's portrait drawings.⁸ In its bundled reverence, the series of etchings catered for the clientele of Joycean devotees. The centenary festivities two years earlier most likely inspired it, rather than any long-standing inspiration.⁹

In the case of Patrick Ireland, who redrew Scott Fitzgerald's drawing around the same time,¹⁰ that gesture of appropriation grew out of a very different level of reflection. While Blake missed the critical undertones – Fitzgerald had sent the image to Sylvia Beach on the frontispiece of *The Great Gatsby* – Ireland/O'Doherty as an artist and writer/critic echoes the prevailing feeling of competition.¹¹ The caricature's humour thinly disguises the fact that everybody, apart from Adrienne Monnier and Sylvia Beach (who are mermaids), is depicted as a meek, mute schoolchild. In this context, appropriation takes on an almost therapeutic

function. It simultaneously provides a confirmation of Joyce's importance for Ireland's work, as well as a critical commentary on the writer's less than easy character.

Thomas Chimes has created neatly framed portraits of canonical Modernists, including *Joyce*, 1974.¹⁵⁶ At first glance, there is nothing remarkable about this "photograph" – one of Gisèle Freund's – in a traditional frame. On closer inspection, the technique is oil on wood, which means that Chimes appropriated photography in the medium of paint. Furthermore, the dominating picture frame does not end; the portrait is merely painted on the recessed part of the carefully handmade "sculpture". This superficially unremarkable image thus generates tension and poses questions: the photograph already post-dates the nineteenth-century practice of framing, quoted (i.e. appropriated) in the work's appearance.¹² The result is a chronological and medial impossibility that draws wider circles. All elements are thus appropriated. While the Philadelphia artist Chimes has clearly chosen his favourite personages from Europe's cultural history, his achievement exceeds paying homage to canonical Modernism.

Some of Heather Ryan Kelley's works on *Finnegans Wake* are in the style of old master paintings. This seems like an odd choice, since their figurative qualities can easily be misunderstood as pinning down one aspect of the work in a mimetic illustration. Ryan Kelley, however, uses the tools of the medieval painter to subvert that mimeticism. *Washers at the Ford*, 1996,¹⁶⁰ features two washerwomen at a river which the artist dislocates into an idyllic landscape. The painting includes a banner, which bears the beginning of the "Anna Livia" episode, a highly stylized piece of drapery (washing), and a *trompe l'oeil* handkerchief "on" the picture plane (where the river is located), on which one can read a further passage from the episode. It can be interpreted as the letter from the *Wake*, as well as an item for washing. The banner suddenly appears as an approximation of the Möbius strip, featuring the "O" and "!" on either side that link the figure eight in *Finnegans Wake* (FW 94.21-22). In Ryan Kelley's oeuvre, the choice of style is therefore motivated by many content-related considerations which can serve in the present context as a reminder of Joyce's multiplicity of styles. In general, multi-stylistic visual work inspired by the writer should also be viewed in the context of appropriation.

As the conscious choice of various styles is a postmodernist feature (following nineteenth-century precedents), Joyce can be understood as a major source for artists concerned with postmodernist thought

160 Heather Ryan
Kelley,
Washers at
the Ford
1996



surrounding the simulacrum as Baudrillard has formulated it – the impossibility of being entirely “original”. While one may “never know whose thoughts you’re chewing” (U 8.717-8), Joyce’s thoughts on this matter have been enlightening for artists who have chosen to join the writer in emphasizing a cyclical view of (art) history.

There is, however, one problem associated with this snugly fitting correspondence: appropriation may seem as if artists were bringing mimeticism into art on Joyce by the back door – with all the problems this entails. Nevertheless, it adds that necessary conceptual level, rendering realism as only deceptively familiar, in a way similar to Joyce’s use of realistic detail in *Ulysses*. He maintained a distance between the *Odyssey* and 1904, for instance, by removing the chapter headings that we now so casually use. Myth – and any tradition – constituted for Joyce a scaffolding, a pragmatic, structural, i.e. conceptual, aid. Appropriation also insists on that distance. It thus opens an avenue for artists who wish to be guided by a distinct source of inspiration (for whatever reason) and also to seek to maintain their independence. “I use Joyce as Joyce used Homer”¹³ is a statement that maintains this balance. Furthermore, appropriation not only possesses conceptual elements, it has been seen – on the level of language – as one of Conceptualism’s constituting strategies.

Joseph Kosuth, appropriator of (literary) language into visual art *par excellence*, explains:

Joyce appropriated daily language to be utilized within a discourse of his own, ultimately speaking about other things in a way which constructed his own creative play. [...] What I learned from Joyce was that sentences, paragraphs, even pages and whole books, could be used as words (in the sense of [...] a basic constructive element) in constructing 'sentences' [...] which then speak of other things than what was originally intended. It was understanding this 'contingency device' (as I've called it) that made language, and by exten[s]ion, context the primary 'materials' in an artistic practice (which became known as Conceptual art).¹⁴

Creation One can even again be more general about the ways in which Joyce's procedures in relation to traditions and myth have been influential for artists. Because of his prominence among twentieth-century users and updaters or dismantlers of mythology, he represents an obvious point of departure for artists who wish (humanist) traditions to be still available while satisfying the (Modernist) requirement of rejecting traditions: those who work in a mythical spirit – or indeed who subvert myth.

The former concerns more than just the *Odyssey*. According to William P. Fitzpatrick, "*Ulysses*' underlying mythic pattern is the myth of creation. [...] *Ulysses* narrates the coming to be of itself."¹⁵ Joyce can thus provide an example – and more than just an example – of how an artist may create: the most fundamental source of inspiration. Such a tendency can be said to underlie much of his writings, early on choosing the definite article quite deliberately in *A Portrait of the Artist*. The autobiographical elements of that work could furthermore point to Joyce's wish to exemplify, even embody, the prototypical artist. An artist may in turn use this route to identify with Joyce.¹⁶

In order to understand Joyce as a pathfinder to creativity and using myth in the context of contemporary art, we should perhaps best see him as subverting myth. Frederic Jameson has spoken against a mythicizing reading of *Ulysses*, which stresses mythic parallels, and Brandon Kershner rightly establishes this view as meaningful in relation to the culture of *Ulysses*. "This is the nonlinear reading necessary to follow references backward and forward across the text, in the process fragmenting it beyond repair and resisting the text's tendency to settle into a fixed symbolic order".¹⁷

→ 5.3

Any tradition, myth or compositional framework remains to be interpreted. Artists have thus become exegetes of Joyce, researchers in his wake. He has indeed been understood as somebody opening new avenues for reflecting on creation. This is true particularly in relation to *Finnegans Wake*, which foregrounds the creative act at every turn, involving readers in a lateral search for meaning and thus enticing them into creativity. In Joseph Kosuth's words: "*Finnegans Wake* is a gaping open window with a dazzling view onto the creative abyss [...] Seeing *Finnegans Wake* creates a blindness made of insight."¹⁸

Notoriety One way in which Joyce reflects on creation is through the chaotic and scatological nature of the creative act, in the way he seems to have viewed it throughout his career. An invocation to dirt was the last topic of which Carola Giedion-Welcker heard Joyce speak shortly before his death. In the current context this is telling. I now wish to turn (again) to the body, which Joyce viewed as essentially creative¹⁹ and the reference to whose activities has established Joyce's notoriety in the eyes of many.

← 4.2

Joyce (like other Modernists) wished to expand our view of the world by rejecting traditional values. That intention inspired artists, and I hope to have considered this adequately under the categories of epiphanic revelations through obscenity and bodily discharge as themes relating to the physical materiality found in Joyce's writing. The aspect of rejection, although the other side of the same coin, has offended many of his contemporaries. Joyce's notoriety in itself has (thus) also inspired artists. Such work includes inappropriately one-dimensional illustrations, as well as the deliberate vulgarity of recent art on Joyce (for example, Sarah Kenny's Dublin exploits).

Joyce partook of the Modernist dynamic and anticipated the "vulgar" extension of his work by choosing a brothel as the setting for "Circe",²⁰ by letting a passage of *Finnegans Wake* circle around Aubrey Beardsley's work,²¹ as well as, for example, linking epiphany with vulgarity and the use of tumescent and detumescent imagery in *Ulysses*. However, society and art have changed greatly and we are now inclined to agree with the statement already made in *Our Exagmination* that "in any of the Freudian classifications man may produce good writing"²² – or visual work. While the Irish art critic Dorothy Walker could write about her youth in Dublin in the 1950s that "a woman had only to wear trousers and carry a copy of *Ulysses* to be visually daring",²³ today's artists' attempts at salvaging the scandalous aura of a banned author are likely to



161 **Julião Sarmento**
The Things Which
Blacken My Mind
(Dublin-Cornell
1909), 1995

prove futile.²⁴ One thus needs to tread carefully: highlighting Joyce’s liberating potential is quite another matter from creating pornography in the name of a work’s author who did not wish “kinetic” urges to determine the recipient’s responses.²⁵ Some artists have struck such a balance and sometimes even achieved the impossible, to remind us that *Ulysses* is offensive.²⁶

Jürgen Klauke pursues this goal by means of humour – an element that questions norms in general and does so in Joyce.²⁷ Klauke’s *Stephen Hero[e]s* exhibition establishes him among Joyce-inspired artists, and he has included the decidedly Joycean props of bowler hats and walking sticks in his staged photographs of often slapstick-like scenes.²⁸ 154 The ashplants – one hanging in the artist’s fly, others are turned upside down – levitate suggestively and perform dances. Thus they assume the function of Klauke’s androgynous genital props in more explicit earlier photo work.²⁹ The artist may also have followed Joseph Beuys in interpreting the walking stick as a reversed “J”.

4.1 ←

Julião Sarmento’s already discussed paintings on the sexually explicit correspondence between the writer and his partner are a reaction to Joyce’s Euclidean diagram by means of a suggestive gesture. In *The Things Which Blacken My Mind* (Dublin-Cornell 1909), 1995,¹⁶¹ a thumb

← 4.1

and forefinger describe a mandala. With very little imagination, it becomes evident that both Joyce (denoting the two triangles within that shape as ALP, i.e. the female) and Sarmento mean to specify the vulva. Initially, however, the fingers hold another almond-shaped object that connotes a host. These *portmanteau* shapes can characteristically be interpreted on many levels, owing to their fragmentary, dismantled nature.³⁰ Sigla have offered an avenue to Patrick Ireland (on the back of his In *The Wake (of)* box) to visualize HCE's and ALP's intercourse (283.32 - 284.4), while remaining within the abstract parameters of his work.

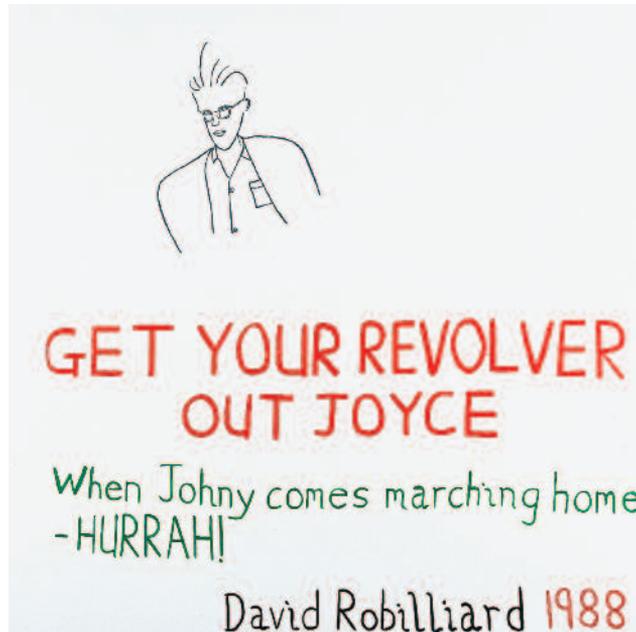
David Robilliard's comic-like, but painting-sized, portrait of Joyce bears the caption "GET YOUR REVOLVER OUT JOYCE".¹⁵⁵ Despite its employment of a different kind of shock value – this at first seems entirely inappropriate concerning the peace-loving writer – the work does belong within the current context. Sebastian Guinness has commented: "David definitely had a relationship with the works of Joyce, however, as with all [his] paintings there is a very London Gay pun." He explains that there is a reference to the BBC radio comedian Joyce Grenfell, who was apparently admired by the post war Gay scene, and continues:

This was a theme seen throughout both his and his close collaborator Andrew Heard's work. David was about the art of vocabulary and the malleable quality of language, something that he found in Joyce's *Ulysses* [...]. We should remember that his first chosen medium was poetry.³¹

← 3.2

Robilliard thus combines the Joycean play on names and identities with evidence that visual art on Joyce is as conducive to "queer theory" as is scholarship on the writer.³² What has earlier been noted on marginalized identities and unruly dislocations is again pertinent. Sexually suggestive passages in Joyce's texts are only one constituent of, or basis for, Joyce's notoriety. His irreverence concerning religious orthodoxies is well known and joined here – uniquely – by a suggestion of violence.

Shock is unspecific and, according to Peter Bürger, becomes a means to draw attention once more to the principles governing the work's construction.³³ This may have been another motivation for artists to turn to this aspect of Joyce's practice. Similarly, transgender shifts of Bloom and ALP serve not only to shock but to hint at the ubiquitous oscillating modes described. Declan Kiberd has extended these to the political, post-colonial realm: Joyce worked "[a]gainst the either/or antithesis of British imperial psychology, [and] demonstrated the superiority of a both/and philosophy."³⁴



162 David Robilliard,
*Get Your Revolver
out Joyce*
1988

Within the larger cultural arena, licentiousness is part of a strategy aimed at deflating and subverting high art and its proponents: If Bloom's [...] low-guilt consumption of pornography joins a recovery of the body to a validation of lower-class experience and a forthrightness about mass-cultural pleasures, this is so, in part, because all three phenomena were suspect from the point of view of high culture.³⁵

Before discussing popular cultural aspects of the current topic, however, I shall begin by examining a related field: Joyce's cult status in the art inspired by him.

Cult, Canon Joyce as an unruly artist conforms to myths and preconceptions about the artist. He is thus located comfortably within the canon, while simultaneously eschewing anything firmly established. To put it simply: he attracts not only artists whose interest in the writer is deep and has developed over a long time, but also a spectrum of artists which ranges from "fans" who often create mimetic portraits and are led by the writer's canonicity, to those who claim to be interested in the unruly while they paradoxically seek to reap the benefits of Joyce's status.

However, some artists have confronted Joyce's cult status and canonicity rather than quietly subsuming it. Nick Cudworth portrayed Joyce

as one of *Three Wise Men*, 1984, who take on the roles of the three wise monkeys, Joyce being the one who does not speak. Duchamp and Eric Satie are the others, each negating, through their gestures, “their” art form’s sense. Rather than interpreting Joyce here as abstinent in terms of politics or commentary on his work, Bernard Moxham, collaborating with Cudworth on Joycean matters, writes: “Nick and I intended to deal with the issue of ‘reverence’ for Joyce and his works. It seems that we’ve reached a stage where some scholars treat him like a ‘God’. This is suspect.”³⁶ Although this is indeed suspect, artists inevitably perpetuate Joyce’s canonical status whenever they refer to him – especially if that reference takes the shape of portraiture, that most ennobling of genres.³⁷

While Cudworth clearly intended to subvert Joyce’s cult status, Jonathan Meese is, I believe, more effective. In July 1999, Meese had Joyce appear in an installation characteristically crammed with portraits of “cult” figures of all ages, from Echnaton to Wagner.³⁸ 162 Frequent references to Isis and the plethora of crosses stress a divine aspect, while loaded German terms from occult and Nazi vocabulary enhance the emotional intensity aroused – until it breaks down. The shocking content (to many viewers) and the characters chosen for veneration suddenly recede in importance. The work looks at cult status itself, conveyed by the simple means of photocopied enlargements and of crudely made or found crosses: the aesthetic of fanzines. We witness myth’s banalization, high culture’s “trickling down”, hollowing out and an inversion that toys with an earnest, “Germanic” intensity. Meese seeks a new beginning, based on an artistic *tabula rasa*. With his low-tech approach, he certainly wishes (paradoxically in the medium of art exhibitions that invite and depend on publicity) to fight the spectacle.³⁹ He uses contemporary teenage adoration, characterized by a gloomy, “Gothic” – “Circean” – *horror vacui*. Similarly to Joyce in “Nausicaa” and “Circe”, he achieves an ironic distance by overdoing it. Meese thus subverts that sentimentality and reverence which art “on” canonical figures so easily breeds, but which is as inappropriate for present-day thought and art as it is for Joyce.

→ 5.3

'Where was I?' it seemed to blink,
finding her place

JACKIE O.

pg. 554 of Remembrance of Things Past
when Jack was shot, running on
(one sentence long! Kos, Kos short...)/pg. 555;
still on Swann's Way (at all!) to be exact -- oh, how
could I forget! but refresh my memory... (not that!)...
I read: "It ran) beside churches... as rugged and
precipitous as cliffs, on whose towers the partridge (oh! lady bird)
would be waiting, suddenly, offering them (the kestrel's hand, its
wider top blown off the hole of the earth to move!)... was substituted...
[not exactly!] the concrete dream of the most variegated of springs,
not the spring of [Camelot], still prickling with all the needles
points... of the winter's frost (the road up
Kedron, indeed!), but that which already covered [me]
From that moment, only a twilight [of a daylong gold,
like those on the English's picture], purple,
colours, seemed to me to have any value; for the
alternation of images had effected a change of
front [all front] where you!" -- in my dream,
and in an abrupt as always that occurred --
(and here we found the page and cross
the road to the next turn -- not yet!) --
sometimes in reverse, [oh!]
must I go on? -- cough -- hanging my
through my bones and when like
driving the shot to run out -- my
in my hand runs still! -- cough!
and blow it out! like a shot -- and
passing long I see another shot,
no passing care that [oh!]
[oh!]
[you're on your own
from here -- yes, go and
see? not my sister, see,
see Harry O, you know!]



LET IT BURN AND NEVER BLINK!

THE 'BIG O'
SCORED 38 POINTS
THAT FATEFUL DAY ON
THE ROAD BEFORE THE GAME WAS
CALLED (NEVER TO BE PLAYED AGAIN?)
SECOND HALF...

JUMP SHOT! --
(UT!

I WOULD GO ON
SMILING A LONG, LONG SMILE.
JUST TO SHUT IT OUT.

NEVER LOSE THAT CHESHIRE GRIN (FOR WHO? --
NOT FOR ME?) -- WHO COULD PUT IT OUT?
IT BURNS ITS BRAND ETERNALLY (OH! FOR ME? JUST ONE --
KISS?) ON ALL WHO STARE AND WATCH...

...AND WHAT WERE YOU WATCHING THE DAY
THAT OSWALD WAS SHOT...?



5.2 Popular Culture, “High” and “Low”

Popular Culture Joyce and popular culture is a topic that cuts at least two ways: the writer, as an unusually media-aware cultural practitioner of his day, incorporated popular culture into the fabric of his works – which themselves contribute to “high” culture – in an unprecedented manner.¹ Since then, Joyce has, in turn, invaded many, if not all, aspects of popular culture. He maintains a presence in various media from advertising to novelettes, from pop music to cinema.² Several authors within Joyce studies have collected and interpreted such evidence.³ *Ulysses* dust jackets have increasingly approached the realm of the domestic and popular.⁴ In his essay on the “Joycean Unconscious”, Vincent Cheng suggested in conclusion that “a Joycean Unconscious is getting the culture to Say Yes to Joyce – and that, in this way, Joyce *is* getting some respect”.⁵ Joyce’s aura, reputation and the cult status in Joyce-inspired art discussed earlier, have indeed taken on an iconic role with a wide range of audiences. Artists are among these audiences, and they cater in turn for audiences where both a conscious Joyce reception and Cheng’s “Joycean Unconscious” can be located. Derek Attridge has argued that:

In *Ulysses* and the *Wake*, the shards of elite culture mingle with the orts of popular culture, and there is no principle of hierarchy to govern them. The reader of *Finnegans Wake* who is unfamiliar with ‘Humpty Dumpty’ loses as much as the reader who is unfamiliar with *Scienza Nuova*. And if you don’t know either, there is still plenty more to get your teeth into.⁶

Some artists have appreciated such openness that – one can safely assume – corresponds to their own techniques and aspirations concerning prospective audiences. Although far removed from art in the 1960s that fed into and gained from Umberto Eco’s theories of openness, these postmodernist inclinations are still pertinent and extend to an appreciation of living in all cultural modes simultaneously.⁷

Although I will – somewhat paradoxically – focus here mostly on visual material in the category of “art”, I understand that category to be broadly expandable and am particularly interested in work that makes use of quotidian material and aesthetics. Within this realm, it is evident that “high” and “low” engage in a dialogue.⁸ Today they can hardly be “unmixed”. However, they have only seemingly merged; rather, they appear to be balancing off each other – similar to the way in which Joyce

3.3 ←

163 Raymond Pettibon, No title (Where was I?)
1987

164 Richard Hamilton, Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing? 1956

operated with classical and naturalistic frameworks, as well as the “high” and “low” cultural materials of his texts.⁹

Counter to leftist critiques of consumer society, Joyce seems to have viewed a mixing of “high” and “low”, as well as the overstepping of boundaries between visual art and literature, as playing a central, leveling and democratizing role.¹⁰

There can be no doubt [in R.B. Kershner’s mind] that in the world of *Ulysses* as in [Horkheimer and Adorno’s] *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, art, popular culture, and advertising all intermix and interpenetrate [....] I want to suggest that Joyce was well aware of the critique of consumer society that had been launched from both right and left, but that he ultimately failed to endorse it.¹¹

Pop Art A similarly ambiguous but superficially uncritical relationship to advertising, commercial affairs and popular culture in general can be located within Pop Art. A Catholic advertising specialist with a compulsive tendency to mythicize and collect all kinds of “high” and “low” cultural artefacts takes pride of place in this movement. Andy Warhol, who drew commercial shoe ads in the 1950s, was outwardly vociferous but – like Joyce – quite withdrawn about commenting on his art. Following what has been said, one can assume that, once the case of Warhol is fully decided – i.e. whether his work constitutes an uncritical celebration or indeed a critique of consumer society – the result will be applicable to Joyce. Would the outcome be furthered or delayed by the suggestion that, in some fundamental ways, Joyce may have inspired Warhol?

The use of everyday subject matter is a broad school. But what about ‘Heinz cans everywhere’ (FW 581.05)?¹⁶⁵ Did Warhol know about Joyce’s awareness of the proliferation of tin cans in modern society? Did he just prefer Campbell’s soup? The use that he made of these cans since the early 1960s – he signed them and appropriated them in prints, where they appear as series – suggests that a similar transformation takes place to that in Joyce’s work. The signing, i.e. the “cult” artist’s touch, betrays quasi religious intentions. Without suggesting a direct link, Hugh Kenner finds no better analogy to the price increase brought about by Warhol’s signing of cans of real soup than Joyce’s (Stephen’s) priestly gesture of consecration.¹² Although Kenner was not aware of the *Fluviana*, he apparently regarded a ready-made strategy – Pop Art takes Duchamp’s practice further in this regard – as connected with Joyce. All this hints at Warhol’s use of quotidian material in ways similar to Joyce’s



165 **Andy Warhol,**
Heinz Box
1964

incorporation of it: conveying a variety of meanings. The trivial becomes “quadruvial”.¹³

Unfortunately, Warhol’s library was almost completely sold in 1988. Auction records are very sketchy and do not mention Joyce. Nevertheless, Matt Wrbcian “suspect[s] that Warhol was aware of his [Joyce’s] work.”¹⁴ He elaborates:

[...] in addition to his everyday subject matter, Warhol made recurring use of the 24-hours/day-in-the-life theme, as Joyce did. Warhol made a 25-hour-long film, *Four Stars*, in 1966-67. It was shown only once, and then was immediately taken apart. His book, *a*, a *novel*, is supposedly 24 hours in the life of his superstar Ondine [...]. He also hoped to make a film of 24 hours in the life of Marcel Duchamp, but only shot 3 minutes.¹⁵

Probing a little further, there is more scope for inspiration – not only in naming a novel *a* (U 3.139-40). Florence Bianu has proposed seeing the four versions of the Mary Kendall poster in *Ulysses* as repetition akin to Warhol’s repeated images of Marilyn Monroe.¹⁶ She calls Joyce a “pop-artist”, but not in an art-historical way as it can now be understood. A further question arises. Did Warhol know Eve Arnold’s 1955 photograph of Marilyn Monroe reading *Ulysses* ¹⁶⁶ which can be “consumed” or, as



166 Eve Arnold,
Marilyn Monroe
reading *Ulysses*
1955

Richard Brown has shown, viewed as document of a reading that was earnestly pursued and is as worthy as everybody else's?¹⁷

Joyce's (and *Ulysses*' position at the threshold (between the 1880s and 1922) of the so-called second industrial revolution, when "everyday life first began to be permeated with modern technologies like the telephone, typewriter, automobile, airplane, cinema, sewing machine, revolver, machine gun, snapshot camera, phonograph and radio",¹⁸ served Pop artists well. Echoing earlier findings on Joyce's prominence as a source of inspiration in the 1960s, when approaches to art and culture that departed from Modernism were sought, Richard Hamilton, foremost European Pop Artist, has spoken to me of his frustration at finding early in his career (in the 1950s) that art did not deal with what his life was about. He went to the cinema several times a week and was aware of popular culture of all kinds. Hamilton thus turned to *Ulysses* in a move that could in his case build on an earlier reading and that he makes sound like the logical option.¹⁹

The work that is usually assumed to have given Pop Art its name is Hamilton's 1956 collage *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* ¹⁶⁴ The interior view serves as a kaleidoscope of popular culture. Apart from a body builder with a "POP"-inscribed lollipop

(instead of a dumbbell) and a practically naked woman on a couch, it features a television set, a movie theatre outside the window with advertising, a tape recorder, a newspaper, a vacuum cleaner, a romance comic and a car advertisement. Eugen Sandow/Blazes Boylan and Molly Bloom immediately come to mind. Bloom is also present, as the cinema front shows a crouching man in black, looking in and completing the domestic triangle. Most explicit is the reference through the title. It thinly disguises the advertising slogan from *Ulysses*: “What is home without Plumtree’s Potted Meat?/Incomplete./With it an abode of bliss.” (U 5.144-47) We duly find a can of ham on the coffee table: potted meat. As if Hamilton wished to remove any doubt, the carpet is a photograph of a crowd of people and the ceiling is a planet (the earth?), floating in space: the universal dimension.

However, Hamilton himself tells me that the reference to Joyce was not intended.²⁰ Did his early reading permeate his mind to such an extent? Hamilton would naturally be reluctant to forfeit the originality of his most canonical and influential work – although the collage, I find, only gains with *Ulysses* as a background. Pop Art as a movement appears ever more generally Joyce-inspired. In keeping with its unacademic ways, one may even call Joyce the first Pop artist.

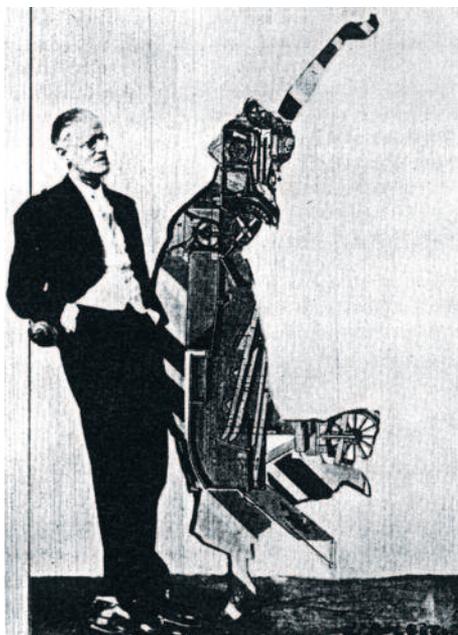
Considering the prominence of Joyce in Hamilton’s practice, one can suggest another correspondence that concerns the “modern home”. *Still life* is a painting from 1965 that features the corner of a tabletop grill made by Braun. On the appliance, the artist changes the brand name to Brown, despite the fact that the manufacturer does not translate the name when selling in English-speaking countries. Giordano Bruno’s death at the stake in 1600 and Joyce’s translation of his name into Gordon Brown as a prospective stage name²¹ are a likely rationale for this alteration, which seems to fit into the context of Hamilton’s *Typo-translation* of Duchamp’s notes in a Joyce-inspired way. Bruno’s coincidence of opposites may also be implied in the medium, which is in the main photo-realistic painting: a contradiction in artistic terms.²²

Eduardo Paolozzi has, like Hamilton, introduced the everyday into his work by means of collage. By

[...] recourse to readymade pictures, [he] introduces standardized, identifiable forms which not only represent themselves but a great deal more: prosperity and prestige [... They] are far more effective than an attempt to draw or transpose life’s experience.²³

Joyce appears in person (photographed by Carola Giedion-Welcker and wooed by a nymph) as part of the machinated universe of Paolozzi’s

3.3 ←



167 **Eduardo Paolozzi,**
History of
Nothing, still
1960

History of Nothing, 1960, ¹⁶⁷ an animated collage, where old and new, “high” and “low” unite to form an at times *Wokean* experience that echoes Joyce’s history of everything.²⁴

Elizabeth Murray is an American artist in the Pop tradition, whose bright, shaped canvases betray an early interest in comics. She employs domestic subject matter – cups and chairs, which float in a dream-like way and are rendered strange. Her formative reading of *Ulysses* brought her confirmation of early interests. Instead of the expected austerity, she found profusion and the epic power of the quotidian. In the late 1970s, Pop Art facilitated for Murray a return to Joyce and Jasper Johns, and these two in turn brought her back to comic sources like Chester Gould.²⁵

Raymond Pettibon began his career by drawing comics. Since then, he has developed a prolific oeuvre that is still faithful to some aspects of the earlier practice – namely accomplished figurative drawing, frames and the juxtaposition with writing. ¹⁶⁴ But he subverts narrative conventions and has found a framework for his drawings in ever more elaborate installations on gallery walls. Pettibon, “despite” the “low” art trappings, is one of the best-read visual artists of his generation. He relentlessly

quotes and appropriates “high” culture in the guise of Proust, Ruskin, Pater, Henry James, Melville – and Joyce. Nonetheless, Joyce does not figure in his 1998 *Raymond Pettibon: A Reader*.²⁶ The copyright issue does not render this a failsafe way of allocating a lowly status to the writer in the artist’s esteem. Neither does the fact prove the opposite that “Joyce” and “*Ulysses*” are mentioned in a list of 20 writers and titles meant to be matched.²⁷ This “test” of high cultural competency appears half a dozen times in Pettibon’s “Thinking of You” publication – always opposite the drawing of an erect, black phallus: a rather graphic commentary by the Los Angeles artist on high culture performance tests that Pettibon himself would have no problems passing. He “unites visual and literary arts by debasing both to a common level”, writes Peter Schjeldahl.²⁸ However, and his extensive annotations to *Finnegans Wake* from the late 1990s have been noted ¹³⁵ – Pettibon employs his sources in order to convey ambiguity, (black) humour and narrative inconsistency which manifest a common ground. One could also say they show a related way of thinking to the *Wake*. Pettibon himself describes his mode of reading as corresponding to that which Joyce’s later writings provoke:

I read as I write, write as I read. [...] I’ve done a lot of marginalia, [...] I’ve lost interest in narrative [...] For me, reading has become more microscopic, more about dissecting the work [...] Probably the most obvious example of that kind of reading is James Joyce. It becomes a kind of disease. Every text becomes related to another one.²⁹

While Pettibon’s individual drawings usually retain what one calls a “domestic” scale, David Robilliard’s Joyce “portrait” captioned “Get your revolver out Joyce”, ¹⁵⁵ transformed a cartoon aesthetic to a medium-sized canvas. Robilliard’s work, as the Joyce portrait itself shows, derives from popular culture: the proliferation of Joyce’s face on T-shirts and mugs that has been noted in relation to the commodification of portraits. Robilliard now re-imports such images into art. The usual way of referring to such sources would be to call them kitsch.

2.2 ←

Kitsch is a field that Pop Art introduced into high art practice. Garry Leonard has succinctly scrutinized Joyce’s use of kitsch from the marketing message that “Araby” signals to the nymph in the Blooms’ bedroom.³⁰ This correspondence can serve to motivate “kitschy” work on Joyce – something that may function as a reminder of the considerable distance from high Modernism at which both Joyce and art after him were (and are) operating. The related topic of appropriation art has already established some of the parameters. But the dearth of “kitschy”

5.1 ←

artistic approaches to Joyce points to the fact that unintentionally kitschy work is still so much in evidence that it could hardly be distinguished from the intentional or ironic use of kitsch aesthetics.

← 4.2

Paul Thek has been mentioned for his quasi vivisection meat pieces. The contrast to these and his other work, a room of paintings from 1979/80, can be isolated as using kitsch consciously. The walls of a small, devotional room are filled with eighteen gold-framed paintings that each have a kitschy picture-light attached. There is a bunch of flowers at the centre, surrounded by four velvet-upholstered chairs facing the paintings.³¹ Some of the paintings have Irish subject matter. All this made me inevitably think of *Ulysses*. *Wild Irish Rose*,¹⁶⁸ for example, perpetuates the equation of the female body with the landscape, so well known from work on *Ulysses*. Thek, a Catholic artist of German and Irish origin (at once an ascetic and a libertine), called his installations “Processions”. While he can no longer reveal a Joycean intention, an informed guess points strongly in the writer’s direction.

Comics and animation often strive to reconcile “high” and “low” audiences. *The Simpsons* is only one of the best-known examples. Homer may well not have been chosen arbitrarily as the first name of the main character, that domestic Springfield Odysseus. In order to achieve the aspired reconciliation in Joyce-inspired art, the path usually followed in this context is that of an appropriation of the comic form, while (thinly) disguising the artist’s learning. By definition, then, the creators of comics with a Joycean theme are knowledgeable about the writer – to the extent of choosing the comic or “low” cultural format as an outlet for veritable Joyce scholarship. The genre then often merely gives the impression of being accessible – something in which Joyce scholarship is only too interested – while retaining in the main the old “high” cultural audience. At other times, a reference to Joyce makes use of an apparently widespread assumption (of the Joycean Unconscious) that the writer was part of a counter-culture. *Finnegans Wake* is “portrayed as the province of fringe weirdos”,³² while the authors of such portrayals themselves are likely to be sympathetic to the Joycean cause and again rather knowledgeable. With those limits in mind (they were partly already in evidence concerning artists’ books and Joyce’s “notoriety”), Joycean comics are highly instructive and amusing.

← 4.4, 5.1

Dan J. Schiff took direct inspiration from Joyce when creating – during his spell as Zurich James Joyce Foundation Scholar in 1993 – a set of labels for beer bottles: “Molly Stout”, “Bloom Beer” and “Stephen’s



168 Paul Thek,
Wild Irish Rose
1979-80

Bitters”. He has continued to work in a quasi scholarly and simultaneously cartoon- and popular culture-inspired manner.³³ His *The Ondt and the Gracehoper* and *Wather Parted From the Say*, 1997, are two “Little Picture Book[s] of Rhymes from the Pages of *Finnegans Wake*”,³⁴ augmented by an exuberant array of stickers which brings to mind Gereon Inger’s stamps on *Ulysses*.

Simon Loekle’s *Dazibao*, a long-running series of Joycean cartoons in the *James Joyce Quarterly*, is testimony to a wish by Joyceans – and a necessity within Joyce studies – to be open not only to “low” culture, but to humour and even a (mild) subversive ironization of their own tenets: a healthy state of affairs that is very much in keeping with the subject.

David Lasky’s 1991 comic entitled *Joyce’s Ulysses* was sold for one dollar. In the trusted cartoon format, the reader is taken through 16 June 1904 in a mere 40 frames that strive to illustrate the main occurrences.³⁵ The difference between a series of oil paintings with the same outcome is that Lasky enclosed a warning: “Please note: that in order to adapt James Joyce’s novel *Ulysses* for the mini-comics format, a few details had to be excluded. This comic is by no means a substitute for the original work.”³⁶ This hilarious caveat turns around the whole project and renders it both educational for the uninitiated and an in-joke for Joyceans.³⁷

Henry J. Sharpe's multi-stylistic but always cartoonish drawings include art-historical commentary and therefore must be seen as a contribution to the general theme of "Joyce and art". The writer features an enthroned Christ as well as two adoring priests drawn in a pseudo-Byzantine manner. In the pose of Leonardo's *Anatomy of Man*, he stretches out and takes on the naivety of a figure in a Miró painting. These vignettes are no substitute for elaborate arguments, but they are certainly thought-provoking in the sense that Joyce appears not only as one thing or the other (for instance a Cubist), but in so many guises that anticipate or echo the multiplicity of the art inspired by him.³⁸

← 4.5

A recent art-historical commentary on Joyce, pairing the writer's work with a popular art form, was made by Declan Sheehan in his decision to invite Lomographic entries for an exhibition on Leopold Bloom at Derry's Context Gallery in June 2003. The title *B-lomo* obviously departs from a wordplay on Bloom's name. It achieves more, however, since photography is clearly apt in relation to *Ulysses*, and Lomo is only the most uninstitutionalized, cheap and popular form of it. Lomo, an affordable Russian camera, yields best results when used spontaneously, without looking through the viewfinder, i.e. when making use of it as a constant companion that can change one's perspective on everyday life. The resulting photographs are more brightly coloured than those produced with other cameras. Several correspondences with Joyce and Pop Art can thus be found. A difference to Pop Art is that Lomo artists have so far mostly remained within an international counter-culture. The exhibition was therefore a two-sided affair, with some of the contributing artists not honouring the casual spirit of the exhibition brief or the "rules" that the Lomographic Society has established – established, however, in order to be broken.³⁹ In the most appropriate cases, artists used the medium according to its parameters, but in their selection and presentation also exerted an often disguised but, in the context of Joyce, indispensable sense of control.⁴⁰

One can conclude that popular culture and Pop Art – understood as including but also as reaching far beyond the confines of its historical moment – have reacted to Joyce's pioneering work in the field with significant contributions to the history of (Joyce-inspired) art. That affinity is likely to yield further results, since the relationship between art and (everyday) life is as topical now as it was half a century or an entire century ago.







"me innerman monophone"
Part I

2. + 9.

158 Professor Gen. Ac. 200

93A to K. Faustall notes
114 A to F Day + Nights notes
176 Ballad of Persse
O'Railey

1
non
11.4/91
9:26A

Joyce (FW) Gary

for 9 always had a crush on

- 461 - (heliotrope) - any of various plants that
turn toward the sun

(M.D.)
119 M.D. made his ante
meridian for
him

461 - since the (dusess) of yore cycled round the
Forest Park, and listen Duse 1859-1924
Italian actress

terribilitell
boots =
like a sewermaid boots
LS

And never mind me laughing at what's
atever. (ate ever)

heimlich
Dick my
hind parts)

Joyce - my tickle pussiness - see lesbian orgy below
I was in the nerves but it's my last day.
[Gay man imitating female complaining about her period]
[also, a whore bathing (female whore)]

Jerry.
Seeing
away out
they comb
up against
his delusion
of a
month
orgentals
525

Joyce - who is going to be a jennyroll, at my nape,
branched, love, with dripping to affectionate
slapmamma but last at night, look, after
my golden violente wetting in my upperstairs (A)
splendidly welluminated with such tidylac
curtains of tidless - (2) Sleepless, watchful]

wallpapered to match the cat ~~2497~~ that morning
he took his daily sponge bath of two-toned
wallpaper painted by Maurice Denis, with a
design of brains climbing up spirals; a long
time ago he had given up water in favor of
wallpaper - reasonable, fashionable, or
according to his whim. F. 53)

Joyce 461 I'll strip straight after devotions

(A) Thus it was that little by little, some became
sighs, and mouths tormented other realities

5.3 Research as a Strategy, Extending Joyce, Clusters

Research as a Strategy It has just been established that Joyce scholarship uses popular culture, such as comics, as a visual vehicle in order (among other things) to convey its findings in an unpretentious way. This cannot, however, distract attention from the fact that Joyce scholarship continues to be challenging for anyone wishing to gain further insight into the author's practice. However, Joyce's texts demand research; they force us beyond their limits. Among readers thus challenged, made to feel helpless or complimented, are artists. Some of them have expressed an attachment to particular titles within Joyce scholarship. *The Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake* and James S. Atherton's *The Books at the Wake* figure strongly. Joe Tilson has stated that the latter "changed my life".¹ Artists have in turn contributed to Joyce scholarship with new visual interpretations of his works, as has been shown.

Quite often, however, an allegation of pretentiousness may be levelled at an artist when he or she makes Joycean interests known. A typical response is: "Why are you so interested in Joyce, you're so well known today, you don't need to play at being intellectual"?² The background for this allegation is among other things the threshold between formalism and content, on which David Smith – the recipient of that derisory remark – kept his balance and that went along with a change in the roles artists adopted. Subsequently, rather than artists being told that they should paint and not speak – or engage in research and interpretation – research (on Joyce) could become a viable strategy for artists.³ This goes beyond cartoons, illustration and a normal level of finding out about one's source of inspiration. It is what I here wish to pursue.

One way for artists to approach Joyce and research is to seek the company of Joyce scholars.⁴ Lawrence Lee (Khui Fatt) has portrayed many Joyceans at Zurich Joyce Foundation workshops and other gatherings. Ciarán Lennon has sought Vicki Mahaffey (and the present author) as interpreters of his work, thereby inviting correspondences and establishing a Joycean context.⁵

Lawrence Weiner's already noted surprise at my question of whether or not his work was inspired by Joyce has not only to do with the vaguely *Finnegans Wake*-related choice of motif for a Dublin work: "Sticks & Stones".¹¹⁴ Early in his career, Weiner ghost-researched Joyce for money.⁶ The academic Joyce community has, one can presume, welcomed his research work as valid scholarship. He is (or was) a member

3.2 ←

169 **Royden Rabinowitch, Horizontal Greased Cone** 1965

170 **Jeffrey Shaw, The Legible City** with Dirk Groeneveld, 1988

171 **William Anastasi, me innerman monophone** detail, 1993

MATTER SO SHAKEN TO ITS CORE TO LEAD TO A CHANGE IN INHERENT FORM
TO THE EXTENT OF BRINGING ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE DESTINY OF THE MATERIAL

— e PRIMARY — e SECONDARY — e TERTIARY —

172 Lawrence Weiner,
Catalogue #885
2002

of that community, albeit an invisible one. Weiner's visual work has remained linguistic in orientation and occupied with questions surrounding translation which are so prominent in Joyce scholarship. When looking at Weiner's Conceptual practice of juxtaposing phrases translated into several languages – usually chosen to be significant with respect to the culture of the exhibition's venue – a (visual) perspective may be added to considerations of the multiplicity of languages in the *Wake*. This regards the different lengths, appearances and grammatical structures of the phrases.⁷ For the *Joyce in Art* exhibition, Weiner chose a statement resonant with matter, change and trinity. ¹⁷²

Other veritable Joyce scholars among artists are – as noted – Martha Rosler, with her early publication on mirrors and photography in *Ulysses*, William Anastasi, Patrick Ireland and, among younger artists, Ecke Bonk and Alexander Roob. Moreover, Noel Sheridan's *HCE* triptych, 1966/67, ⁶⁷ was submitted instead of an essay to William York Tindall at Columbia University.⁸ The scholarly Joyce libraries of artists that I have had the pleasure to access provide evidence for much Joycean research on the part of many artists. Visual artists emerge as eminently knowledgeable when it comes to Joyce. Indeed, in the cases of Beuys, Tony Smith, Jess, John Latham, Ladislav Galeta and William Anastasi,

even Joyce scholars can find their work a humbling experience.

In the oeuvres of the last two, research is foregrounded and takes on a life of its own. William Anastasi, in particular, has applied the proverbial fine-tooth comb (from Duchamp's *transition* cover)¹³ to the works of Alfred Jarry, Marcel Duchamp and James Joyce. Very likely, nobody in the scholarly community can match his knowledge of detailed correspondences between the three figures.⁹¹⁷¹ However, his set of tools in ascertaining these correspondences is artistic, overtly creative – and Joycean – rather than scientific (whatever that difference may mean at a time when the two realms have been found to be each other's match in their levels of “unscientific” speculation). “Research” into encounters that most likely took place between Joyce and Duchamp and their “inevitable” translation into closer than possible relationships of their works is best left to artists whose concept of cause and effect does not need to live up to scientific standards. They have the right to obfuscate discourse and may thus react better to obfuscated discourse – and could therefore be the better *Wake* “scholars”.¹⁰ William Anastasi's research has in this vein yielded fascinating visual and conceptual, i.e. artistic, results: he clearly overdoes it with his almost limitless interpretations and correspondences. In this, he is decidedly Joycean, not because of parallels to freewheeling Joyce scholarship, but because Joyce overdid it, too, in “Ithaca”, *Finnegans Wake* and elsewhere. Fritz Senn has coined the term “provection” for that carried-away-ness, exaggeration, expansion, magnification, piling up, transgressing into parody or hyperbole and overstepping limits.¹¹

This notion is related to the accumulation and sedimentation already located in much artwork on Joyce. Anastasi's provection can most clearly be ascertained in his *me innerman monophone: Jarry in Joyce*, first shown in 1993 and reinstalled at the RHA exhibition, 2004.¹²^{171, 182} Marlena Corcoran has rightly focused on this work's border-crossings between the categories of manuscript, drawing, exhibition and scholarship (a symposium took place in the gallery during the first presentation).¹³ What remains to be noted, however, is Anastasi's role as one of the most innovative early Conceptual artists,¹⁴ whose canonical work *Untitled*, 1966, consisting of a photograph of a gallery wall placed on that same wall, can be said to correspond to Joyce's Cork picture in the cork frame. Anastasi belongs within the same Joyce-inspired league of artists as Richard Hamilton (with his “typotranslative” research on Joyce and Duchamp). Weiner and Kosuth, must also, of course, all be mentioned again in the context of Joyce and research strategies in visual art.

4.2 ←

1.1 ←

Provection in the field of oral history is a way of describing Kenneth Goldsmith's artistic practice. It has included recording his every move for a whole day – Bloomsday in 1997 under the title *Fidget* – or his utterances for a whole week: *Soliloquy*, 1996. His Joyce-suffused work entails publishing books with the masses of collected material, and his life features a son called Finnegan: provection indeed.

Bulky installations of texts, arrived at in a quasi scholarly manner and presented for viewers' active engagement – this is a description of a whole branch of recent artistic practice. Joyce is clearly not merely one of the quoted authors, but a source of inspiration for that artistic procedure itself. Fritz Senn finds a likely reason for this extraordinary presence: “Joyce gave us something to dislocute: that is one reason why we are so busy”.¹⁵ Or as the writer himself said: “I’ve put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that’s the only way of ensuring one’s immortality.”¹⁶ Artists engaged in Joycean research can be confident that they help to ensure Joyce’s immortality, but also that their work extends the writer’s oeuvre – or that all research after Joyce is required by or already contained in his texts.¹⁷

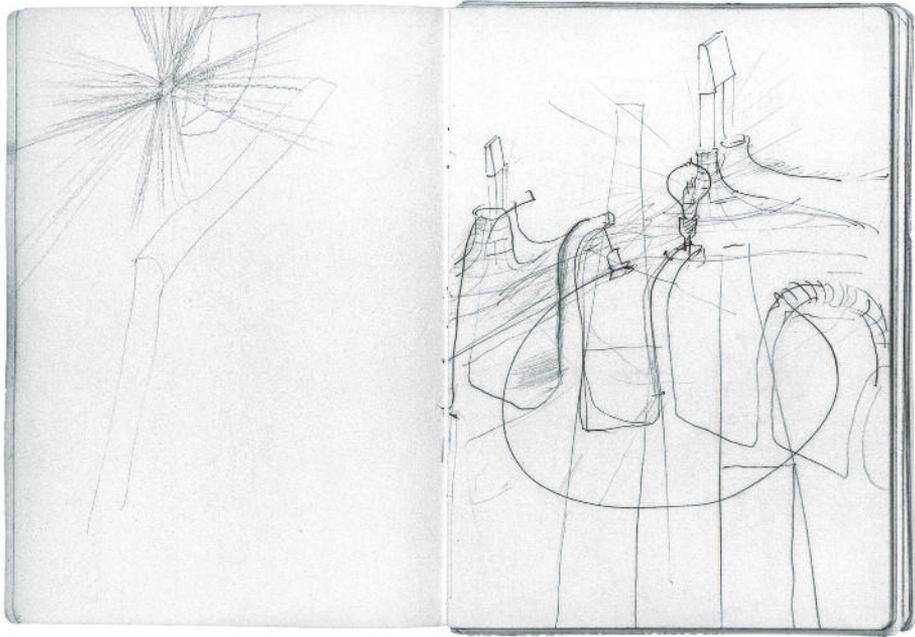
Extending Joyce Reading, research and the artistic interpretation involved constitute an “extension” of Joyce’s work or a carrying out of the tasks that the writer allocated to his “ideal readers” (FW 120.13).¹⁸ He clearly invites various “facultative” extensions:¹⁹ “why dont they go and create something” (U 18.1565).²⁰ When Jean-Michel Rabaté claims that Joyce “had no doubt that [...] the new-born genetic reader could add an ideal parape to [*Finnegans Wake*]”,²¹ I would like to argue that this could also be true for “microscopic” artist-readers of Joyce, among whom I would count Tony Smith (for his sigla work), ⁵⁶ Joseph Beuys (the *Ulysses Extension* drawings), ¹¹⁶ William Anastasi (*Bababad* series paintings) ⁷⁹ and Raymond Pettibon as another reader struck by the “disease” of reading *Finnegans Wake* (and subsequently other texts in a *Wakean* manner). ¹³⁵

Continuing History Joseph Beuys may have been unique in his claim that he received a posthumous “request” from Joyce to “extend” *Ulysses*,²² but as “post Joyce” time proceeds, the need to “extend” the writer’s work in a temporal or historical way can be seen to be ever more pressing. Richard Hamilton’s *Citizen*,⁷⁶ which includes a reflection on recent Irish history, is one example.

Artists like Joseph Beuys and Paul Wunderlich did not need to wait for as long as this to find a post-Joycean historical turning-point that the writer either uncannily anticipated or by which he is posthumously challenged – depending on the point of view. This is the Shoah of European Jewry. Paul Wunderlich, like Beuys a German soldier in World War II who turned to art, reads *Giacomo Joyce* with the benefit of hindsight and, to put it simply, accuses the writer of sexism and anti-Semitism in his treatment of Amelia Popper.²³ In my view, Wunderlich's primary motivation is apparent. The highly sexualized renderings of the female subject – not too far from Allen Jones's figures – turns one of the accusations back at Wunderlich himself, who moreover fails to differentiate between biography and fiction. The accusation of anti-Semitism, of “colonizing” the Jewish woman's body, may find some ground between the lines of *Giacomo Joyce*. But it escapes me why the former German soldier could not pick a more pertinent example (even among Modernist writers), if his intention had been the honourable one of highlighting latent anti-Semitism.

Joseph Beuys has been accused of fascism and of not engaging with his past. This view, mostly found in English-speaking literature,²⁴ I see as largely based on an unawareness of certain (in the past hardly accessible) work. There is no doubt that Beuys was far more prescriptive in his stated views than we can now bear, but his (early) work shows otherwise. Beuys' wish to “extend” *Ulysses*, as I have argued,²⁵ was at least partially motivated by his wish to come to terms with Germany's recent past, i.e. his past. In 1957, towards the end of his depressive crisis, he decided to set himself the most difficult of tasks and submit a proposal of sculptural work for the former extermination camp's site at Auschwitz. Studies towards his proposal are to be found in the *Ulysses Extension*: in a Joycean context.¹⁷³ Beuys wished to place three large concrete shapes of decreasing size (roofs on stilts) on the camp's main axis marked by train tracks.^{174, 127} Possibly as a reaction to Brancusi's *Tirgu Jiu* monument to those who died in World War I, he thus devised a modern-day rite of passage, at whose end a reflective bowl was to catch the light and point upwards.²⁶

Which role does the Joycean context of the drawings play? It is obviously not used in the usual, more concrete (or reductive) way of referring to Leopold Bloom (wrongly) as a Jew. Joyce's peripatetic lifestyle may have contributed to the choice, but, in the main, Beuys' *Auschwitz Memorial* submission is Joyce-related in so far as it conflates old and new: not as regards the *Odyssey* and Dublin in 1904, but megalithic and

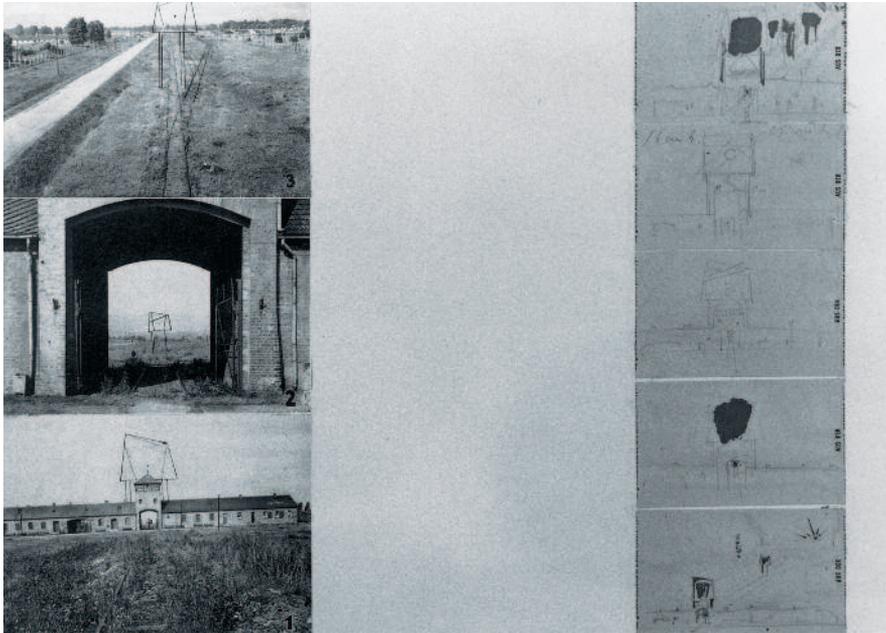


173 Joseph Beuys,
Ulysses-Extension,
 book 2, pp. 2-3
 ca. 1957-61

recent history. The roof shapes stand for dolmens that (even without an added tumulus) mark the route of a passage tomb. In passage graves such as Newgrange, the sun shines through the passageway at the winter solstice and illuminates the stone bowl containing ashes placed at its end.

To Beuys all kinds of mines and tunnels seemed Irish and Joycean (in his characteristic equation of the two). *Finnegans Wake's* museyroom may be the main motivation here, aided by the fact that Beuys had learned in his childhood about Irish miners in the Ruhr area, not far from his native region, where a mine named "Hibernia" still exists.²⁷ In the megalithic population of Europe and the Celts who were marginalized and even subject to genocide, Beuys found a valid point of comparison to European Jews in the twentieth century. Joyce's Celtic, i.e. Hibernian (Irish and "wintry") origins, his "Jewish" subject matter and treatment of war in a damning and of death in a hopeful, cyclical manner, his "Edenville" telephone call from "Proteus" (U 3.39), his reflection on "Jewgreek is greekjew" (U 15.2098-99.), his quasi anticipation of the Holocaust through his mentioning of burnt offerings (holocaust) in both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, and especially the "*felix culpa*" motif – all these turned Joyce into the perfect point of departure for Beuys' redemptive gesture.

← 4.2



174 **Joseph Beuys, Auschwitz Monument, proposal, 1957**

Despite the fact that the comparison with genocide in earlier history seeks to relativize the Holocaust in a way similar to some German historians' views that sparked off a hotly contested historians' debate in the late 1980s,²⁸ Beuys deals in a more earnestly searching, less self-righteous way with the past and Joyce's perspective on Jews than some of his critics, or Paul Wunderlich. The Shoah has thrown Joyce's attitude into sharp focus – and not only within Joyce studies. Artists who share a marginalized, diasporian existence with the writer have found much ground to identify with Joyce, as has been noted. Others participating in a culture that has continued for sixty years to grapple with those events continue to find Joyce's work a fruitful source. The consensus seems to be that Joyce "updates" rather well in relation to historical matters.

3.2 ←

Scientific Thought This is also the case with a view to new media, hypertext and various (more or less) recent mathematical and physical ways of looking at the world. To begin with the last-named, László Moholy-Nagy had already stated that "Joyce contained multitudes. And with these 'multitudes', he paved the way to a related, space-time thinking on a larger scale than any writer had done before."²⁹ He refers here to Einstein's discontinuous space-time relationship.

Royden Rabinowitch was introduced to Jules Henry Poincaré's writings in 1957.³⁰ When the artist states that "Joyce lay the foundations for the modern consciousness that everybody has to rely on",³¹ this takes on a slightly more scientific and philosophically founded nuance in comparison to the many who have stated similar sentiments.³² Poincaré at the turn of the nineteenth century described the space of ordinary experience and abstract space as opposed entities, corresponding to the oppositions between Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic views.³³ Rabinowitch sees this opposition as a threat of solipsism and thus opposes both views. Joyce, the artist asserts, had an "exquisite awareness of these differences".

An example of the opposition is the use of the Euclidean diagram in *Finnegans Wake*. "It demonstrates in artistic terms that it is possible to utilise such structures in ways that were not intended." Furthermore, *Ulysses* as a whole can be seen as consisting of empirical situations, whereas *Finnegans Wake* is profoundly unempirical. When the two extremes meet, absurdity and humour enter. "Both together stand for a kind of sanity." Is it a coincidence that the best example for this are Rabinowitch's *Greased Cones* from the mid-1960s,¹⁶⁹ which combine an organic, uneven, sensual surface with a regular, geometric shape? Beuys and Rabinowitch independently (but around the same time) seem to have developed similar thought processes and priorities using the same media (grease, geometrical shapes). The two artists centre on something that can be formulated variously as *coincidentia oppositorum*, mediation or oscillation. Did Joyce facilitate such artistic findings? In Beuys' case we can be certain. In an interview from 1979, whose text he used for his *James Joyce with Sled* multiple, 1985,⁴² he maintained that "these things [Joyce's work] that change the universe belong into our consciousness [... and that Joyce stood for a] self-changing principle".³⁴ But Rabinowitch is hesitant: he could never deal with Joyce directly, again for fear of solipsism – or, one can add, illustration. And yet: "Joyce still instils hope in me ... [There is an] incredible sanity to" his work.

John Latham's scientifically inspired theories concern time more than space. He has formulated that:

The current premis[e] is that the real world is a phenomenon taking place in space and a linear time measured by clocks, and a dynamic split between mind and matter. The idea has been derided only in art [...] systematically thrown overboard by James Joyce.³⁵

Latham was from 1954 a friend of two scientists, a biologist and a physicist, who worked in a then unusually interdisciplinary way. This

← 4.2



175 John Latham,
The roller
1976

serendipitous encounter prompted similarly interdisciplinary work involving constellatory marks that he created with a then new technique, the mechanical spray-gun. It “recorded what happened in that second.”³⁶ Understood historically (“Joyce was interested in a total history”) as well as cosmically, the *Time-Base Roller*, 1972, “is a model that enables humans to situate themselves in the context of the cosmos as a whole.”³⁷ On the second such roller blind from 1976, **175** one can see many letters in a grid. These letters make sense in a vertical arrangement, but this can be seen only upside-down and from the back of the work, when the “blind” is lowered. From the front, the viewer has to try to read the combination of (meaningless) letters horizontally. The work is entitled *The*, a reference not only to the last word of *Finnegans Wake* (in lower case), but also to the inadequately definite article in the name of the exhibition’s venue, The Gallery, London. The viewers are forced to adopt the *Wake* reader’s habit of going across the text and inverting literature’s linear timeframe.³⁸ Latham clearly views this as a model to be applied to society, history and government in general, following the innovations in physics in the early twentieth century. For him – as for many other artists, as has just been shown – Joyce indicates a shift in human thought.³⁹

4.3 ←

Interactivity, Hypertext, Rhizomes Jeffrey Shaw studied with John Latham at St. Martin's School of Art, London, in 1966. One year later, he co-founded the Event Structure Research Group. When Shaw employs the latest in digital technology to create interactive work, this is not out of a belief in progress. Shaw states: "I'm a big fan of Joyce – deeply under the spell of *Finnegan[s] Wake* – my best understanding of him comes via Norman O. Brown's book *Closing Time* where he interpolates Joyce and Vico – I have used some phrases from *Finnegans Wake* in my work *PLACE – A USERS GUIDE*."⁴⁰ While this work is indeed more explicit, the Viconian dimension and other Joycean aspects can be better ascertained in Shaw's canonical interactive work *The Legible City* (with Dirk Groeneveld), 1988.¹⁷⁰

The viewer cycles on a stationary bicycle. But rather than through time (history) alone, he or she cycles through space – textual space. The visual/virtual reality in front of the cyclist is interactive in so far as the active viewer navigates through a cityscape made up of building-sized text. There are several later versions based on various city maps and the possibility of including multiple viewers/cyclists. The Dublin of "Wandering Rocks" invariably comes to mind, as well as the cyclically rhizomatic textual landscape of the *Wake*, where different turns can be taken.⁴¹

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in 1976 did not see in Joyce a prefiguration of their poststructural structures, the rhizomes, since in their view he did not go far enough. While on the level of the word, rhizomes were in evidence, they slighted the circularity and thus the encompassing wholeness of the book as world, which the two philosophers found boring and effectively totalitarian.⁴² However, the postmodernist Joyce⁴³ already called upon in fact does by all accounts constitute a model or source of inspiration for knotting symptoms,⁴⁴ non-linear, rhizomatic hypertextuality.⁴⁵ Not only the perceived necessity to create hypertexts of Joyce's works testifies to this, however useful or not the annotations given may be to (novice) readers. Joyce as a source of inspiration for interactive, hypertextual artwork (and theories thereon) also makes a powerful statement in this regard.

Lynn Hershman has created interactive video installations since the mid-1990s.¹⁷⁶ She wrote to me that she "used Molly Bloom's soliloquy in one of her installations".⁴⁶ She did not elaborate, but then "Hershman's female protagonists not only possess unstable identities – they are 'shifting personalities', whose inner logic presupposes the non-existence of boundaries between different layers of reality"⁴⁷ – and between the



176 Lynne Hershman,
Lorna
1983-84

works. Viewers can effectively change her characteristics and identities. More recently,

[...] the shy, neurotic and awkward woman, personified by Roberta and other personae, has been substituted with the forthright, short-haired Marion, who aggressively attacks the observer from the monitor [...] is a projection of the observer's imagination.

Did Hershman choose the name Marion with Marion Tweedy (aka Molly Bloom) in mind? Most likely. What earlier artists achieved by working on Joyce's sigla, new technologies render possible via an interactivity that furthermore involves the viewers' changing identities more directly.

3.1, 3.2 ←

The works just discussed, in their Joyce-inspired and digitally enabled hypertextuality, give the impression that (the late) Joyce has come into his own⁴⁸ or found a suitable "extension". Even Joseph Beuys' much earlier *Ulysses Extension* drawings have been anachronistically and in parallel with Joyce's writings associated with digital, hypertextual artwork.⁴⁹ The realm of more recent Joyce "extensions" significantly includes interactivity, where recipients can let further roots grow onto other plateaux (to use Deleuze and Guattari's term).⁵⁰ Virtual reality becomes more than a metaphor for the locus of such "extensions".

Departing from theories of openness and interactivity, Söke Dinkla has proposed a “floating work of art” which is to account for the physical experience of the simultaneity of inside and outside in relation to the work.⁵¹ This indeed links up with artists’ views of the oppositions that Joyce encompasses (Royden Rabinowitch has just been quoted as remarking on related matters). But may it not also be possible to find such physical and mental experiences of inside and outside in good old-fashioned reading?⁵²

The performative quality in much artwork that departs from Joyce has so far surfaced only as a tendency within interactive art (and between the lines of Eco’s definition of the open work via *Finnegans Wake*). What I mean far exceeds any artist, writer, or curator condescendingly granting the recipient the right to fulfil his or her vision.⁵³ Readers of the later Joyce have found encouragement to usurp his work, to remake it, but mainly to create, share and enact new, fleeting meanings.⁵⁴ I detect a germ of such performative practice in the love of artists to read *Finnegans Wake* (with others) – this particularly applies to Tony Smith, John Cage, Robert Barnes, Patrick Ireland and Noel Sheridan – to digress, not to interpret in a scholarly manner, but to enjoy a momentary coming together. They regard the *Wake* as a model that undermines models. They look away from the text – and find that space within culture, informed and distracted: a reading strategy.⁵⁵ “Shut your eyes and see” (U 3.9).

Joycean Ways of Thinking Through Joyce artists have thus developed new modes of thinking. No matter what one may call the supposed opposites encountered in this study – ratio/intuition, Aristotelian/Neo-Platonic thought, figuration/abstraction, formalism/content, Ivory Tower/Sacred Fount, space/time, internal/external, yin/yang, colonial/postcolonial frames of mind, marginality/universality, teleological/cyclical thinking etc. etc. – artists have described (and located in their works) ways of thinking between the categories as Joyce had already developed these avenues. John Cage remarked on “this bringing together of opposites”⁵⁶ in Joyce. It now no longer surprises that (such mediating or oscillating) thought processes themselves have been linked with the writer.⁵⁷ By means of the insights into thought processes that the stream of consciousness technique provides and the rhizomatic readings that the *Wake* prompts, Joyce has focused on our thinking (about him).⁵⁸

On the one hand, Joycean thinking as it manifests itself in visual art is a lucidly conceptual kind of thinking. On the other hand, it is also a

visual, “constellating” thought process, akin to how visual artists compose their often spatially presented works aesthetically. And it requires artists to sustain the two.⁵⁹

It almost seems that there is no escaping Joyce for the many artists engaged in theories and topics that are of significance in present-day culture, life and art. Joseph Kosuth echoes in his reply to my questions concerning his Joyce-inspiration what artists from David Smith to John Cage have repeatedly stated: “Joyce is one of the individuals [who are] responsible for a culture that I work within, which is to say that Joyce is somewhat internalized in all the work I do”.⁶⁰ To that sentiment I sought to provide a background in this chapter. It is in keeping with my subject then – and with the “disease” (Raymond Pettibon) of reading and viewing the world in a Joyce-inspired way – that I find rhizomatic modes⁶¹ or clusters of references even *between* Joyce-inspired art.

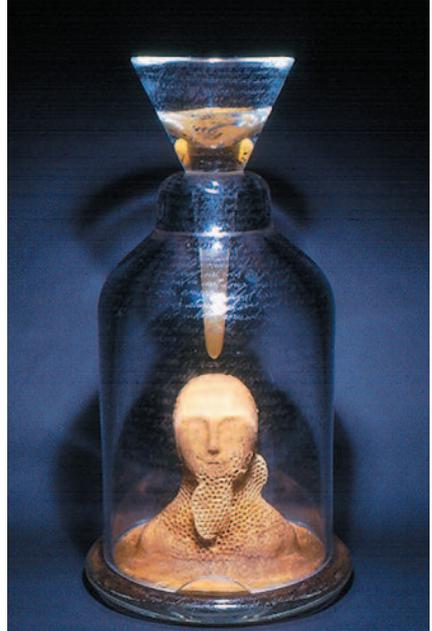
Clusters Research is about making connections; and Joyce’s texts teach us to read other texts. Under the heading of clusters, I must credit several artists, whose work has anticipated in several ways my own attempts at making such (rhizomatic) connections between Joyce and visual artists. Taking into account the direction of my previous book on Joyce and Beuys, I have found such instances most prominently displayed by the many artists who have linked these two figures.

John Cage had Beuys appear in a hilarious manner in *James Joyce, Marcel Duchamp, Erik Satie: An Alphabet*, providing two pheasants with electrical felt nests.⁶² Inge Prokot’s *Great Stag Painting* from 1986 contains the names “James Joyce” and “Joseph”, rightly pointing out the fact that both artists identified with stags. A painting by Jürg Burkhardt’s bears the title *L’ultiomo canto di Joyce per Beuys*, 1988.⁶³ Miroslaw Balka’s *a, e, i, o, u*, 1998,¹⁷⁷ refers in several ways to both Joyce and Beuys and also finds in the title – as Stephen Dedalus before him (U 9.213) – a formula for indebtedness in general. Dogs in their kennels recall Beuys’ *Coyote* “action” in New York, 1974, that was in turn inspired by Joyce’s palindromic linking of god and dog.⁶⁴ Once the correspondence is established, the diary format appears to be borrowed from *A Portrait* and the cyclical format (the month of October initiates and concludes the series) related to *Finnegans Wake*. Much of Balka’s other work hints simultaneously at Beuys’ and Joyce’s preoccupations. The only question is: which one appeared first in the artist’s universe? The fact that *Remembrance of the First Holy Communion* ⁶⁹ is Balka’s first major work points to Joyce.

177 **Mirosław Balka,**
a, e, i, o, u
1998



178 **Michael Rogers,**
Beehive for
Molly Bloom
2002



Within a postmodernist context, however, that chronology (or hierarchy) is not always maintained. Michael Rogers's *Beehive for Molly Bloom*, 2002, ¹⁷⁸ consists of blown and engraved glass and beeswax. It served as a real, working beehive, as the honeycomb “beard” on Molly Bloom proves: she has literally become a flower. Rogers states: “I was aware of Beuys['] interest in Joyce and his interest in bees which is what originally led me to Joyce”.⁶⁵

All these artists had practically just their intuition (and the rhyming names) to rely on to make such connections. Only Hannes Vogel, who had himself worked (separately) on Beuys and Joyce, was prompted by our mutually inspiring conversations when he created *Wylermeer* ^{179, 89} – a work that focuses on the (spiritual) presences of Joyce, Beuys, Arnold Schoenberg and John Cage, at the Expressionist house in the Lower Rhine Region, where Alice Schuster attempted to translate *Finnegans Wake*. With its conical roof, it has been mentioned as the likely site of Beuys' reading of the *Wake* in the early 1950s. This isolated incident can serve here as a further pointer to the fact that scholarship – normally, however, meaning Joyce scholarship, not necessarily art history – has also inspired artists.

← 4.2

I began this study by calling upon or calling to mind the creativity involved in research and interpretation. This assertion has now become more complex in relation to Joyce-inspired artwork employing research strategies. Since making this statement, I have become aware of an even closer parallel to my own endeavours in the pursuit of Joyce-inspired art. While I have researched works that to me showed correspondences with the writer and asked many of the relevant artists, whether or not they would consider Joyce as a source of inspiration for their work, Simon Morris has approached a panel of international artists and asked them to nominate books – usually their “favourite” books.⁶⁶ The terms used to describe the resulting artwork – “Extreme Reading”, “informationas-material” and “BiblioMANIA” ¹⁸⁰ – speak of the “disease” and “provection” mentioned earlier, as well as further categories under which Joyce-inspired work has here been investigated (accumulation and research, even book objects as an updated notion for the internet). Several of the artists involved in their colleague’s project have (and this comes as no surprise) listed Joyce’s works. They are Howard Britton, Suzanne Cotter, Nick Thurston, Anne Moeglin-Delcroix, Derek Tyman, Paul O’Neill and, of course, Joseph Kosuth and Kenneth Goldsmith. This list can serve as a pointer to future needs for artistic and art-historical work. James Joyce will without any doubt continue to inspire artists well into the twenty-first century.

The artists already indebted to him have, as I could show, directed the course of the history of art over wide swathes of twentieth-century art. They have been extraordinarily inspirational in their own right. One can view this as introducing an indirect driving force and complicating the issue, but since we are here dealing with the appropriator *par excellence* among writers, such a development can hardly be seen as a threat.⁶⁷ As Vincent Cheng writes on postcolonial authors in the wake of Joyce: “the ideological power of internationally widespread and influential works like Joyce’s is perhaps just as effectively spread indirectly – by the influences they have on various other sources, who then propagate those influences in their own ways”.⁶⁸ Joyce’s impact on artists and on the history of art that has been mapped here thus constitutes the best of all cases – from the perspective of Joyce’s afterlife and for the history of art.

Lukkedoerendunan-
durraske wdyloosho-
ofer moyportertoory-
zooy sphalnabortan-
sporthaokansakroi-
dver j kapakkapuk

Perk o dhuskurun-
barggruan yagokgo-
rlyayorgroa gremmi-
tghundharth unath-
unaradidillafayhill-
ibumullunukkanun

Üllhodtun weir-
mudgaardgragnir-
urdmo hirfennrlu-
kkiokki baugimand-
odrrerih s urtkri-
nge nraekinarockar

bababadigharagim-
kammitarronkama-
brrombinn e mro-
tuonmimntrovant-
anna shakarrwaba-
oioordemhergim

kliaaklakakaska-
klo n strigokk-
tabadactop-
bedocher-
fenn-
sperlak-
puffol

bibliomania

ENCARTA
DICTIONARY

Joseph Kosuth
Oxford
English
Latin
ETYMOLOGY
English
The Oxford Dictionary of
QUOTATIONS
ROBERTS
FORSTER
OXFORD

ENCARTA
WORLD ENGLISH
DICTIONARY

THE NEW
SHORTER
OXFORD
ENGLISH
DICTIONARY
WEBSTER'S
COLLEGE
DICTIONARY
THE PROBLEM
OF
KNOWLEDGE
ROLAND
BARTHES
A Lover's Discourse
RESISTANCE

ENCARTA
DICTIONARY

ILLUMINATIONS
WALTER
BENJAMIN
Anti-
Oedipus
CAPITALISM and
SCHIZOPHRENIA
Gilles Deleuze
and
Felix Guattari
THE
TRAVELER AND
THE CRIMINAL

ENCARTA
DICTIONARY

ILLUMINATIONS
WALTER
BENJAMIN
FREUD
FREUD
FREUD

ENCARTA
DICTIONARY

POSTMODERNISM
Martin Jay
The
INTELLECTUAL
WASHTON
What is Post-Modernism?
THE
LARGE SCALE
OF
WORLD
REINVENTION

ENCARTA

BRADY LARSON
J. LAPLANCHE
J.-B. PONTALIS
LUDWIG
WITTGENSTEIN



Conclusion

Umberto Eco asserted in 1962 that the most important lesson that could be learned from the experience of Joyce was an implicit definition of the situation of modern art.¹ That has indeed been found to be true – and equally applicable to more recent art. It has moreover been established that the reasons for Eco's impression were often direct knowledge and conscious inspiration among artists, particularly those of the generation that developed their oeuvres in the 1960s.

Modernist artists frequently showed an interest in Joyce, his use of everyday life, his various sources and his formal innovations. When the inspiration went deeper, they transcended the Modernist framework and showed an interest in the space between abstraction and figuration and between form and content. Minimalists explored such dichotomies even further. Joyce appeared with great regularity at turning-points within the history of art. He even became a regular guest at its battlegrounds, whether in a debate on Barnett Newman's work or between those who could and those who could not bear the noted coincidence of (or oscillation between) opposites. In relation to art history of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, Joyce teaches us that artists – usually Joyce-inspired ones – will prove wrong dogmatism of any kind.

Joyce is particularly prominent as a trainer of the minds of Conceptual artists. He played a seminal role in the worldviews of those who led the rediscovery of Duchamp in the 1960s and the simultaneous lingualization of art. Against expectations, the ensuing politicization of culture was not so much of a barrier for the appreciation of Joyce among visual artists as it was among literary scholars. He was viewed more as liberating through openness. But even on the (supposedly) apolitical side of the artistic spectrum, among Pop Artists, Joyce was appreciated.

In the current multi-faceted artistic landscape, Joyce holds his ground as a source of inspiration, motivated by a variety of factors. The writer has inspired many current modes of thinking and scientific theories (relativity, indeterminacy, theories related to new media, post-structuralism, postcolonialism). Thus, artists engaging with these have found Joyce helpful, because he showed an awareness of changes that were happening around his time. Joyce is moreover seen to anticipate and encompass current worldviews. His is an admirable (or annoying!) artistic ethos of great humanity, combined with universal or rhizomatically rooted subject matter. It seems to be no longer possible for many twentieth- or

179 Hannes Vogel, Wyltermeer
1996

180 Simon Morris, bibliomania,
Joseph Kosuth's
selection, 1999

twenty-first century artists to deal with tradition – whether biblical, Homeric, or Modernist – without referring to Joyce for ways to go about it. Artists researched, educated their minds in order to become Joyce’s contemporaries (as Richard Ellmann would say) or his equals. Many have succeeded in their fields.

For visual artists, Joyce provides an access to traditions, to world literature, to peripheral European culture (Ireland) and simultaneously to culture as it was valued in the centres of artistic practice (Italy in the years of Futurism, Zurich during the Dada era, Paris following World War I and the United States after World War II).

There is a certain self-help aspect in reading Joyce which has attracted some artists. The writer continues to be an inspiration for artists who wish to create work on identities of a shifting, often marginalized, kind – and with universal implications. Joyce’s sigla and the labyrinthine, rhizomatic or hypertextual reading that *Finnegans Wake* encourages, have been instrumental in giving new, positive expressions to multiple, diasporic identities. New, interactive artistic media have eagerly taken account of such precedents.

While the title *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* may have attracted the attention of many young artists, and prompted identifications and portraits of various kinds, it is not this early work that has incited the most significant artistic engagements with Joyce. Dieter Roth has even slighted *A Portrait* as kitsch. *Ulysses*, by contrast, has been at the centre when it comes to artists developing their own stylistic versatility and multiplicity which are even rather alien to visual artists’ oeuvres (and the market forces that govern them). The novel has provided artists with many materials for pillaging and serves particularly well as a precedent for work on popular culture. Joseph Kosuth expresses a sentiment shared by artists who have contributed many of the most original and far-reaching responses to Joyce: “As a cultural draw of course *Ulysses* stands there as a towering presence, the mountain to be climbed. But for all the reasons one must respect *Ulysses*[,] it is *Finnegans Wake* that one arrives at with a sense of completion.”²

Joyce’s status as canonical but (formerly) banned author brought about a two-sided history of reception that shows how the writer continues to be valued, critically interpreted and reinvented. He has simultaneously retained a credible presence in sub-cultural and popular cultural fields within visual art. And he also serves as an example of a celebrity whose “brilliance” is felt as overwhelming for some and whose canonical status should either be further enhanced and perpetuated, or criticized and

subverted. Appropriation techniques have been used to achieve both ends. They are, furthermore, close to aspects of Joyce's technique.

These techniques and motifs are so multi-faceted that artists have found a never-ending wealth of inspiring material. Motifs alone – in portraiture and illustration – have been questioned and found to be of limited relevance if not expanded and matched by a consideration of Joyce's procedures or techniques. Motifs such as constellations, fat and felt, maps, and the course of a day thus usually have an effect on a variety of procedural choices, often guiding an artist's oeuvre over a broad terrain and for a considerable length of time. Iconography alone therefore can not achieve what is necessary: an interpretation of what a reference to the writer achieves within a particular (art) historical moment, in a particular medium – i.e. iconology.³ I hope that my references to Joyce are not understood as being reductive or as exhausting the interpretative possibilities of any work. The contrary is the case. Artists' application of Joyce usually matches the way in which he himself used his sources: irreverently, kept to a limit, as scaffolding.⁴

With regard to many of the examples given, the answer to the question of whether or not Joyce's achievement was valid and important in the sense of providing an understandable model must be a resounding "yes". We find confirmed Ezra Pound's dictum that a work is all the more worthwhile, the more works of different genres are required to interpret it. I would like to argue that Joyce's model has not only continued to be understandable to artists, but that their practice can also become adequately transparent by approaching it through Joyce. New interpretations of major and minor works were the consequence.

It transpires that the model of (the later) Joyce is one that (maybe paradoxically) teaches irreverence with regard to models. Frequently, his position as a source of inspiration is thus both oblique and exclusive. Artists have generally (and in the most fortuitous cases) used Joyce for their own ends and with independent minds. He is a writer who has managed to give rise to or to encompass the most diverse artistic approaches. This is evident in the fact that he provided precedents for Barnett Newman's virile *Ulysses* painting and the text for an earth-motherly work by Joan Snyder, the basis for a "trippy, acidy"⁵ *HCE* painting by Noel Sheridan, and the strategy for much sober, "lingualized" and utterly intellectual Conceptual Art. Joyce provided inspiration for John Latham's "libroclastic" position and for Joseph Beuys' installation on his workspace's windowsill, which appears like an altar and which features a copy of *Ulysses*.

Visual artists have also “corrected” Joyce, for example, those (including Beuys) who have favoured soap instead of stone as the substance into which a washerwoman can metamorphose. They have also sometimes examined the writer’s difficult personality. In general, artists have adopted axioms from Joyce and have certainly avoided becoming his epigones. No major artist of the twentieth century – with the possible exception of Richard Hamilton – is primarily known for Joyce-inspired work. In this regard it is telling that the topic under investigation here has hardly been dealt with before.⁶

The broad spectrum of Joyce-inspired art renders it difficult to generalize about what it is that Joyce has inspired visual artists to do. But what emerges from the wealth of connections is firstly that Joyce provides “something for everybody” – an intentional aspect of his oeuvre. Each art movement found aspects of particular importance (Conceptual art, Pop Art and Fluxus). Secondly, the writer has (thus rightly and in keeping with his approaches) been instrumentalized for artists’ own purposes. This confirms the openness of Joyce’s texts and ideally takes that quality into Joyce-inspired art. Artists have extended Joyce in every possible way (historically, politically), but, most importantly, they have adopted Joyce’s ways of thinking. Some artists’ procedures when reacting to Joyce appear as somewhat too automatic or too “crafted”, but they need not retain the balance that Joyce himself kept. It is paramount that a link is retained with the artist’s whole oeuvre (something that could here be touched upon only in passing).

It is precisely the irreducible wealth of Joyce’s thinking, the unbroken line from mythical times to postmodernism that he represents, which artists have found fascinating. The difficulties in pinning down Joyce have had an inspiring effect on artists, as they strive for formulations that cannot be paraphrased.

Artists have used Joyce’s precedent to be extraordinarily responsive to their own media. Their materiality – ranging from typography and (artists’) books to bodily excretions, from flowing substances (or potentially flowing ones like fat) to bulky accumulations – has been in the foreground for much of this study. Metamorphosis, transubstantiation, epiphany, collecting and sedimentation, parallax, circulation, vivisection, the diaphane, sacralization and secularization, as well as *portmanteau* strategies are all applicable to the material world with which artists have become engaged when responding to Joyce. They have provided singularly useful approaches to artistic media within art history in the wake of the ready-made.

Joyce's flowing language, along with his strategies of time manipulation, are central in another context. While the writer clearly became important for artists who were creative during the era of the linguistic turn, when linguistic competency, conceptuality and wordplay entered visual practice, he remains useful in more recent developments under the aegis of the performative turn. This is not only to do with Joyce's wish to have readers perform *Finnegans Wake* (i.e. read the text aloud) that has given sustained inspiration to performance art, but also with the paradoxical fact that Joyce is a model for those who dislike models, question prescribed meaning cultivate irreverence and prefer to perform their own meanings.

The fact that artists' media have increasingly included language has meant, among other things, that visual artists are now no longer automatically dispensed from being in "competition" with the writer. Artists' competencies have approached the realm of Joyce: wordplay, translations and dislocutions of all kinds. Feelings of competition or of being overwhelmed are growing, along with – possibly – the notion that Joyce is now more relevant to artists than he has ever been. The boundary between the genres – however elusive this had already become in Joyce's day – has nevertheless continued to serve as a safeguard from allegations of plagiarism, a protection of artists' autonomy, despite the most extensive borrowings.

Joyce's *Fluviana* – here introduced as visual work by the writer – mean among many other things that (since 1929) that boundary can only, if at all, be upheld as a tendency. Joyce's other forays into the visual world of layout and typography take on a more consciously "artistic" air, and artists need to welcome Joyce as an innovator within their own ranks. He was a conceptual artist.

It is also significant that Joyce sought to bridge the boundary between word and image – which artists using language have continued to do from the other side. Both Joyce's spatial strategies and his manipulations of time have been particularly fruitful as inspirations for time-based and performance genres of visual art. These transgressions are in keeping with the transgressiveness, licentiousness, notoriety and (politically) daring nature of Joyce's oeuvre – and much artwork in his wake. Artists aim to question taboos and the hierarchical order of things. In that respect, Joyce, the epitome of linguistic competence, has even been seen as anti-literary and as standing outside of traditional power structures.⁷ It is in this sense that artists perform a socio-political task when reacting to Joyce and thus renegotiating the word/image relationship.

Whether or not Joyce would have “liked” any – or all – of the artworks scrutinized here is of no consequence. He would certainly have approved of the attention. Moreover, I believe that he would have recognized the constellations, the universality, mediations and oscillations involved, as well as – crucially – the conceptuality behind many of the works: in other words, his ways of thinking. That element renders Joyce such a commanding presence in the history of art from the Modernist period onwards – with a stress on the 1960s, but hardly a lull in the long history of artistic reception. He has been an epiphany for artists and has also provided many such experiences through works inspired by him.

It would be wrong to say that Joyce has dominated major artists’ oeuvres or even the history of art after him. But without the writer, it may very well have run a different course. A picture has emerged that securely establishes Joyce as a most enduring inspiration of artists for almost a hundred years. Arguably, no Modernist writer has been as fruitful a whetstone and quarry, an intellectual measure and annoyance as Joyce; or as bright a guiding light for the use of traditions and idiosyncratic general knowledge, as well as for ways to employ the most diverse materials and achieve coherence in an artistic oeuvre. And that coincidence of opposites, that oscillating coherence of contradictory forces contained in materially aware and visually stimulating works, has been established as a leitmotif within Joyce-inspired art. It makes for complex, rewarding artworks that sustain the fascination of this topic. James Joyce is clearly an artists’ writer.



